



STUDENT HANDBOOK

Master of Arts in Mental Health Counseling

School of Graduate & Professional Programs

Nyack College

**Rockland Campus
350 N. Highland Ave.
Nyack, NY 10960**

**N.Y.C. Campus
2 Washington Street
New York, NY 10004**

2016-2017 Edition

WELCOME to AGSC

On behalf of the faculty and staff of the Alliance Graduate School of Counseling (AGSC), in the School of Graduate & Professional Studies, I want to warmly welcome you to the field of mental health counseling. We offer two degrees:

MA-Mental Health Counseling

MA-Marriage and Family Therapy

You have chosen to enroll in the MA-Mental Health Counseling, seeking to prepare yourself for a profession where healing of the individual begins by acknowledging that we are a bio-psycho-social-spiritual being. As Helen Harris Perlman stated:

“People are whole in any moment of their living. They operate as physical, psychological, social entities, whether the problem is one of neurotic anxieties or of inadequate income; they are product-in-process, so to speak, of their constitutional make-up, their physical and social environment, their past experience, their present perceptions and reactions, and even their future aspirations. It is this physical-psychological-social, past-present-future configuration that they bring to every life-situation they encounter.”

AGSC is committed to prepare students for the role of mental health counselors who are emotionally mature, intellectually sound, and professionally competent. Aligned with the 2016 CACREP Standards, we will provide you with the professional **knowledge**, facilitate the acquisition of the **clinical skills**, and promote the personal **dispositions** you will need to “empower diverse individuals, families, and groups” to reach their “mental health, wellness, education, and career goals.” (2014 ACA Code of Ethics).

This Student Handbook contains invaluable information regarding the curricular and training requirements of the degree, as stipulated by the Board of Regents of New York State. The Handbook also contains the institutional academic policies and procedures of Nyack College.

Dr. Carol Diaz Robles
Associate Dean, AGSC

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I. NYACK COLLEGE

Mission Statement

Nyack College, a Christian and Missionary Alliance educational institution, through its undergraduate, graduate and seminary programs, pursues its historic mission of preparing men and women to take the whole Gospel to the whole world.

Core Values

Nyack College and Alliance Theological Seminary seek to exalt Jesus Christ and fulfill their mission by being:

Socially Relevant: Preparing students to serve in ministerial, educational, healing, and community-building professions.

Academically Excellent: Pursuing academic excellence in the spirit of grace and humility.

Globally Engaged: Fostering a global perspective within a multi-ethnic and multicultural Christian academic community.

Intentionally Diverse: Providing educational access and support to motivated students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

Personally Transforming: Emphasizing the integration of faith, learning, and spiritual transformation.

Philosophy of Education

“Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is just, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things.”

Philippians 4:8

In keeping with this wisdom, Nyack College is committed to providing its students a broad education based upon the liberal arts and rooted in the historic Christian faith. Thus Nyack College is a Christian liberal arts college dedicated to pursuing, integrating, communicating, and applying truth.

Pursuit of Truth: Nyack College is committed to the PURSUIT of truth in God’s Word and God’s world. The pursuit of truth in God’s Word provides the conceptual framework within which we interpret God’s world and humanity’s place in it. The pursuit of truth in God’s world requires that we investigate and be responsible stewards of the physical world and that we foster and cherish human intellectual and cultural achievements.

Integration of Truth: Truth is whole. Thus we seek to INTEGRATE truth in God’s Word with that discovered in God’s world.

Communication of Truth: Truth must be COMMUNICATED with clarity and precision. For this reason we seek to cultivate the ability to read carefully, think critically, and speak and write clearly.

Application of Truth: Truth must be internalized and APPLIED in personal attitudes, behavior, and in service to others. Thus we seek to educate and develop the whole person.

Nyack College’s holistic approach to truth is foundational to its commitment to PREPARE students for service. This preparation occurs in its liberal arts and professional programs. We acknowledge a special responsibility to prepare vocational and lay Christian workers who communicate truth in ways consistent with God’s Word and relevant to God’s world.

