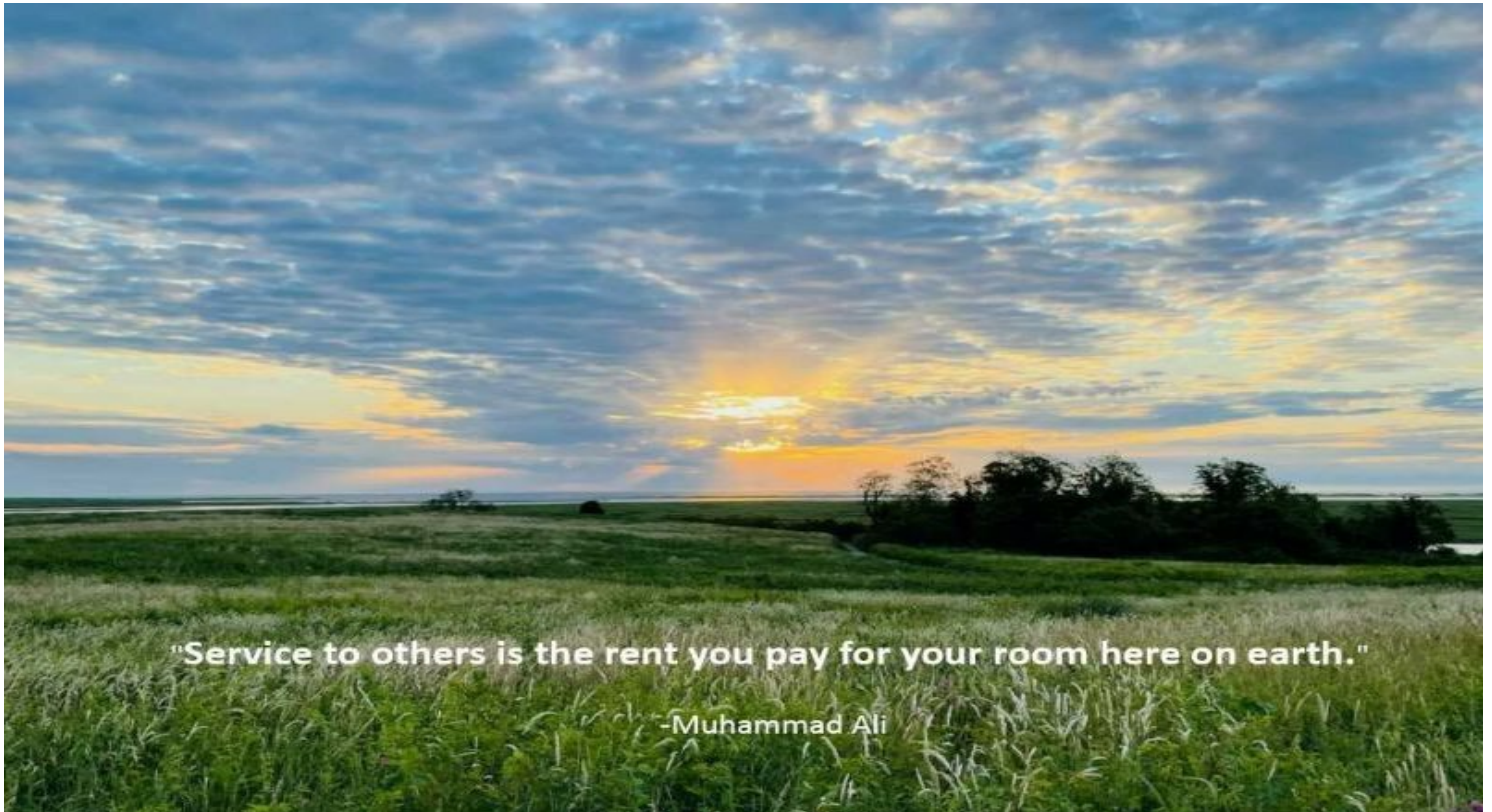


# MHC STUDENT HANDBOOK



**M.S. PROGRAM  
MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING  
ST. JOHN FISHER UNIVERSITY  
2023-2024**

# MHC Student Handbook

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## **THE ROLE OF THIS HANDBOOK**

This handbook describes policies and procedures relevant to students in the Master of Science degree program in Mental Health Counseling at St. John Fisher University. It is the responsibility of every student, whether full- or part-time, to know and observe the policies and procedures contained in this handbook, as well as any updates that are made available. Students are likewise expected to be familiar with policies and procedures outlined in the St. John Fisher University Graduate Catalog. This document contains valuable university-wide and program-specific information regarding campus facilities, codes of conduct, disciplinary system, academic information, and campus resources.

The Graduate Catalog can be accessed at <https://catalog.sjf.edu/2023-2024/graduate/grad-home/>

We hope that this information is helpful to you in plotting a course of successful academic study and field work at St. John Fisher University in the M.S. program in Mental Health Counseling.

## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

### M.S. in Mental Health Counseling

The following program mission statement was adopted by the faculty of the Mental Health Counseling program at St. John Fisher University and endorsed by the Advisory Board of the program in Spring 2015.

#### Mission

Building on the mission of St. John Fisher University, the Mental Health Counseling program's mission is to deliver personalized instruction to a diverse student body regarding essential counseling knowledge and skills, as well as facilitating the development and enhancement of personal qualities and characteristics necessary to become an outstanding professional mental health counselor.

#### Program Overview\*

The Master of Science in Mental Health Counseling program at St. John Fisher University educates students to provide therapeutic mental health interventions in the community. This program prepares students for work in community agencies, clinics, hospitals, managed behavioral healthcare organizations, outpatient mental health programs, residential treatment and rehabilitation settings, employee assistance programs, substance abuse treatment programs, colleges, and private practice. The Mental Health Counseling program is designed to emphasize the strengths of individuals and families in order to facilitate recovery and resilience when faced with emotional, mental, or physical challenges. Students will develop a strong understanding of the psychological foundations of mental health and the related developmental issues.

In accordance with standards recommended by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP) and New York State requirements for licensure as a mental health counselor, the program focuses upon counseling areas such as professional identity, social and cultural diversity, human growth and development, helping relationships, career development, group work, assessment, research, program evaluation, and evidence-based intervention skills used in mental health counseling. This Masters of Science degree in Mental Health Counseling provides students the opportunity to learn this knowledge base through a variety of teaching methodologies, including class discussions, role playing, small-group work, case-study analysis, and classroom simulations. Students also have the opportunity to apply this knowledge in supervised clinical settings.

#### Knowledge and Skills

The content areas of knowledge and skill are based on CACREP standards and New York State requirements for licensure as a mental health counselor. We also value, and demonstrate through our pedagogy, these knowledge and skill areas:

- self-knowledge
- clarity of written and oral communication
- a balance of theory and practice
- the demonstrated ability to apply knowledge to practice, and

- both the knowledge and use of empirically supported treatment modalities.

### Personal Qualities and Characteristics

The MHC program further seeks to facilitate the development and enhancement of personal qualities and attitudes in students which create a foundation for the successful practice of counseling:

- Flexibility and adaptability
- Respectfulness of others including diverse populations
- Receptivity to feedback
- Capacity to listen and attend
- Appropriate self-disclosure
- Clarity of communication
- Capacity for organization
- Reliability and follow through
- Genuineness
- Empathy, warmth and caring
- Confidence balanced with humility
- Commitment to excellence
- Professional integrity
- Ability to balance multiple life expectations and commitment to wellness
- Sense of humor

Additional information on personal qualities and how they are assessed is included in the section of the handbook regarding clinical instruction and in Appendix B.

There are numerous specialty areas in the profession of mental health counseling. At the present time, the Mental Health Counseling Program at St. John Fisher University has a clinical mental health counseling specialty focused on the care of adults and children in a variety of health and behavioral health settings.

*\*Note: This document provides an overview of information on the M.S. in Mental Health Counseling Program. Full details on the program, policies, and procedures are available in the St. John Fisher University Graduate Catalog.*

### Accreditation

In 2016, the Mental Health Counseling program was awarded a full eight years of accreditation from the **Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)**. CACREP accreditation provides recognition that the content and quality of the education offered by the accredited program has been evaluated extensively and meets standards set by and for the profession.

## **ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE**

The M. S. degree program in Mental Health Counseling admitted its first entering class in Fall 2004, functioning as an independent academic unit within St. John Fisher University. At that time, St. John Fisher University was organized into departments and was moving toward the formation of schools to accommodate growth and change in the University. St. John Fisher University is now organized into the following schools: the School of Arts and Sciences, the Ralph C. Wilson School of Education, the School of Business, the Wegmans School of Pharmacy, and the Wegmans School of Nursing. As of Summer, 2006, the Mental Health Counseling program became affiliated with the Wegmans School of Nursing. The MHC Program Director reports to the Dean of the School of Nursing, who in turn reports to the Provost of the University. The Provost reports to the President, who in turn reports to the Board of Trustees of the University. The Board of Trustees has ultimate decision-making authority for most matters pertaining to the overall health and well-being of the University.

The MHC Program Director represents the MHC program as a member of the Graduate Program Council. The Graduate Program Council considers recommendations for curriculum change at the graduate level, and also hears academic petitions regarding dismissal and requests to return to graduate study.

The MHC Director of Clinical Internships has primary responsibility for securing field placements for students approved for Practicum and Internship. The Director of Clinical Internships works with students, site supervisors, and faculty to ensure a positive field experience for agencies, clients, and students.

The MHC Program solicits nominations each year for student representatives. Representatives are nominated by classmates and selected by the MHC faculty. The student representatives fulfill a variety of roles. They share information with prospective students in quarterly Information Sessions scheduled by Graduate Admissions, and share perspectives with new students at New Student Orientation. They also act as information conduits between the student body and the MHC program. They represent the student body on the MHC Advisory Board at semi-annual meetings. The current student representatives for 2021-2022 are: Cassandra Martin, Casey Miller, and Adina Feldman.

## **MHC FACULTY AND STAFF**

The MHC Program has six and a half full-time faculty and one part-time administrative assistant. Adjunct faculty serve in a part-time capacity as needed. We usually employ one work-study student during the academic year.

The current faculty is as follows:

### **Rachel Jordan, Ph.D., LMHC**

Associate Professor

Office phone: 585-899-3858

email: [rjordan@sjf.edu](mailto:rjordan@sjf.edu)

**Clinical and Professional Interests:** Pro-active wellness strategies, stress reduction interventions, domestic violence treatment, sex offender treatment, and mental health screening and prevention.

### **Courses Taught:**

GMHC 500 – Mental Health Counseling as a Profession

GMHC 530 – Treatment Planning and Intervention

GMHC 550 – Counseling Practicum

GMHC 603 – Human Development in Counseling

GMHC 650 – Counseling Internship

### **Robert H. Rice Jr., Ph.D., LMHC**

Program Director and Associate Professor

Office phone: 585-385-7318

email: [rrice@sjf.edu](mailto:rrice@sjf.edu)

**Clinical and Professional Interests:** Counseling children, Play therapy, Childhood trauma, Clinical supervision, Counselor training initiatives, Anxiety, Autism, Spectrum disorders.

### **Courses Taught:**

GMHC 500 - Mental Health Counseling as a Profession

GMHC 550 - Counseling Practicum

GMHC 590 - Assessment and Intervention in Child and Adolescent Disorders

GMHC 650 - Counseling Internship

**Scott McGuinness, Ph.D., LMHC, Master CASAC**

Assistant Professor

Office phone: 585-385-7222

email: [smcguinness@sjf.edu](mailto:smcguinness@sjf.edu)

**Clinical and Professional Interests:** Addiction counseling, harm reduction, clinical supervision, complimentary treatment methods.

**Courses Taught:**

GMHC 540 - Group Theory & Process/Group Activity

GMHC 550- Counseling Practicum

GMHC 650 - Counseling Internship

GMHC 510 – Counseling Theories

**Gail H. Begley, MA, CPRP, LMHC, Master CASAC**

Assistant Professor

Office phone: 585-385-5329

email: [gbegley@sjf.edu](mailto:gbegley@sjf.edu)

**Clinical and Professional Interests:** Mental Health screening, prevention and intervention, chemical dependency screening, prevention and intervention, and vocational rehabilitation.

**Courses Taught:**

GMHC 520 – Assessment in Counseling

GMHC 610 - Adult Lifestyle and Career Counseling

GMHC 630 – Substance Use Counseling

GMHC 575 – Research Methods and Program Review



**Denise Curlee, Ph.D., LMHC**

Director of Clinical Internships and Visiting Assistant Professor

email: [dcurlee@sjf.edu](mailto:dcurlee@sjf.edu)

**Clinical and Professional Interests:** Mental Health skills, Sexual behavior treatment, Crisis and trauma counseling, family and couples counseling.

**Courses Taught:**

GMHC 500 – Mental Health Counseling as a Profession

GMHC 510 – Counseling Theories

GMHC 515 – Social and Cultural Diversity

GMHC 600 – Family and Partner Counseling

GMHC 620 – Crisis and Trauma Counseling

**Elizabeth Shannon, MS, MS**

**PMHNP**

PT Visiting Assistant Professor

email: [eshannon@sjf.edu](mailto:eshannon@sjf.edu)

**Courses Taught:**

GMHC 525-Psychopathology and Differential Diagnosis

GMHC 585-Biological Foundations of Behavior and Psychopharmacological Interventions

## **PROGRAM STRUCTURE, PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS, PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

### Program Structure

Students may take courses on a full-time or part-time basis (see recommended sequence of courses). Students are required to complete 60 credit hours, including 48 credits of required coursework and 12 credits of field work. The 60-credit program includes a supervised practicum experience with a minimum of 100 clock hours (3 credits) and a supervised internship with a minimum of 600 clock hours (9 credits). This application of counseling skills in community sites will allow students the opportunity to grow into effective mental health counselors, while being supervised by experienced mental health practitioners.

As most placement sites provide services to clients during regular weekday business hours, it is important for students to plan ahead for the time commitment that is required to complete the practicum and internship. It is generally not possible to complete these critical program components in the evening or on weekends. The typical internship requires 18 hours per week at the agency site.

Each field experience entails working in approved clinical sites under the direction of qualified site supervisors and faculty instructors. Readiness for placement in a clinical setting is based on a student's satisfactory completion of prerequisite academic courses (minimum GPA of 3.0) and the determination by faculty that the student demonstrates personal qualities that are widely accepted in the counseling profession as the foundation of effective counseling. These qualities include, but are not limited to, flexibility, respectfulness, receptivity to feedback, capacity to listen, appropriate self-disclosure, organization, reliability, commitment to excellence and wellness, and professional integrity. They are measurable and observable in the attitudes and behaviors demonstrated by students in written assignments, classroom discussions, peer group projects, role-plays, and interactions with faculty, staff and other students.

In the semester prior to anticipated placement in a clinical setting, faculty members familiar with the student will evaluate her or his performance on these qualities. Students who meet the criteria will be recommended for placement. Students who evidence deficiencies will have the opportunity to develop and implement a plan, with the aid and support of faculty, to demonstrate improvement. Students who fail to improve will not be allowed to continue in the program but will be encouraged to consult with their faculty advisor regarding alternative educational, training or employment activities.

### Professional Standards

This graduate program is accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP) and adheres to the professional standards and ethical guidelines of the American Counseling Association, the American Mental Health Counseling Association, and the National Board for Certified Counselors. The program is also registered with the New York State Education Department, Office of Higher Education. Rules of the Board of Regents, such as those defining good moral character and unprofessional conduct, are followed. Thus, decisions about admissions and continued enrollment in this program are consistent with CACREP standards, the

ethical guidelines of the profession, the laws of New York State and the policies of St. John Fisher University.

Professional standards, state rules, and ethical guidelines acknowledge counselors' responsibility to society and are mechanisms for accountability. Personal or professional conduct that is inconsistent with these standards, rules, and ethical guidelines, as well as with those cited in the St. John Fisher University handbook, may prohibit an applicant from being admitted into the Mental Health Counseling program. Students enrolled in the Mental Health Counseling program are expected to exhibit personal and professional conduct that is consistent with these standards, rules, ethical guidelines, and/or policies of St. John Fisher University both in the college setting or while working in practicum and internship sites. Students found to be in violation of these standards, rules, or guidelines will face appropriate action, which may include dismissal from the program and/or University.

### Student Designations

Graduate students are admitted with a certain status, depending upon the specific application decision and the student's individual circumstances. The admissions committee seeks to select candidates who are not only academically strong but who can benefit from the program and who will also contribute significantly to the learning experience of their peers. The admission decision will be based on an evaluation of all criteria rather than upon academic record alone.

#### **Matriculated**

Applicants who meet the program admission requirements qualify for matriculated status.

#### **Conditionally Matriculated**

Applicants who marginally meet the admission standards but appear to have potential for success in the program based on other evaluation criteria may be matriculated with conditional status. Conditional students can take courses for a maximum of two semesters and should meet with the program chair at the end of each semester to discuss their plan and progress. At the conclusion of the second semester, the program chair may remove the conditional status for students with a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher. All conditional students with a cumulative GPA below 3.00 will be referred to the Graduate Academic Standing Committee for consideration. The committee may place a conditional student on academic probation or dismiss the student from the program.

#### **Provisionally Matriculated**

Students are admitted on a provisional basis if supporting documentation is not complete at the time of admission. If all admission components are not in place by the date specified in the letter of acceptance, these students may not be allowed to register for any subsequent courses until their application requirements are satisfied. Official degree-bearing transcripts must be submitted and received within 30 days of the first day of class of the semester a student matriculates. If you do not submit complete transcripts by this time, you may be withdrawn from Fisher and not allowed to re-enroll until these transcripts have been received by the Office of Transfer and Graduate Admissions. Full graduate standing is granted when the documents are received in the Office of Transfer and Graduate Admissions by the date specified in the letter of acceptance.

## **Non-Matriculated**

Students with baccalaureate degrees from accredited undergraduate colleges may register for graduate coursework on a space available basis. These individuals must submit a transcript from the undergraduate institution indicating completion of a bachelor's degree and must complete a Non-Matriculated Form. Non-matriculated status does not indicate acceptance into a graduate program at Fisher. Students may be non-matriculated for only one semester and enroll in no more than six credits, after which they must submit an application for admission. Financial aid is not available to non-matriculated students.

## **Continuous Matriculation**

Maintenance of matriculation requires the successful completion of at least one graduate-level course at Fisher during the calendar year. Pre-approved transfer credit may be used to meet this requirement for continuous matriculation. Degree requirements existing at the time of admission will remain in force if the student maintains continuous matriculation. A student who discontinues enrollment for more than two semesters must apply for readmission. The student must meet any new requirements for admission, as well as any new requirements for the degree.

## Personal Development

It is strongly recommended that, during the course of this program, students engage in a personal counseling experience as a client for a minimum of six individual sessions. Students may avail themselves of the free counseling services offered through the St. John Fisher University Wellness Center, or may choose to seek services for a fee off-campus.

## Program Objectives

Upon graduation, the successful student in the Mental Health Counseling program will be able to:

- Demonstrate professional skills and personal qualities required for working as an effective counselor in an interdisciplinary mental health setting.
- Demonstrate a variety of differential diagnostic assessment skills consistent with the most current diagnostic manual.
- Demonstrate the ability to use a diverse range of evidence-based intervention strategies.
- Develop appropriate intervention plans based upon knowledge of culturally relevant variables in client care, including ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic levels, gender, sexual orientation, and disability status.
- Demonstrate professional behavior consistent with ethical guidelines of Mental Health Counseling professional organizations and regulatory agencies.

## PROGRAM CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS AND COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

### Curriculum

It is recommended, but not required, that students have completed undergraduate courses in Abnormal Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Research Methods, Theories of Personality, Statistics, and Tests and Measurement.

### Required Courses

Course #	Course Name	Credits
GMHC 500	Mental Health Counseling as a Profession	3
GMHC 510	Counseling Theories and Strategies	3
GMHC 515	Social and Cultural Diversity	3
GMHC 520	Assessment in Counseling	3
GMHC 525	Psychopathology and Differential Diagnosis	3
GMHC 530	Treatment Planning and Intervention	3
GMHC 540	Group Theory and Process	3
GMHC 550	Counseling Practicum	3
GMHC 575	Research and Program Evaluation	3
GMHC 585	Biological Foundations of Behavior and Psychopharmacological Interventions	3
GMHC 590	Child and Adolescent Disorders	3
GMHC 600	Family and Partner Counseling	3
GMHC 603	Human Development in Counseling	3
GMHC 610	Adult Lifestyle and Career Counseling	3
GMHC 620	Crisis and Trauma Counseling	3
GMHC 630	Substance Use Counseling	3
GMHC 650	Counseling Internship	9
<b>One elective:</b>		3
Varies each year		
<b>Total</b>		<b>60</b>

Complete course descriptions are available in the [Graduate Program Catalog](#).

### Electives:

One elective (3 credits) is part of each student's program of study. The elective offerings vary each year based on student and faculty interests and are typically offered in the summer. In any given years, the following electives may offered:

- Human Sexuality in Counseling
- Animal-Assisted Therapy

- ATOD Topics in Counseling (Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drugs)
- Complimentary Treatment Methods
- Thesis

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

### **Academic Policies**

General and specific academic policies are covered in the St. John Fisher University Graduate Catalog; please refer to this important document and familiarize yourself with the content.

Course requirements and grading should be addressed in course syllabi; students are encouraged to request clarification as necessary from course instructors early in the semester. The majority of MHC faculty share the same expectations of students in terms of attendance, graduate-level writing, and other policies. These are detailed in Appendix A, “The Fine Print”, and all students should familiarize themselves with these policies as your academic work will be evaluated per this criteria unless specified otherwise in the course syllabus.

### **MHC Program Grading Policies**

Each faculty member establishes grading criteria for his/her courses. The grading policies and criteria are outlined in the course syllabi each semester. Students should clarify any questions on grading policies with the course instructor. As noted above, “The Fine Print” (Appendix A) includes information on grading criteria.

### **MHC Program Graduation Requirements**

It is important to distinguish between “commencement” and “graduation.” Graduation from the M.S. program at St. John Fisher University indicates that a student has satisfactorily completed all degree program requirements. Commencement is an event which celebrates the completion of a program; however, participating in commencement does not necessarily indicate that a student has actually completed all requirements as students may be permitted to participate in commencement while still having 9 credits left to complete (with approval of the Program Director).

Students must complete all program requirements with a minimum cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 in order to graduate. In addition, the student must file a Petition for Graduation with the Registrar’s Office (see Graduate Catalog).

Students who wish to participate in commencement must file a Petition for Graduation with the Registrar's Office. The deadline for filing the Petition is generally around December 1 for May commencement; please check with the Registrar's office to confirm the deadline date. You should only file a Petition if you are sure you will complete the Spring semester with only 9 credits (or less) remaining to be completed over the summer. Students with more than 9 credits remaining at the conclusion of the spring semester will be able to participate in the following year's commencement ceremony. (See the Graduate Catalog for more complete information.)

### **Grievances/Appeals**

When an issue arises where there are conflicting opinions between a student and an instructor, the student must first make all reasonable attempts to work out a solution with the instructor. If the student and the instructor are unable to reach a solution, the student must then contact the program director. The student should be prepared to deliver all pertinent facts to the program director in order that he/she may make an informed decision. If the student and the program director are unable to come to an agreement, the student may make an appointment with the Dean of the School of Nursing to discuss the matter. The Dean of the School of Nursing may determine that the matter be taken up with the Graduate Program Council Academic Standing Committee, the Provost or Provost Designee.