History

Nyack College's founder is widely recognized as one of the foremost figures in the American missionary movement. Dr. A.B. Simpson resigned a prestigious New York City pastorate to develop an interdenominational fellowship devoted to serving unreached people. Simpson's view was shared by a wide group of men and women, including mainline church leaders, laborers, and theological scholars. This ever-growing alliance was bound together by a desire to inspire the church to fulfill its Great Commission of world evangelization.

An important step towards making their vision a reality was the founding of the Missionary Training Institute, the first Bible college in North America. This school was the forerunner of Nyack College. Thus, from its beginning in New York City in 1882, Nyack College has been devoted to the concept of education as preparation for service.

Today Nyack College, an accredited liberal arts college, continues to fulfill the vision of its founder. It is an educational institution rooted in the historic Christian faith, serving The Christian and Missionary Alliance, the church, the community and the world. Nyack College seeks to produce broadly educated persons who are prepared for advanced study, careers, and civic responsibility.

It is committed to promoting Christian knowledge, moral maturity, and spiritual development in its students, and to preparing them for lives of ministry and service. To achieve these objectives, the institution offers traditional and non-traditional undergraduate and graduate programs to a coeducational, ethnically diverse student body. Additional graduate programs are offered through Alliance Theological Seminary.

Statement of Faith

- There is one God, who is infinitely perfect, existing eternally in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- Jesus Christ is true God and true man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He died upon the cross, the just for the unjust, as a substitutionary sacrifice, and all who believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood. He arose from the dead according to the Scriptures. He is now at the right hand of the Majesty on high as our great High Priest. He will come again to establish His Kingdom of righteousness and peace.
- The Holy Spirit is a divine person, sent to indwell, guide, teach, empower the believer, and convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.
- The Old and New Testaments, inerrant as originally given, were verbally inspired by God and are a complete revelation of His will for the salvation of man. They constitute the divine and only rule of Christian faith and practice.
- Man was originally created in the image and likeness of God; he fell through disobedience, incurring thereby both physical and spiritual death. All men are born with a sinful nature, are separated from the life of God, and can be saved only through the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The portion of the impenitent and unbelieving is existence forever in conscious torment; and that of the believer, in everlasting joy and bliss.
- Salvation has been provided through Jesus Christ for all men; and those who repent and believe in Him are born again of the Holy Spirit, receive the gift of eternal life, and become the children of God.
- It is the will of God that each believer should be filled with the Holy Spirit and be sanctified wholly, being separated from sin and the world and fully dedicated to the will of God, thereby receiving power for holy living and effective service. This is both a crisis and a progressive experience wrought in the life of the believer subsequent to conversion.
- Provision is made in the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ for the healing of the mortal body. Prayer for the sick and anointing with oil are taught in the Scriptures and are privileges for the church in this present age.
- The Church consists of all those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, are redeemed through His blood, and are born again of the Holy Spirit. Christ is the Head of the Body, the Church, which has been commissioned by Him to go into the entire world as a witness, preaching the gospel to all nations. The local church is a body of believers in Christ who are joined together for the worship of God, for edification through the Word of God, for prayer, fellowship, the proclamation of the gospel, and observance of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- There shall be a bodily resurrection of the just and of the unjust; for the former, a resurrection unto life; for the latter, a resurrection unto judgment. The Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is imminent and will be personal, visible, and premillennial. This is the believer's blessed hope and is a vital truth, which is an incentive to holy living and faithful service.

Source: Nyack College Institutional Catalog, 2016-2017 (online)
http://www.nyack.edu/files/NYACK_Catalog_2016-17.pdf

Accreditation

Nyack College is chartered by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. Its curricula are registered with the New York State Education Department and approved for the training of veterans under Public Laws 550 and 894.

Questions and inquiries should be directed to:

New York State Education Department
Office of Higher Education and the Professions
Cultural Education Center, Room 5B28
Albany, New York 12230
(518) 474-5851

Nyack College is accredited by Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. Questions and inquiries should be directed to:

Commission on Higher Education
Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools
3624 Market Street History and Mission
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104
(215) 662-5606

Nyack College in New York City has been granted “Center” status by the New York State Education Department. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education has designated Nyack College – New York City as a “Branch Campus” of Nyack College.