### **Procedure to Appeal a Disability-Related Request**

In the event that a student wishes to appeal a University decision in response to a request for a reasonable accommodation, the students must submit a written appeal to the Office of Academic Affairs indicating the basis for the appeal within twenty calendar days of notification of the initial decision. The appeal will be forwarded to the appropriate University officer (the Provost or Provost designee for academic-related requests; the Dean of Students for non-academic-related requests). The Office of Academic Affairs will forward to the University officer receiving the appeal all documentation and related information submitted to the University in support of the request. The officer hearing the appeal may request additional information from the student, as well as seek expert opinion from sources outside the University. The student must cooperate if the opinion of an additional expert is sought. The officer hearing the appeal will meet with the student to discuss the request and may interview other individuals who have information relevant to the request. After interviewing the documentation and meeting with the student, the officer hearing the appeal may modify or sustain the original decision regarding the request for accommodation. The decision regarding the appeal will be made within thirty calendar days of receipt of the appeal.

### **MHC Program student retention and dismissal policy**

#### *At Risk Policy*

The MHC Program's "At Risk" classification is intended to identify and support students who are at risk for failing to meet any of the criteria necessary to be successful in the Mental Health Counseling Program and/or who have demonstrated behaviors that may be harmful to clients. Placement in the "At Risk" category prompts additional monitoring which may include, but is not limited to: leave of absence from the program, regularly scheduled meetings with advisor (frequency to be determined by circumstances), formal remediation plan, and reviews at faculty meetings. The "At Risk" classification represents an important part of the MHC Program's process for gatekeeping.

#### Procedure:

If a faculty member believes that a student meets any of the criteria identified below, she/he will propose that a student be included in the "At Risk" category. Students will then be added to the "At Risk" category if a majority of the MHC faculty believe that the student has met one or more of the criteria specified below. Students identified as "At Risk" will be notified of the faculty's decision by their advisor. Students will remain in the "At Risk" category for a period of one year following the most recent episode of concern or until graduation or dismissal from the program. The "At Risk" students will be reviewed at each faculty meeting. When warranted, specific high-risk behaviors will be identified, monitored, and used to determine if/when a student meets criteria for dismissal as per the Student Handbook.

#### Broad Criteria:

- Tardiness and absenteeism
- Emotional instability
- Academic deficiencies (delayed submission of assignments, incomplete and/or poor quality work, poor writing, other evidence of inadequate demonstration of required skills and knowledge, dishonesty)
- Interpersonal dysfunction (with students and faculty)



- Inadequate communications style/skills
- Intolerance of others' culture/lifestyle
- Disrespect for others
- Repeated concerns brought up at faculty meetings

*Essential Behaviors for all Graduate Students in the Wegmans School of Nursing*

The following behaviors and attributes are necessary to successfully complete graduate-level work in the Wegmans School of Nursing:

1. Emotional Stability:
  - a. Students must possess the emotional health required for the full utilization of intellectual abilities, the exercise of sound judgment, and the timely completion of responsibilities in their area of study;
  - b. Students must maintain mature, sensitive and effective relationships with clients, students, staff, faculty, other professionals and agency personnel under all circumstances, including highly stressful situations;
  - c. Students must function effectively under stress and adapt to environments that may change rapidly without warning and/or in unpredictable ways as relevant to their programs of study;
  - d. Students must demonstrate empathy for the situations and circumstances of others and appropriately communicate that empathy;
  - e. Students must acknowledge that values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and experiences affect their perceptions and relationships with others;
  - f. Students must examine and change behaviors when they interfere with productive individual or team relationships;
  - g. Students must demonstrate effective and harmonious relationships with the diverse academic, professional, and community environments relevant to their chosen programs of study.
  
2. Professional Conduct:
  - a. Students must reason morally and engage in the practice of their program of study in an ethical manner;
  - b. Students must abide by professional standards of practice as well as regulations for professional licensure;
  - c. Students must demonstrate compassion, honesty, responsibility, and tolerance.

*Retention and Dismissal: Implementation of the Essential Behaviors for Continuation and Graduation*

All students will be advised of the Wegmans School of Nursing Essential Behaviors for Continuation and Graduation during program orientation and via the St. John Fisher University MHC student handbook. Additional behaviors and attributes expected for successful completion of the Mental Health Counseling (MHC) Program are outlined by the Personal Qualities Assessment found in the MHC student handbook.

When students fail to adequately exhibit one or more of the above-noted essential behaviors, counselor educators have an ethical obligation to address these circumstances (see American Counseling Association [ACA] Code of Ethics, sections F.6-F.9). Specifically, times in which the Mental Health Counseling (MHC) program faculty may question a student's fitness for the program or the counseling profession may include, but are not limited to:

- (1) a student has achieved a GPA less than 3.0 or a grade in any course below C+;
- (2) a student's actions have been found in violation of campus policies;
- (3) a student is currently or has been involved in legal proceedings relevant to one's moral character;
- (4) a student engages in a violation of the ACA ethical standards;
- (5) a student violates the contractual agreement and policies of her or his clinical placement site; or
- (6) a student fails to demonstrate adequate remediation of personal and/or professional fitness deficits as measured by the Personal Qualities Assessment and outlined in the student's Action Plan, or any subsequent remediation agreement.

If a student's fitness for the program and/or the profession is in question, the following will occur:

1. **Problematic behavior documented:** Problematic behavior will be documented by faculty and placed in the student's record.
2. **Problematic behavior results in action:** If a pattern of problematic behavior, or a single, serious lapse in the essential behaviors, becomes evident, the steps below will be followed so that the student is informed that the student's continuation in the program is in jeopardy. All communication will take the form of an email sent to the student's St. John Fisher email address and a letter sent via postal mail to the last known address on record.
  - a. **Academic hearing:** The student will be informed by their academic advisor in writing that an academic hearing will be conducted with the Academic Appeals Committee, which consists of all full-time faculty members in the MHC program. This hearing will result in a decision by the faculty on the presence or absence of a violation and recommendations by the faculty on appropriate corrective measures for the student. If a faculty member is found to have a conflict of interest with the student, that faculty member will recuse him/herself from voting.
  - b. **Faculty decision:** Within 96 hours of the hearing, the student will be issued, in writing, a letter from the MHC Program director stating the results of the hearing. Examples of results of this hearing could include: (1) the student is not in violation of the policies and expectations of the MHC program and no further action is required; (2) the student will receive written recommendations for further remediation in the form of a contract outlining recommendations for remediation and clear expectations of future performance, to be signed by student and Program Chair; (3) The student will be required to take a mandatory leave of absence; or (4) the student will be dismissed from the program.
  - c. **Advisor meeting:** Upon receipt of the results of the academic hearing, the student's advisor will request a meeting with the student to discuss options for proceeding, including providing appropriate referrals and/or suggestions for alternative academic programs and/or career options. If a contract has been generated, the advisor will review such contract with the student and obtain the student's signature.

3. **Grievance Procedure:** The student has one week from issuance of the MHC Academic Appeals Committee's decision to appeal this decision. This appeal must be in writing and be directed to the Dean of the School of Nursing. In accordance with the appeals process outlined in the St. John Fisher University Graduate Catalog, should a student wish to appeal the Dean of the School of Nursing's decision, the student may submit subsequent appeals to the Provost and the Academic Standing Committee of the Graduate Program Council. See the Graduate Catalog for further information.

Should a referral for services be deemed appropriate, students may access campus resources including:

1. SJF Counseling Center- found in the Health and Wellness Center- 385-8280;
2. Academic skills enhancement is available through the Writing Center- (385-8185) and the Math Center (385-8407);
3. Career Services- 385-8050;
4. Campus Ministry- 385-8368

## **SPECIALIZED FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT, INSURANCE, AND TRANSPORTATION NEEDS**

### **MHC Training Lab Policies and Procedures**

The Mental Health Counseling training lab contains state-of-the-art technology designed to facilitate the development and growth of counseling skills for St. John Fisher University's M.S. in Mental Health Counseling students. We expect that all MHC students will use the utmost care when utilizing these facilities.

In order to provide a high-quality training experience in counseling skills, our facilities include five counseling/interview rooms with one-way mirrors, video cameras, and other specialized equipment. Students will be given an orientation to the use of this equipment, and the opportunity to sign up for individual use of these facilities to practice their skill development. The administrative assistant, work-study student, and faculty/staff will be available to assist with equipment questions and trouble-shooting. This specialized equipment should be treated with the utmost of care, as equipment breakdowns due to maltreatment are costly and time-consuming to repair. Please read all instructions and follow them closely for optimal equipment functioning. When you are uncertain, please ask for assistance on how to operate the equipment.

The five training rooms include 2 rooms for individual (one-on-one) sessions, one couples/family room, one group room, and one play therapy room.

To schedule time to use the training rooms, please fill in the schedule on each lab door.

Please respect the following training lab policies:

1. Reservations must be made to use the training labs as described above.
2. When you sign up, please be considerate of your classmates' need to use the labs and only sign up for three or four non-consecutive 60-minute time blocks. This will allow you 15 minutes to "setup", 30 minutes to conduct your session, and 15 minutes to "cleanup." It will be important for you to arrive in a timely way to set up for your session, hold your session, and collect your belongings so the

next person can come in. (If you check the sign-up calendars, you'll know if someone is immediately before or after you.)

3. Please remember to keep the main light switch in the control room OFF – otherwise people in the meeting rooms can see you, and this is very distracting.
4. Be aware that if you wear white when you're in the control room; the light reflects off of white clothing and again, the "clients" can see you moving around in the control room.
5. If other people are recording sessions in other meeting rooms at the same time, please turn the volume all the way down on the video monitor (NOT the control deck), or plug in the headphones to video monitor. Otherwise, everyone in the control room will hear what your client is saying. Likewise, keep the control room door *closed* so people passing in the hall do not look in and see your client on the video monitor.
6. If you have problems with the equipment, check the laminated instruction sheets in the control room; these will help you out. If the instruction sheets don't help, look for the "lab monitor" (faculty, staff, or work-study student) for that time frame. Please report any issues with the equipment immediately to the person on duty. If you can't find anyone, contact the OIT Service Desk at 385-8016.
7. Students are responsible for collecting their recorded materials from the control room and keeping those materials secure and confidential.

8. Please make sure to leave the training labs and control room neat and clean.

### **Mental Health Counseling Recorded Session Policy**

All students in the Mental Health Counseling Program at St. John Fisher University will be required to record counseling sessions for the purpose of education and skill improvement. Maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of persons recorded is our utmost priority so all recorded sessions must comply with the following guidelines.

1. All students must obtain written authorization to record sessions with clients during their fieldwork. Students must comply with all rules, standards, and practice guidelines of their sites regarding recording sessions and proper disposal of recorded materials.
2. Students need to obtain written authorization to record other MHC students or volunteer clients for classroom projects. Permission to Record forms are provided to students in the filing cabinet in the Master Control Room of the Mental Health Counseling Labs. Students must retain the Permission to Record form until the recording is deleted when the assignment is complete.
3. St. John Fisher University provides for recording and viewing recorded sessions through a secure server. Students are expected to review recorded sessions in private areas so that session information remains confidential.

### Devices

Unless a student's site has required recording equipment, all student recordings must be:

1. Digital (this includes phones, tablets, computers, digital recorders, and flash drives)
2. Password Protected
3. Of good audio and/or video quality (preferably more than 6 megapixels)

### Data Storage and Transfer

The *ACA Code of Ethics* and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) require that all devices with client data be:

1. Password protected
2. Never posted online at any sites or uploaded to cloud sites
3. Properly deleted and disposed of in the appropriate time frame relevant to the nature of the recorded materials

### Assessment Library Policies and Guidelines

The Mental Health Counseling Assessment Library is a resource provided to all MHC students. The library includes a variety of testing materials intended to help students become familiar with the skills of assessment and testing in mental health settings. Because of the value of these assessments, this room is kept locked and can be opened by a faculty or staff member or by calling to arrange to borrow the key from a faculty member. The library also includes books donated by faculty. These books are for review only and cannot be removed from the library.

1. This library is for the use of students in the Mental Health Counseling Program only. Any students who are not currently enrolled in this program must seek permission to use these assessments.
2. Students may remove testing items unless the items contain a "Do Not Remove" label. All items removed from this room must be signed out and returned within 1 week of being borrowed.
3. If a student wants to use a "Do Not Remove" item he or she must seek special permission from faculty to remove this item from the room.
4. Students are responsible for making sure that this library and the test materials are maintained with great care. Remember: These are extremely expensive resources and should be treated as such.

### Liability Insurance

All students beginning field work (practicum and internship) must maintain their own professional liability insurance, commonly known as malpractice insurance. (See section on clinical instruction.) Malpractice insurance is available at very reasonable rates for students through various professional associations. ACA provides it at no cost for student members. (See section on professional associations.)

### Transportation

Students must have access to reliable transportation for field work. Field placements are an extremely important part of your program, and punctuality and reliability are critical. Please plan for this.

## CLINICAL INSTRUCTION

### 1. Overview

Clinical instruction refers to 700 clock hours (a total of 12 of the 60 credit hours required to graduate from the program) of supervised experiences that are part of a student's practicum and internship. Often called "field work," these experiences constitute the professional practice component of the Mental Health Counseling Program for students who have met specific academic prerequisites and have demonstrated personal qualities commensurate with the role of a counselor. During this phase of their training, students engage in a range of supervised clinical activities, in approved settings, for the purpose of applying theory learned in the classroom, further developing counseling skills, and becoming familiar with the roles and responsibilities of mental health professionals. Their supervision by both agency staff and faculty instructors is intended to promote the acquisition of knowledge and the building of skills, preparing them to become professional mental health counselors.

### 2. Guidelines for Clinical Instruction

Consistent with the program's mission of providing an individualized instructional approach and developing the student's knowledge and skills to be an outstanding professional mental health counselor, the clinical instruction component is guided by the following principles:

- a) **Student-centered focus.** Students are active participants in the selection of their clinical settings. When searching for, identifying, reviewing and recommending a placement, faculty members are guided by the expressed interest of each student regarding preferred clinical population, treatment setting and style of supervision desired, and also by the student's demonstrated knowledge and skill. Although this process is strongly student centered, the decision of where the student will be placed ultimately rests with the Director of Clinical Internships who will determine which students are a good match for which sites. Once placed in a setting, supervision is tailored to the needs of the student and will emphasize, as needed and appropriate, the roles of teacher, consultant, coach and administrator.
- b) **Integration of theory with practice.** In the selection of community sites and in the supervision of the practice of clinical activities at those sites, faculty instructors will emphasize the application of theoretical and evidenced-based models of counseling. Faculty instructors will encourage site supervisors to do the same. This will be evident in discussions with students that promote case conceptualization and the use of counseling approaches and techniques that are rooted in theory.
- c) **Developmental approach to clinical experience.** The typical model of instruction begins with the student learning about the agency and its practices and observing the clinical work of the site supervisor and other experienced practitioners before moving into a co-counseling role and eventually assuming more responsibility as a solo practitioner under supervision. The decision about readiness to engage in more

independent activities is the joint responsibility of the site supervisor and student with input and monitoring from the faculty instructor.

- d) **Opportunity for broad and diverse clinical experiences.** Students are encouraged to complete their 700 hours in at least two different settings, thereby having the opportunity to engage in varied clinical experiences with populations that represent the ethnic, lifestyle and demographic diversity of the community. For example, a student may have a first placement in an outpatient clinic in a rural community serving persons who are primarily Caucasian and a second placement in an urban hospital setting serving persons from various ethnic and racial backgrounds. Different settings may also be defined as different programs within the same organization. Examples include a children's service and an adult service, a mental health service and a chemical dependency service or an inpatient program and a partial hospitalization (outpatient) program. In certain circumstances, community partners require a full year at their site. These cases are handled on an individual basis by the Director of Clinical Internships (DCI) with the involved student and agency staff.
- e) **Awareness of contextual factors in counseling.** Education and support for students in field work will promote an understanding of the "systems" that impact their work with clients. These systems include, but are not limited to, the agency in which the student is practicing with its policies and procedures; the service delivery system that includes other agencies and programs in the community with their established methods of referral and collaboration; and the family and social network of the client with various kinds and levels of interest in, and support of, the client's care and welfare.
- f) **Counselor wellness.** In recognition of the physical and emotional strain that often occurs in the process of practicing a new role that is stressful for even the experienced practitioner, attention is consistently given to the student counselor's health and wellness. Accomplishments are recognized and praised. Areas of deficiency are regarded as opportunities to learn and improve. It is the responsibility of the faculty instructor to ensure that individual and group supervision are safe environments in which to process what one does as a counselor-in-training and what it feels like. Balancing work and relaxation is promoted. If personal issues interfere with the student's role as counselor, personal counseling or a Leave of Absence will be suggested.

### 3. The Counseling Practicum Experience (GMHC 550)

- a) **Description.** The practicum is designed to provide students with an initial exposure to the work of a mental health counselor. (Rationale: the work meets the definition of MH counseling as defined in NYS, but not all settings regard themselves as MH settings and not all are licensed as such). Because settings differ with regard to the clinical presentation of clients served and the type of clinical services offered, the learning objectives are generic. They include developing core counseling skills (interviewing, relationship building), assessing a client's problems and strengths,



doing case conceptualization to demonstrate understanding of clients from a theoretical perspective, and beginning to identify one's own theoretical orientation. Students in practicum will typically work with a small number of clients selected by their site supervisor and they will do both individual and group work. Clinical observation and co-counseling will dominate the early part of the student's practicum. Independent counseling experiences will occur more frequently toward the end of practicum. Site and faculty supervision will be consistent and extensive during practicum. The faculty will supervise each student during 90 minutes of group supervision and 1 hour of individual or triadic supervision throughout practicum. Students are also expected to have one hour of supervision at their practicum site.

**b) Requirements.** In order to be placed in a clinical setting for practicum, a student must have earned a GPA of 3.0 or higher in all course work and have completed the following core courses:

- GMHC 500 - Mental Health Counseling as a Profession
- GMHC 510 - Counseling Theories and Strategies
- GMHC 515 – Social and Cultural Diversity
- GMHC 520 - Assessment in Counseling
- GMHC 525 - Psychopathology and Differential Diagnosis
- GMHC 530 - Treatment Planning and Intervention
- GMHC 540 - Group Theory and Process

In addition to this academic requirement, readiness for placement in practicum will be based on a determination by faculty members that the student demonstrates personal qualities and characteristics that are widely accepted in the counseling profession as the foundation of effective counseling. These qualities include, but are not limited to, flexibility, respectfulness, receptivity to feedback, capacity to listen, appropriate self-disclosure, organization, reliability, commitment to excellence and wellness and professional integrity. These qualities and characteristics are observable in the attitudes and behaviors that students demonstrate in written assignments, classroom discussions, peer group projects, role plays, and other interactions with faculty, staff and other students. These qualities and characteristics have been defined in behavioral terms and organized into a measurement instrument, Personal Qualities Assessment (Document A in Appendix B). In the semester prior to the anticipated placement in practicum, faculty members familiar with the student will evaluate her/his performance on these qualities. Students who meet the criteria will be recommended for placement. Students who evidence deficiencies will have the opportunity to develop and implement a plan, with the aid and support of faculty, to demonstrate improvement. (See Appendix C for the appropriate format for a plan of remediation.) Students who fail to improve will not be allowed to continue in the program, but will be encouraged to consult with their faculty advisor regarding alternative educational, training or employment opportunities.

**c) Schedule and Hours.** The practicum occurs exclusively in the summer session following the first year for full time students and the second year for part-time

students. The Counseling Practicum is a three credit hour course with a maximum of **six** students in each section. Students are expected to spend a minimum of 100 clock hours to fulfill the requirements of the practicum. This includes time spent being oriented to agency policies and procedures, observing the provision of clinical services, providing clinical services and engaging in other activities such as record-keeping, case conferences, in-service trainings and supervision with site supervisor and faculty instructor. A minimum of 40 hours must be spent providing “direct service” which is defined as “interactions with clients that includes the application of counseling, consultation or human development skills.”

#### **4. The Counseling Internship Experience (GMHC 650)**

- a) Description.** As the capstone experience of mental health counselor training, the internship experience builds on the knowledge and skills learned in academic courses and in the clinical experiences of the Counseling Practicum. Working under the individual supervision of a qualified mental health professional at the site and group supervision facilitated by a faculty instructor, students are expected to demonstrate increasing levels of mastery of the basic skills of counseling; conduct and communicate the results of clinical assessments; make diagnoses according to the DSM V; plan and implement treatment strategies that are grounded in theory and/or are consistent with evidenced-based interventions; maintain appropriate clinical records; participate in the full range of experiences at the site to include, but not limited to, interdisciplinary team meetings, in-service trainings, case management and clinical consultation activities, and collaboration and coordination of services with other care providers; and adhere to professional and ethical standards of the profession as promulgated by the American Counseling Association.
- b) Requirements.** In order to begin the first internship placement (usually in the same agency as the practicum), the student must have completed the practicum with a “satisfactory” grade and continue to maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher in all courses. In subsequent semesters, continued enrollment in internship depends on the student earning a “satisfactory” grade in the prior semester’s internship experience and continuing to maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher. Personal qualities and characteristics remain important requirements for internship. They are built into the formal evaluation by site supervisors and faculty instructors during the practicum and internship each semester. If at any time a student exhibits behaviors or characteristics that are deemed inappropriate and could potentially compromise client safety, they will be removed from the field.
- c) Schedule and Hours.** The internship typically begins in the semester immediately following the practicum and is in the same setting as the practicum. In subsequent semesters, the internship will occur in a different agency or in a different program within the same agency. In this way, a student will have the opportunity to serve different populations and become familiar with different age and/or clinical populations, treatment methods, and program philosophies. The total internship

experience is 9 credit hours of coursework that extends over three semesters. Students register for three credit hours of internship per semester. The minimum number of clock hours that is associated with three credit hours is 200 per semester, with the requirement that 80 hours of the 200 hours are to be spent in providing “direct service” as defined above. Over a 15-week semester, this averages to 18 hours per week, of which at least 7 hours must be direct service.

## 5. Service Type and Location of Clinical Settings

a) **Service Type.** The programs that are selected for practicum and internship placements include those which serve adults, adolescents and children. They may be part of large behavioral health systems that provide a comprehensive array of services to persons with mental illness and/or addictions or small organizations with a limited treatment focus and target population. Organizations that host students include both not-for-profit and for-profit organizations and many are licensed, funded or certified by a government oversight organization. All settings employ mental health counselors and/or allied behavioral health practitioners such as social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists and nurses. Organizations or programs, by service category, include:

- In-patient psychiatric services in state-operated, general hospital and VA facilities
- Comprehensive psychiatric emergency programs and mobile crisis services
- Partial hospital programs (mental health)
- Continuing day treatment programs and PROS (mental health)
- Intensive psychiatric treatment programs (mental health)
- Outpatient clinics (mental health)
- Residential treatment programs (mental health)
- Supervised and independent living programs (mental health)
- Chemical dependency inpatient rehabilitation services
- Residential chemical dependency programs for youth
- Outpatient rehabilitation services (chemical dependency)
- Methadone maintenance outpatient programs
- Community residential and supportive living programs (chemical dependency)
- Family service agencies
- Children’s service agencies and programs
- Employee assistance programs
- College counseling centers
- Faith-based counseling programs
- Criminal justice- based evaluation and treatment programs
- Crisis Services and Assessments (mental health)

b) The agencies and programs that affiliate with the Mental Health Counseling Program are located in the greater Rochester area to include Monroe County and nearby counties.

## **6. Agreement between St. John Fisher University and Affiliated Organization**

A formal agreement is established with all organizations and programs before any student is allowed to enter a field experience at that facility. The Agreement details the purpose and mutual responsibilities and expectations of the University and Organization. It is signed by the Vice President for Financial Affairs of the University and the Director of Clinical Internships for the Mental Health Counseling Program. The Organization's Executive Director or the person responsible for contracts will sign on behalf of the Organization. This Agreement covers most of the essential elements that are contained in this section of the Student Handbook.

Once an agreement is reached between the student, the site supervisor, and the Director of Clinical Internships regarding a placement, including start and end dates and other logistical details of the field work, the student may not make any changes to that agreement without the approval of both the Director of Clinical Internships and the assigned site supervisor. Thus, communication between students, faculty and site supervisors, and the Director of Clinical Internships is essential.

## **7. Coordination of Placements**

The program has designated a faculty member to serve as the Director of Clinical Internships (DCI). In this role, the faculty member will establish a formal relationship (see Agreement) with the organization. Discussions with key organization staff will determine that the organization is able to provide students with supervised clinical experiences that meet the learning objectives of practicum or internship. A key responsibility of the DCI is ensuring that the organization is able to assign site supervisors who meet education and experience requirements that are consistent with the standards of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). This is described below.

Students are not expected to locate their own placements and are prohibited from initiating contact with organization staff to set up a practicum or internship. The Director of Clinical Internships (DCI) is responsible for meeting with students to assess their preference for placement options (type of setting, population and clinical orientation of organization) and recommending appropriate organizations. However, if a student has a preference for placement in a particular organization or wishes to be supervised by a specific staff person in an organization, the student is invited to make this known to the DCI and this will be seriously considered in the student's placement decision. Similarly, if a student is interested in an organization or program with which there is not an existing formal agreement, the student should make that fact known and the establishment of a field placement site will be explored. The DCI will coordinate connections between sites and students and will make every effort to ensure that students have an opportunity to interview at a setting of preference, however, if a student refuses settings offered their options will be limited. Additionally, a student may only interview at one placement at a time and no others until a decision about placement is reached.

## 8. Expectations of Students

These expectations apply to students who have met the academic prerequisites for practicum or internship and have consistently demonstrated the personal qualities and characteristics that are widely accepted in the profession as the foundation of effective counseling. The procedures for assessing these characteristics have been described earlier in this Handbook.

### a) Pre-placement activities

- Meet with the DCI or other Internship placement designee during the Spring semester (for first placement) and Fall semester (for second placement) to discuss placement options and plan for interviews with staff of the organization
- Prepare/update resume and complete application materials if requested
- Interview with agency staff, report outcome to Director of Clinical Internships and decide on whether to accept placement if offered
- Complete all pre-placement requirements of agency such as submission of personal medical information, child abuse registry data, motor vehicle information and attend organization orientation meetings as directed
- Establish schedule (days and hours of on-site experience) with site supervisor
- Obtain and maintain professional liability insurance

### b) In-placement activities (differences between practicum and internship are noted).

- Prepare practicum or internship plan with site supervisor, sign and submit to faculty instructor
- Adhere to schedule for on-site attendance, keep a log of activities, submit log as directed in course syllabus
- Adhere to the dress code of the agency and learn and follow all relevant policies and procedures of the agency to include those which protect the privacy and safety of clients, their families, staff members and others involved in the care of clients
- Attend one hour of individual supervision per week with the site supervisor at the agency, one hour of individual or triadic supervision per week with the faculty instructor on campus (practicum only) and one and one-half hours of group supervision with peers that is facilitated by the faculty instructor each week on campus. Students are expected to come prepared to all supervision sessions, reporting about their clinical experiences with clients, identifying issues and barriers to providing care, seeking guidance about effective assessment and treatment strategies and requesting help to meet the learning objectives. In group supervision, students are to present cases for discussion. The agenda may also include some didactic instruction on common topics relevant to clinical practice and professional and ethical behavior.
- Digitally record or audio recording a sample of assessment and counseling sessions with clients for review by the faculty instructor. The number of required recordings will be specified in the course syllabus. The faculty instructor will typically review the recordings in individual or triadic supervision sessions and offer feedback at that time. When possible, recordings should also be presented to

the site supervisor for critique and feedback, especially in settings when the site supervisor is unable to directly observe the student's counseling on a regular basis. All recordings must follow the established policies and procedures of the agency with regard to obtaining prior written authorization for recordings from adult clients or from parents or guardians for clients under 18 years of age. Students and faculty are expected to keep recordings in a secure place and maintain confidentiality of the information shared in the sessions and return them to the site supervisor for proper disposal. Some organizations will not allow recordings to be removed from their premises; in this case, the faculty instructor will need to go to the site to critique the recording.

#### Alternatives to Recording:

- If the client selected for recording refuses to be recorded after initially agreeing and another client is not available in the timeframe to meet the due date for submission or if the organization is not allowing students to record its clients, a written critique of a counseling session observed by the supervisor is an acceptable substitute. When time permits, this option should first be discussed with the faculty instructor.
- If the organization allows it, another option is having the faculty instructor directly observe a session conducted by the student at the site. The instructor must first agree to this option and it must be cleared by the organization's administrative personnel.
- Prepare and submit a clinical summary with each recording (or interviewer rating form for sessions observed) using a common format to provide uniformity for documentation regardless of the setting or theoretical model used. Additionally, students are expected to complete chart notes as required by the agency.
- Complete other assignments as described in the syllabus. These include, but are not limited to, written reports about the agency (agency profile) and analyses of clinical activities and case studies that demonstrate understanding of theoretical concepts.
- Complete self-evaluations and evaluations of faculty instructor, site supervisor and field work experiences.

## 9. Requirements, Orientation, and Responsibilities of Site Supervisors

### a) **Requirements.** Site supervisors are required to have:

- a minimum of a Master's degree in counseling or a related field and relevant credentials, certifications or licenses for their profession; and
- knowledge of the program's expectations, requirements and evaluation procedures for students.

It is the responsibility of the Director of Clinical Internships to confirm that the prospective site supervisor meets the aforementioned education and experience requirements. The program has adopted the list of approved credentials or certifications for its site supervisors that is consistent with what is currently used in

NY State to qualify as a supervisor for persons seeking the Mental Health Counselor license. Exceptions are allowed if the prospective supervisor meets CACREP standards. A Site Supervisor Information Sheet is used to collect and document information about the education and experience of the site supervisor.

**b) Orientation.** Orientation to the Mental Health Counseling program is initiated by the Director of Clinical Internships in conversations with organization managers and site supervisors. An orientation packet and/or webcast orientation will be provided that includes information about the mission and goals of the program, the curriculum and course descriptions, mental health counseling as a profession and the requirements for licensure in NYS as a Mental Health Counselor. Additionally, site supervisors are provided a written description of their responsibilities prior to the student's practicum or internship. They are also oriented to the background and learning objectives of the students who are screened and recommended to them for placement. Once a student is placed, the student's faculty instructor is responsible for keeping the site supervisor informed of student-specific or program-based information. There is an annual orientation and training meeting for all site supervisors to share experiences and concerns and offer suggestions for improving clinical instruction.

**c) Responsibilities of Site Supervisors**

- Conduct or arrange an orientation for students covering the organization's physical plant, relevant policies, procedures and practices and an introduction to other staff and their roles.
- Work out a schedule with students for the days and hours that they will spend on site, taking into consideration the student's established school schedule, hours of operation, best times to engage with clients, availability of staff for regular and emergency support, and opportunities to engage in the full range of organization activities (internship especially), such as staff meetings, in-service trainings and case conferences.
- Provide students with the opportunity to observe their (or colleagues') clinical work and/ or engage in co-counseling.
- Facilitate the screening of clients for assignment to students with consideration given to each student's abilities and readiness in relation to the client's needs.
- Ensure that students are assigned space for counseling that is private and adequate for their work with individuals, couples, families and groups. In addition, space and equipment will be provided to write notes and conduct other business that is required, such as phone calls to other providers and families, as appropriate.

- Provide students with the opportunity to videotape or audiotape a sample of their counseling sessions for critique by them and by the faculty instructor. (see “Alternatives to Taping” – pg. 30)
- Meet with students individually (or with one other student) for the equivalent of one hour of supervision each week to hear about and critique the student’s clinical work, address ethical and professional issues, assess readiness for assignment of more clients or more difficult clients and give feedback on the quality of record-keeping. The bases for supervisory feedback will include direct observation, critique of tapes, reports from other staff and review of chart notes.
- Work cooperatively with students in an effort to help them meet the established requirements for total clock hours and minimum direct care hours as indicated on the student’s practicum or internship plan.
- Meet with the student’s faculty instructor on site at least one time each semester and maintain phone and email contact throughout the semester to review and discuss the student’s performance. Immediately report any problems or concerns such as non-attendance, tardiness or misconduct related to ethical or professional standards.
- Immediately report to the faculty instructor any conduct by the student that violates organizational policy or indicates that the student is having difficulty performing her/his responsibilities. Participate with faculty members and the student in any corrective or remedial action.
- Provide a written formal evaluation of student progress in relation to learning objectives at the end of the semester.



## 10. Requirements, Orientation and Responsibilities of Faculty Instructors

**a) Requirements and Orientation.** Each regular or adjunct program faculty member who provides individual or group supervision in the practicum or internship component of clinical instruction must have:

- a doctoral degree and/or appropriate clinical preparation, preferably from an accredited counselor education program;
- relevant professional experience and competence in counseling; and
- relevant training and supervision.

It is the responsibility of the Director of Clinical Internships to meet with all adjunct faculty members to orient them to their role of faculty instructor of practicum and internship students and provide on-going support and supervision.

**b) Responsibilities.** The responsibilities vary based on whether the student is in a practicum or internship. These differences are noted.

- Prepare and disseminate, each semester, a course syllabus for practicum or internship that includes a description and learning objectives, assignments and due dates, evaluation and grading and other course requirements as stipulated by the University.
- Provide individual (or triadic\*) supervision for one hour per week. This is required during practicum and is optional during internship. It is the time and place to review and critique tapes and to help the student tie together theory and practice. Faculty supervision should complement the supervision occurring at the agency site.  
(\*Triadic supervision consists of one faculty instructor meeting with two students at one time.)
- Provide group supervision for one and one-half hours per week with up to 10 students. This is required throughout the time the student is in the field placement (practicum and internship). The faculty instructor is expected to facilitate peer learning as well as provide didactic instruction when appropriate.
- Critique audio and/or video tapes and documentation of clinical services. The student will be provided with oral and/or written feedback about areas of strength and areas that need improvement or further development.
- Provide an orientation and regularly communicate with site supervisors. This includes describing the core learning objectives for the placement each semester and any specific goals for the assigned student. Additionally, the faculty instructor will establish with the site supervisor a plan for communication about the progress of the student. This will include scheduled visits to the site to meet with the

supervisor and the student and the distribution and collection of formal evaluation reports about the student's performance. It will also include a timely response to emergent questions or concerns about the student's conduct and the facilitation of discussions and plans for corrective action.

- Monitor course requirements. This includes regular review of the student's activity logs, personal insight narratives and all other written assignments to ensure that the student is meeting the requirements of the practicum or internship. If the student is falling behind schedule in meeting requirements or problems are identified with the quality of work or professional and ethical conduct, these concerns will be addressed immediately with the student and a plan of corrective action will be developed, implemented and reviewed. The problems and plan will be documented and the student's academic advisor will be notified immediately.
- Provide the student with a Faculty instructor evaluation and assign a grade. The faculty instructor will obtain and review the final evaluation from the site supervisor and integrate this information with observations made in individual and group supervision, with the critique of tapes and with an assessment of the quality of other assignments. Ultimately, this evaluation will result in the assignment of a grade in accordance with the criteria in the syllabus. Students will receive a formal grade of S = Satisfactory or U = Unsatisfactory. Faculty instructors may also assign a grade of M = Marginal to the categories listed above. Students who receive "M" grades in 3 or more areas may be required to complete an action plan or take a leave of absence.
- In practicum, one faculty member may be meeting with the student for individual or triadic supervision and another will facilitate the group supervision. These faculty members will communicate regularly during the semester regarding the student's performance. The faculty member meeting weekly with the student for individual or triadic supervision will also be meeting with the site supervisor and will be responsible for assigning the student's final grade.

## **11. Miscellaneous Items**

- a) Hours of internship in different settings. In keeping with the guideline of having a broad and diverse clinical experience, students may work in more than one setting during the same semester. Students are responsible for maintaining separate logs to account for hours in different settings.
- b) Clinical experience at employment site. Students may complete some of their clinical instruction (practicum and/or internship) in the organization in which they are employed under the following conditions: (a) the setting allows for the development and practice of mental health counseling skills consistent with the instructional objectives of the practicum and/or internship; (b) the setting (e.g., a

program of the organization) cannot be a setting in the organization in which the student was a regular employee prior to the beginning of the student's placement in that setting; (c) the site supervisor cannot be the student's employment supervisor.

## **PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

We encourage students to participate in professional associations relevant to the work of a mental health counselor. There are a number of helpful national, regional, state-wide, and local organizations which may be of interest. Student membership rates are often quite affordable, and this is a great way to expand your training options in areas of specialization and also to begin networking for future career opportunities. A few of these organizations, with their web address, mission statements and student membership fees (accurate as of July 2009'), are outlined below.

### **NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

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

The American Counseling Association is a not-for-profit, professional and educational organization that is dedicated to the growth and enhancement of the counseling profession. Founded in 1952, ACA is the world's largest association exclusively representing professional counselors in various practice settings.

**ACES – Association for Counselor Education and Supervision** [www.acesonline.net](http://www.acesonline.net)

The Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) emphasizes the need for quality education and supervision of counselors in all work settings. Through the accreditation process and professional development activities, ACES strives to continue to improve the education, credentialing and supervision of counselors.

**AMHCA – American Mental Health Counseling Association** [www.amhca.org](http://www.amhca.org)

The mission of the American Mental Health Counseling Association is “To enhance the profession of mental health counseling through licensing, advocacy, education and professional development.”

**ASGW – Association for Specialists in Group Work** [www.asgw.org](http://www.asgw.org)

The purpose of the Association for Specialists in Group work shall be to establish standards for professional and ethical practice; to support research and the dissemination of knowledge; and to provide professional leadership in the field of group work. In addition, the Association shall seek to extend counseling through the use of group process; to provide a forum for examining innovative and developing concepts in group work; to foster diversity and dignity in our groups; and to be models of effective group practice.

**NBCC – National Board for Certified Counselors** [www.nbcc.org](http://www.nbcc.org)

The National Board for Certified Counselors, Inc. and Affiliates (NBCC), an independent not-for-profit credentialing body for counselors, was incorporated in 1982 to establish and monitor a national certification system, to identify those counselors who have voluntarily sought and obtained certification, and to maintain a register of those counselors.

**NCDA – National Career Development Association** [www.ncda.org](http://www.ncda.org)

The National Career Development Association (NCDA) is a division of the American Counseling Association (ACA). The mission of NCDA is to promote the career development of all people over the lifespan. To achieve this mission, NCDA provides service to the public and professionals involved with or interested in career development, including professional development activities, publications, research, public information, professional standards, advocacy, and recognition for achievement and service.

### **NEW YORK STATE ORGANIZATIONS**

**NYMHCA – New York Mental Health Counselors Association** [www.nymhca.org](http://www.nymhca.org)

NYMHCA is the advocacy organization representing the clinical counselors of New York State. We worked to obtain licensure, and our continuing role is to protect and enhance the rights of counselors to practice our profession.

**NYACES – state affiliate of ACES (see above)**

**NYASGW – affiliate of ASGW (see above)**

### **REGIONAL AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS**

**Mental Health Counselors of Greater Rochester (affiliate of NYMHCA)**

**<http://www.mentalhealthcounselors.org/>**

Mental Health Counselors of Greater Rochester (affiliate of NYMHCA) exists to advance the profession of Mental Health Counseling and clinical excellence through education, networking and peer support. We are committed to enhancing interdisciplinary relationships and wellness.

**NARACES – North Atlantic Regional affiliate of ACES (See above)**

**[www.naraces.org](http://www.naraces.org)**

The purpose of the Association, in accordance with the purposes of ACES, shall be: to advance counselor education and supervision in order to improve guidance, counseling, and student personnel services in various settings of society; to be concerned with matters relevant to the training and supervision of counselors in all settings including schools, agencies, colleges, universities, and government settings; to be actively supportive of the accreditation of counselor education programs in an effort to improve the education and credentialing of counselors in the North Atlantic region; to be dedicated to the continuing professional development and renewal of its members through a regional conference which includes presentations designed to appeal to a broad spectrum of supervisors, practitioners and counselor educators.

**RAGPS – Rochester Area Group Psychotherapy Society [www.ragps.org](http://www.ragps.org)**

The Rochester Area Group Psychotherapy Society (RAGPS) is a community-based professional organization devoted to providing a forum for the expression of ideas and sharing of knowledge related to the theory and practice of group psychotherapy.

## **LICENSURE AS A MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR**

As of Fall 2009, all 50 states require licensure for the practice of mental health counseling. In New York State, that law took effect on January 1, 2006. The New York State law is both a “title” law and a “scope of practice” law. That is, a person cannot call themselves a mental health counselor (title) unless they are licensed; and they cannot perform the duties (scope of practice) associated with the mental health counselor title unless they are licensed.

If you think you may relocate to another state at some point in the future, it is to your benefit to investigate the licensure requirements in your destination state(s), as requirements vary. At this time, there is no reciprocity between New York State and any other state; so although you may become licensed in New York State, there is no guarantee that you will be licensed in another state unless you meet their specific requirements.

The M.S. program in Mental Health Counseling at St. John Fisher University is approved by the New York State Education Department for the education component of licensure. There are three components to licensure: education, examination, and experience. Completion of the M.S. degree in Mental Health Counseling at St. John Fisher University indicates that you have met New York State’s requirements for education. You must also complete a state-required examination and 3,000 hours of post-master’s degree supervised experience. A limited permit is required to begin the 3,000 hours of post-master’s practice. Details of these and all MHC licensure requirements are available at the website of the Office of the Professions of New York State:

**<http://www.op.nysed.gov/prof/mhp/mhclic.htm>**

Faculty provide information about licensure in various courses throughout the program; however, it is the responsibility of each student to be aware of the New York State policies and the procedures necessary to become licensed. The program, faculty and St. John Fisher University have no authority over the licensure process. Our role and responsibility is to offer the educational program necessary for licensure as per our approval as a New York State registered program.

## COMMUNICATIONS AND ADVISING

### Communications

MHC Program faculty and staff use 2 primary methods to contact students outside of class: email, and telephone. Please check your mail regularly for communications from the faculty and staff. You may leave mail for full-time faculty and staff with the Administrative Assistant. Faculty and staff will use your student St. John Fisher University email addresses (ending in sjf.edu) for all email communication. If you prefer to use a different email account, please consult OIT (Office of Information Technology) for instructions on how to forward your sjf.edu account to your preferred email account. Please do not ask instructors to mail to separate accounts; it is impossible for us to keep track of all these separate requests and accounts. We may occasionally contact you by telephone; therefore, we ask that you keep us apprised of any changes to your telephone or home mailing address. Please submit address and phone changes to the MHC Administrative Assistant. In addition to these methods of sharing information, the bulletin boards in the Student Lounge and hallway (3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Wegmans School of Nursing) are used to post information regarding job openings, professional association memberships, on-campus activities of interest, and workshop/conference information relevant to MHC.

As noted in an earlier section, MHC program student representatives play an important role in funneling information to MHC staff and faculty about program issues (not about individual student issues, which should be addressed one-on-one between student and faculty/staff).

### Inclement Weather

Classes at St. John Fisher University are rarely cancelled due to weather. However, if the University determines that classes should be cancelled, the local media will be notified. A cancellation decision for evening classes is usually made by 4pm or earlier. All local TV stations (10NBC, WROC-TV8, 13WHAM-TV, Fox, and YNN) will carry this information. In addition, most local radio stations will be contacted. There will also be a message on the Fisher Home Page.

### Advising

**In accordance with standards in the St. John Fisher University Faculty Statutes, the American Counseling Association's (ACA) Code of Ethics and accreditation guidelines from the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the following statement describes the duties and responsibilities of academic advisors in the M.S. in Mental Health Counseling Program at St. John Fisher University.**

1. Students have an assigned faculty advisor at all times during enrollment in the program. Students, with their faculty advisor, develop a planned program of study within the first 12 months of graduate study.
2. The program faculty must conduct a systematic developmental assessment of each student's progress throughout the program, including consideration of the student's academic performance, professional development, and personal development. Consistent with established institutional due process policy and the ACA code of ethics and other relevant codes of ethics and standards of practice, if evaluations indicate that a student is not appropriate for the program, the student's faculty advisor, with the assistance of the program faculty, must help facilitate the student's transition out of the program and, if possible, into a more appropriate area of study.

3. Faculty Advisors in the Mental Health Counseling Program must:

Build an effective working relationship with each advisee.

Help the advisee to understand and navigate the academic and administrative processes of the university.

Be knowledgeable about the Mental Health Counseling Program(s) and the published academic rules and regulations of St. John Fisher University. Faculty advisors are also knowledgeable about the ethical, legal, and regulatory aspects of the Counseling profession, are skilled in applying that knowledge and make students and supervisees aware of their responsibilities.

Inform the advisee of degree requirements and communicate and emphasize the advisee's responsibility for satisfying degree requirements.

Discuss with the advisee academic performance and its implications for successful completion of the MS in Mental Health Counseling Program.

Establish, post, and maintain office hours throughout the semester

Maintain an up-to-date program of study including pertinent documentation regarding advisee's progress.

**Documentation of Effective Advising may include but is not limited to:**

- a. Self-evaluation
- b. Evaluation by Program Director, Dean of the School, or Provost
- c. Peer evaluations
- d. Systematic gathering of student opinion

**TRANSFER CREDITS**

A student may request up to 9 credits in transfer. A form for this purpose can be obtained from the Registrar's Office or on the St. John Fisher University website. These courses must be successfully completed at an accredited institution with a grade of B or higher at the graduate level. The courses must be the substantial equivalent of a similar course in the MHC program. Requests for transfer credit must be accompanied by a course description, and preferably a course syllabus. The student's advisor will request the faculty member who teaches that course at St. John Fisher University to review the materials to determine whether or not the course is the substantial equivalent. The student will be informed of the instructor's determination. Transfer credits must be taken at an accredited institution within six years of entering St. John Fisher University.

If a student wishes to complete a course at another institution in order to complete a St. John Fisher University MHC program requirement, the student must submit course description information in advance of registering for that course to the advisor, who will then request a review by the faculty member who teaches that course at St. John Fisher University. Students should be aware that there may be financial aid implications to taking a course at another institution; questions regarding such implications should be discussed with the Financial Aid Office at St. John Fisher University.



## **CAREER SERVICES**

The St. John Fisher University Graduate Catalog outlines the assistance provided by the Center for Career and Academic Planning office. This includes career and educational exploration, job search workshops, individual counseling, and placement activities. Please refer to the Graduate Catalog for more details on these programs and activities. The Center for Career and Academic Planning office is located in on the main floor of the Lavery Library), by phone at 585-385-8050, or go to the website <http://www.sjf.edu/campus-services/careers/>

In addition to these services provided by the Center for Career and Academic Planning office, the MHC faculty and staff receive and post notices of job openings on bulletin boards in the Wegmans School of Nursing Student (3<sup>rd</sup> floor). These positions include those that would be of interest to current students as well as those who are completing the M.S. degree and entering the field with a limited permit to practice as a MHC.

## **REQUESTS FOR LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION**

Students approaching completion of the MHC program at St. John Fisher University often ask faculty for letters of recommendation for employment or for study at the doctoral level. It should not be assumed that such an endorsement will be given. Each faculty member has the discretion to agree to write such a recommendation, or to decline to do so. It is in each student's best interests to conduct themselves in such a way that a faculty member would be inclined to agree to recommend him/her for employment or for continued study.

When requesting a recommendation, please make a timely request; at least 2 weeks in advance of the deadline date. Include complete information, such as:

- To whom it should be addressed, where it should be sent, the title of the position for which you are applying or name of program where you are applying.
- Identify the competencies or personal qualities you wish to be addressed.
- Title of the course(s) you completed with the faculty member from whom you are requesting the letter, the semester in which you completed the course, the final grade you received and any other outstanding achievements in that course.
- Identify the deadline date.

## Appendix A

### THE FINE PRINT: RULES AND OTHER IMPORTANT STUFF ABOUT HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THIS COURSE

#### A. Academic Integrity

All students, regardless of level or school, are responsible for following the St. John Fisher University Academic Integrity Policy in addition to any other individual school's or program's academic expectations and/or professional standards. Every student is expected to demonstrate academic integrity in all academic pursuits at all times. If a student suspects that another student has violated the Academic Integrity Policy, he or she should contact the instructor for that course and provide support for that suspicion. Any finding of responsibility and associated sanctions for a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is retained per the University records policy. All students are expected to be familiar with the details of the [Academic Honesty Policy](#)."

#### B. Attendance

The attendance policy for this course follows the guidelines included in the St. John Fisher University Graduate Catalog. This program educates professionals who will be responsible for facilitating growth and adjustment in others-- a significant responsibility indeed! As counselors-in-training, the mental health counseling program expects that you will take your education as seriously as a professional counselor takes her or his professional job. Accordingly, the MHC program's expectation is that students will attend all classes and required class activities. Students are allowed to miss up to two classes without penalty or risk of course failure, although individual instructors may require additional work to make up missed classes. If three classes are missed, for any reason, the student is required to initiate discussions with the faculty member to create a plan of remediation to make up the course time missed. Students who miss four or more classes will be assigned a grade of F for that course, or if within the university's timeframe for withdrawal, will have the opportunity to withdraw from the course and register for that course in a subsequent semester. Please refer to the Graduate Catalog and Academic Calendar for more details on withdrawal dates and policies. For public health reasons, we ask that you stay at home and do *not* attend class when you are suffering from a contagious illness. This is good for you and better for those who don't want to catch whatever you have. Each day, a few students are absent and it is impossible for us to re-teach the material for every class. Therefore, **if you miss a class, please contact a reliable classmate to find out what you have missed.**

#### C. Confidentiality

In courses that are part of the MHC program, the education and training process aims at the development of self-reflective helping professionals, and students often share information of personal importance with their peers in the classroom. You are encouraged to share yourself to your own limits of growth, learning, and comfort. Maintaining confidentiality is normatively expected of students in this course; however, it cannot be guaranteed due to the nature of the group setting.

#### D. Grading

Grades will be assigned in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the St. John Fisher University Graduate Catalog. Please note that successful graduate study requires a minimum grade of B. Students may be required to repeat courses for which they earn a grade of B- or below. Fair grading is very important to us. Grading, in our opinion, is a very subjective exercise; however, we attempt to bring as much objectivity to it as possible. We do this by using rubrics for many of the assignments. The rubrics spell out the criteria that we use to evaluate performance; an example of this is the "Guidelines for Written Work" provided below regarding our expectations for graduate-level writing. We try to use a variety of opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning. We assign a number of points to each of these opportunities, then simply add up the total number of points you have earned at the end of the semester. These points are then translated to a final grade:

A	93 or more points earned
A-	89-92 points
B+	85-88 points
B	82-84 points
B-	79-81 points
C+	75-78 points
C	72-74 points

Grades below a C are cause for concern about your continuation in the program. We will discuss this individually should a final grade fall in the unacceptable range (B- or below).

#### E. Participation

Class participation is absolutely critical to the success of the course. Each person is an important part of group discussion and other in-class learning activities, and therefore regular attendance, punctual arrival, and active participation are required. Come to class prepared to take part in discussions and activities. Likewise, full and equal participation in assigned group projects is expected.

#### F. Personal Counseling

Sometimes students find that the material we explore as part of the course is troubling, upsetting, or triggers emotional reactions that are difficult to manage. We are all Nationally Certified and/or NYS-licensed counselors; however, due to conflict of interest issues, we cannot counsel individuals who are currently students in our courses. We strongly encourage you to avail yourself of the services provided by the university Wellness Center if you find yourself encountering emotional turmoil, whether in relation to the course or other issues. The Wellness Center offers individual counseling, and can be reached at 385-8280. This is a wonderful opportunity to directly experience the helping professions at work.

#### G. Writing

Please familiarize yourself with the following “Guidelines for Written Work.” If you would like to improve your writing, we urge you to take advantage of the services provided by the Writing Center. Call 385-8151 to make an appointment.

### **Guidelines for written work**

1. Format: Written assignments are to be typewritten and double-spaced, with your name at the top, following APA guidelines. Use 10- or 12-point font size. Leave 1” margins at top, bottom, and sides. Check spelling and grammar, and cite references appropriately.
2. Due Dates: Written work that is handed in late will be penalized 2 points for each day late. Specifically, assignments are due when class convenes on the date specified. If the assignment is not turned in at that time, it is late.
3. Audience: Who are you writing for? Please assume an educated audience. Specifically, your target should be a person in the social sciences, perhaps not in this course, who has little or no knowledge of your particular topic.
4. Evaluation Criteria: In evaluating your written work, we will be looking for the following components:
  - a. **Quality writing skills** – Good writing is *essential*. If we can’t understand your writing, we are limited in our ability to appreciate your ideas. Avoid rambling! Be clear, concise, and well-organized in presenting your material. There is no excuse for typos or spelling errors at this level of study. Clarity of expression is *very* important. Beyond the basics of good grammar and

sentence structure, quality writing includes staying within stated guidelines for paper length, using appropriate academic writing, and citing sources as necessary when including ideas and phrases that are not original to you. A direct quote must *always* be cited with author, date, and page number. The same is true when you are quoting statistics. Confused about citation? Check out the library's helpful resources on Mental Health Counseling, including the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.

Do not hesitate to seek assistance from the reference librarians, and also from the Writing Center. Your tuition dollars pay for these services, so take advantage of them!

- b. Theme development** – Be sure to articulate your central message clearly and succinctly. Your title (if you are using one) should reflect this focus. The introduction and conclusion of your paper should refer to your theme in specific terms. Avoid making claims that are not supported by evidence. Cover a few issues in depth, rather than spreading yourself too thin. Show depth in expanding your thoughts, and by providing arguments to support your position. I.e., how did your reading for the course (or lectures, discussions, etc.) bring you to this conclusion?
- c. Use of examples/evidence** – Illustrate your point(s) with specific cases/examples and data from your readings and class work, but don't get lost in the details. Get to the point. Use evidence to support your claims. Always cite statements that are not your original thought.
- d. Creativity and original thinking** —Don't just summarize the texts/articles you've read; your writing should reflect your own unique interpretation and ideas. Originality is encouraged. Use an intriguing introduction to grab the reader's interest. Don't confuse originality with uninformed opinions. Acquaint yourself thoroughly with the topic first.
- e. Integration and application** – Demonstrate not only your knowledge of theoretical perspectives, but also your ability to integrate theory and practical applications. Apply your ideas to specific populations, settings, or situations. Note the implications of theory for practice. Connect ideas from across the course or even with material in other courses.

### **University Policy Concerning Students with Disabilities**

St. John Fisher University has a continuing commitment to providing reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students with disabilities who may need some accommodation to fully participate in this class are urged to contact the Student Accessibility Services Office, as soon as possible, to explore what arrangements need to be made to assure access. The Student Accessibility Services Office (Kearney 300) can be reached by phone (585-385-5252) and email ([sas@sjf.edu](mailto:sas@sjf.edu)).

### **Diversity Statement**

At Fisher and the Wegmans School of Nursing, respect, open-mindedness, and integrity are of the utmost importance, and we pledge to demonstrate our commitment to these values to all members of the greater Rochester community and our own campus. We are committed to educating our faculty, students and community around issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Faculty are committed to confronting and addressing issues of inequality and injustice through teaching, research, mentorship, and service as we seek to create a safe space and inclusive environment where students are encouraged to expand the boundaries of their knowledge in the pursuit of understanding.

## Appendix B

### Faculty Evaluation of Student for Readiness for Fieldwork: Personal Qualities Assessment

#### Purpose and Process

Faculty members of the Mental Health Counseling Program will have the opportunity to observe many personal qualities and characteristics of students that create a foundation for being a caring and effective counselor. These qualities are manifested in a student's attitudes and behaviors that are demonstrated in classroom discussions, peer group projects, reflective writings and other written assignments and in individual interactions with other students, faculty and staff. Moreover, faculty members have the responsibility to help students recognize and enhance the qualities and characteristics that facilitate effective counseling and to encourage and support them in making needed changes in attitudes and behaviors in order to become more effective helpers. Faculty members are in a unique position of noticing when personal growth and development is occurring, when students are making efforts to recognize and change their attitudes and behaviors and when they are struggling to change.

Therefore, in addition to evaluating a student's academic performance for readiness to engage in fieldwork, faculty members are also expected to evaluate each student's personal qualities as a basis for recommending placement in a fieldwork site. Faculty members who are familiar with the student will evaluate the student on a core set of personal qualities. The qualities that have been selected for evaluation are considered relevant to the practice of counseling regardless of one's theoretical orientation or preferred clinical population or practice setting. These qualities are defined in behavioral terms to allow for rating on a scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high). Students who consistently demonstrate attitudes and behaviors that meet the criteria of a specific quality will merit high ratings (4 or 5) in that area. Students who behave in ways that do not consistently reflect a specific quality, as defined, will merit low ratings (1 and 2).

Those students who earn faculty ratings of 4 or 5 on most personal qualities (with no rating lower than a 3) will be considered ready for placement. Those students who are rated less than 3 in two or fewer personal qualities categories, but have demonstrated improvement, will need to show further improvement by way of a remediation plan in order to be recommended for a fieldwork placement (see Appendix C for Plan format). Those students who earn faculty ratings of less than 3 in three or more areas are not considered ready for placement and the faculty may initiate dismissal procedures at their discretion. Any student who earns faculty ratings of 1 and 2 in most areas will not be considered appropriate for placement and the faculty will meet to consider dismissal of the student from the program.

Students are encouraged to continuously seek constructive feedback from peers, faculty, and advisor throughout the program and certainly in advance of the formal PQA process. As part of the application process, the student will complete a PQA self-rating and submit it to the faculty advisor. This self-assessment will be considered in the overall evaluation. The faculty will submit a rating on each personal quality and may provide comments that support that rating. The faculty advisor is expected to meet with the student to review the resulting ratings, comments and readiness for placement. For a student who is not recommended, the advisor is responsible for reviewing the student-developed remediation plan (as outlined in Appendix C), and for recommending to other faculty when the student is ready for placement, or for initiating dismissal if necessary.

## Personal Qualities Assessment – Self Assessment

**Directions:** This assessment is intended to help in the determination of readiness for fieldwork. On the following pages you will find descriptions of personal qualities and characteristics that are widely accepted in the counseling profession as the foundation of effective counseling. These qualities and characteristics are observable in the attitudes and behaviors that you demonstrate in written assignments, classroom discussions, peer group projects, role plays and other interactions with faculty, staff and peers. Faculty members who are familiar with you will be completing this assessment based on their experiences. This is your opportunity to engage in a self-assessment of the same qualities as defined in this form. You are invited to submit it to your academic advisor who will share it with those faculty members who are evaluating you.

Please rate yourself using a scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high) to indicate the extent to which you believe that you have demonstrated the specific quality or characteristic that is described. Consider your attitudes and behaviors in the classroom, in peer and faculty interactions and in other settings where these qualities are manifested. Please support your rating with relevant comments.

See below. Anchor words are the extremes. Please rate the *presence/frequency* of each quality.

### Flexibility and Adaptability

This quality is most evident when you consistently demonstrate willingness to change or compromise in the face of new information, but don't change merely to be liked or to avoid situations of being challenged about your views and needing to defend them. This quality is least evident when you are rigid and unyielding about the value of another's opinion and/or hold on to your way of thinking about and doing things, even when other ways are reasonable and appropriate for the situation.

1	2	3	4	5
never	sometimes	usually	mostly	consistently
(<10%)	(~25%)	(~50%)	(~75%)	(>90%)

**rigid**  
**unyielding**

**flexible**  
**adaptable**

Comments:

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## **Respectfulness of Others including Diverse Populations**

This quality is most evident when you consistently convey an attitude of respect, in both verbal and non-verbal communication, for the capability and worth of others and seek to understand them in terms of what makes them different. It means honoring individual differences such as culture, race, ethnicity, family structure, gender, age, socioeconomic status, and other individual differences without needing to always agree with what others do or say based on these differences. This quality is least evident when you are judgmental and critical of others in words and actions (e.g., gestures) or reject or minimize the capability and worth of others or attempt to impose your views and values on others.

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
never sometimes usually mostly consistently  
(<10%) (~25%) (~50%) (~75%) (>90%)

**judgmental  
critical**

**respectful  
valuing**

Comments:

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## **Receptivity to Feedback**

This quality is most evident when you consistently accept feedback in a respectful way by saying or doing things which indicate that you have or will benefit from hearing what others think. You may not always agree or feel bound to act on the feedback received, but you communicate appreciation for the effort of others in giving feedback. This quality is least evident when you react negatively to feedback by displaying one or more of the following behaviors- anger, annoyance, frustration, defensiveness, excessive/exaggerated self-criticism, or withdrawal- thereby leaving the well-intended source of feedback feeling like the effort was unappreciated or uncalled for.

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
never sometimes usually mostly consistently  
(<10%) (~25%) (~50%) (~75%) (>90%)

**defensive  
negative**

**appreciative  
openly receptive**

Comments:

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## **Capacity to Listen and Attend**

This quality is most evident when you consistently demonstrate a listening and attentive attitude when speaking to others. This includes exhibiting a physical presence in posture, eye contact, head movement, etc. that indicate interest in what others are saying, and projecting a mental presence by concentrating on the ideas and themes raised by others. This quality is least evident when you are visually distracted or abrupt or select only part of a conversation to listen and react to, cut in or talk over others, or seem pressed to get in the last word.

1	2	3	4	5
never	sometimes	usually	mostly	consistently
(<10%)	(~25%)	(~50%)	(~75%)	(>90%)

**selective listening**  
**distracted**  
**abrupt**

**attentive**  
**focused**

Comments:

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## **Appropriate Self-Disclosure**

This quality is most evident when you only share information about yourself that fits the nature and purpose of the interaction. When personal information is revealed, it is tasteful, relevant, and is not upsetting, distracting, or confusing to others. This quality is least evident when you disclose personal information that is unnecessary for the nature and purpose of the interaction or is actually or potentially overwhelming and confusing to others or shifts the focus of attention to yourself and is primarily self-serving or self-aggrandizing.

1	2	3	4	5
never	sometimes	usually	mostly	consistently
(<10%)	(~25%)	(~50%)	(~75%)	(>90%)

**unnecessary**  
**detracts from task**  
**self-serving**

**useful**  
**relevant**

Comments:

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## Clarity of Communication

This quality is most evident when your thoughts and ideas are consistently clear and direct, and leave no doubt of the intent of the message. Thoughts are expressed in language that is understandable thereby communicating knowledge about the others' capability to comprehend what is being said. This quality is least evident when you communicate your views in an ambiguous or indirect way and leave confusion about the intent of the message or when the language used is inconsiderate or oblivious to the capacity of the listener to understand the message.

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
never sometimes usually mostly consistently  
(<10%) (~25%) (~50%) (~75%) (>90%)

**ambiguous**  
**confusing**  
**incomprehensible to listener**

**clear**  
**direct**  
**understandable**

Comments:

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## Capacity for Organization

This quality is most evident when you are consistently planful and orderly in thinking about and performing tasks, set priorities, are disciplined and task-oriented, and impose the right kind of structure on yourself to be productive without being unreasonably obsessive about things. This quality is least evident when you come across as scattered or unfocused in ideas and actions, appear to think and behave in a frenzied, pressured way, and often leave things to the last minute.

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
never sometimes usually mostly consistently  
(<10%) (~25%) (~50%) (~75%) (>90%)

**scattered**  
**unfocused**  
**frenzied**  
**procrastinate**

**organized**  
**orderly**  
**planful**

Comments:

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## Reliability and Follow Through

This quality is most evident when you are consistently dependable, reliable, and follow through with tasks and assignments in a timely and thorough manner. This includes meeting deadlines, being punctual with meeting attendance, being prepared and having a reputation as one who can be counted on to do your part when functioning as a team or project member. This quality is least evident when you miss deadlines, are tardy with meeting attendance, are not prepared or do not complete projects, and are not regarded by others as a reliable team or project member.

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
never sometimes usually mostly consistently  
(<10%) (~25%) (~50%) (~75%) (>90%)

**tardy  
unprepared  
unreliable**

**timely/thorough  
prepared  
dependable**

Comments:

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## Genuineness

This quality is most evident when you are real, authentic and congruent in interactions with others; what one sees in you is consistently portrayed in a variety of situations and circumstances. This quality is least evident when you lack a sense of being consistently comfortable with yourself and come across as if wearing a mask or playing a role that changes to fit the situation.

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
never sometimes usually mostly consistently  
(<10%) (~25%) (~50%) (~75%) (>90%)

**phony  
deceptive  
inconsistent**

**real  
authentic  
congruence in actions and words**

Comments:

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## **Empathy, Warmth and Caring**

This quality is most evident when you consistently communicate, in words and actions, an accurate understanding of what others around you are feeling or thinking; when you are truly “in tune” with others by verbal and nonverbal actions and reactions, and make an effort to know what it is like to be in the other person’s shoes; and when you consistently convey warmth, caring and concern for others in your interactions with them. This quality is least evident when you say or do things that communicate having missed the mark about what others think or feel; when you impose your views about what is going on or should be done, without being in tune with the true thoughts and feelings of others; when you inaccurately conclude what and why another is thinking or feeling or are behaving in a certain way; and when communicate in a way that lacks warmth, caring and compassion for the thoughts and feelings and experiences of others.

1	2	3	4	5
never	sometimes	usually	mostly	consistently
(<10%)	(~25%)	(~50%)	(~75%)	(>90%)

**misinterpreting  
off the mark  
distant/uncaring**

**empathic  
accurate  
caring/concerned**

Comments:

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## **Confidence Balanced with Humility**

This quality is most evident when you act with self-assurance by consistently expressing your thoughts and feelings in a clear, deliberate and unassuming manner. This quality is least evident when you “put on an airs,” flaunt knowledge or skills, bring attention to yourself (e.g., asking questions to promote a conversation that puts on display what you know).

1	2	3	4	5
never	sometimes	usually	mostly	consistently
(<10%)	(~25%)	(~50%)	(~75%)	(>90%)

**arrogant**

**modestly self-assured**

Comments:

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## **Commitment to Excellence**

This quality is most evident when you are open to new learning and examining your own values and use all avenues of learning (classroom, readings, assignments, peer and faculty input, etc.) to grow and develop professionally. When a gap in knowledge is discovered or a deficit in a personal quality is uncovered, you will take the initiative to acquire new information, improve and change. This quality is least evident when you do the minimum amount of work to get by; when gaps in knowledge or deficits in personal qualities come mostly from the repeated feedback of others rather than from an honest self-appraisal; and when any meaningful change in the acquisition of knowledge or the demonstration of skills requires repeated reminding and reinforcement in excess of what is expected of a graduate student.

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
never sometimes usually mostly consistently  
(<10%) (~25%) (~50%) (~75%) (>90%)

**requires repeated external motivation  
seeks lowest acceptable standards  
restricted growth**

**self-motivated  
flexible learning styles  
committed to self-improvement**

Comments:

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## **Professional Integrity**

This quality is most evident when you are consistently honest and trustworthy in dealing with others and accept and admit to your shortcomings and limitations in knowledge and skills. This quality is least evident when you are deceitful or stretch the truth or fail to honor a commitment to keep something in confidence or take credit for something that is not deserved or act with knowledge and authority in an area about which you are not trained or competent.

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
never sometimes usually mostly consistently  
(<10%) (~25%) (~50%) (~75%) (>90%)

**deceitful/deceptive  
dishonorable  
unethical**

**honest/trustworthy  
honorable  
ethical**

Comments:

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## **Ability to Balance Multiple Life Expectations and Commitment to Wellness**

This quality is most evident when you recognize and accept your capacity to handle multiple life responsibilities such as family, school, work, and avocational pursuits. This includes being realistic in setting limits on time spent in various roles, adjusting your schedule to accommodate changes in responsibilities, eating healthily, and getting adequate sleep and exercise in order to function effectively. This quality is least evident when you typically engage in multiple activities without considering the time or energy needed to accomplish tasks, fail to recognize your limits, push yourself to the neglect of health and well-being and get frustrated with yourself because the quality and/or timeliness in completing tasks are inferior to your own standards.

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
never sometimes usually mostly consistently  
(<10%) (~25%) (~50%) (~75%) (>90%)

**poor time management  
overextended  
frenzied**

**organized  
attentive to self-care  
balanced**

Comments:

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## **Sense of Humor**

This quality is most evident when you do not take yourself too seriously, especially during difficult times; when you can acknowledge to yourself and others the value of looking at the “lighter side” of life to maintain a balance; when you enjoy laughing with others and recognize laughter as a way of reducing tension and as an important aspect of social discourse. This quality is least evident when your relationships with others are consistently serious; when you are unable or unwilling to laugh at yourself when doing so may ease tensions and give evidence of your humanness; or when you go to the opposite extreme by having a joke at the expense of others or carrying on with humor in social settings when it is no longer funny or appropriate for the situation.

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
never sometimes usually mostly consistently  
(<10%) (~25%) (~50%) (~75%) (>90%)

**inappropriate expressions of humor  
absence of humor**

**humor as adaptive  
appropriate expressions of humor**

Comments:

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## Appendix C

### Writing a Remediation Plan using the S.M.A.R.T Model

As part of the Remediation/Action Plan development process, students will utilize the S.M.A.R.T approach to demonstrate that their plan offers specific, measurable, realistic, and time-limited goals and benchmarks. SMART stands for:

**Specific:** the student will state what exactly they are going to do, what changes will take place as a result of their proposed plan, and how, and how the student intends to implement the proposed plan.

**Measurable:** the student's proposed goals/objectives must be quantifiable or measurable.

**Attainable/Achievable:** The student's proposed goals must be attainable within the proposed time frame and with the available resources and support.

**Realistic/Relevant:** The proposed plan must directly lead to changes in the key main areas of noted deficiencies as noted on the results of the PQA and other areas as identified by faculty.

**Time bound:** The student must include in their remediation plan a reasonable time frame within which the stated goals and objectives will be accomplished.

If an Action Plan is submitted which does not include these components, the student's advisor will return it with request for modification.