Alliance Theological Seminary is accredited by The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada.

Nyack College is listed by the United States Department of Justice for training of foreign students.

II. AGSC Faculty Directory / Student Support Staff

AGSC Faculty Directory

Dr. Bennett Schepens
Assistant Provost
Dean of the School of Graduate &
Professional Programs
(845) 770-4543

Dr. Craig Ellison,
Director Emeritus

Dr. Michael Gillern
Assistant Professor of Pastoral Counseling
(845) 770-5737

Dr. Charles Joanides
MFT Internship Director
(845) 770-5782

Dr. Marcia Lucas
MHC-NYC Program Director
Assistant Professor of Counseling
(646) 378-6160

Dr. Ching-Ching Ruan
Assistant Professor of Marriage and Family Therapy
(845) 770-5741

Dr. Lisa Steiner
Director of Online MHC Program
Assistant Professor of Counseling
(845) 770- 5720

Dr. Carol Robles
Associate Dean of AGSC
Professor of Counseling
(845) 770-5735

Dr. Elaine Eng
Professor of Counseling
646) 378-6162

Dr. Antoinette Gines-Rivera
MHC-NYC Practicum/Internship Director
Assistant Professor
(646) 378-6162

Dr. Deanna Kwan
Assistant Professor of Counseling
(845) 770-5738

Dr. Andrew Mercurio
MFT Program Director
Professor of Marriage & Family Therapy
Director of Graduate Counseling Center
(845) 770-5739

Dr. Donald Skinner
**MHC-Rockland Practicum/Internship
Director**
Associate Professor of Counseling
(845) 770-5740

Student Support Staff

Maria Arroyo
NYC Financial Aid Counselor
(646) 378-6114

Sabrina Durand
MHC-Online Administrative Assistant

Francine Ott
NYC-MHC Administrative Assistant
(646) 378-6164

Elizabeth Dahlberg-Lee
AGSC Program Coordinator
(845) 770-5731

Tracie Orozco
MFT Internship Coordinator
(845) 770-5736

Angela Roth
Rockland Financial Aid Counselor
(845) 770-5772

Registrar
NYC: (646) 378-6192
Rockland: (845) 770-577

III. Master of Arts in Mental Health Counseling (63 credits)

The Master of Arts in Mental Health Counseling is a Biblically grounded, 63-credit program combining the historic evangelical Christian faith with sound counseling principles. We seek to prepare students to obtain the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to “empower diverse individuals, families, and groups” to reach their “mental health, wellness, education, and career goals.” (2014 ACA Code of Ethics).

Aligned with the 2016 CACREP clinical mental health standards, the program will facilitate the student’s acquisition of the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions of a mental health counselor. Nyack College’s MA in Mental Health Counseling is registered as a *New York State licensure qualifying degree* (program code: 21777). Upon graduation, students will have met the New York State academic and professional practice requirements for licensure.

Taught from a Christian worldview, our diverse faculty utilize the Psychospiritual counseling model. More importantly, we care deeply about the personal and professional growth of each student and provide them with individual attention serving as caring mentors and academic advisors.

AGSC Core Values

- Belief in the centrality and authority of the Holy Scriptures as the source, foundation and guide to Truth.
- Recognition of the essential and primary place of God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) in the healing process as the source of health and healing.
- Consistent and continuing commitment by the counselor to maintain a personal walk with God through the practice of spiritual disciplines such as Bible study, prayer, fasting and biblical meditation.
- Maintenance of self-care (physical, spiritual, emotional and relational) for the counselor’s own well-being.
- Importance of participation and service in the local church and its worldwide mission.
- Commitment to an open-universe model of epistemology and therapeutic intervention, integrating theory, research and practice, with respect for and utilization of both the empirical and the supernatural.
- Adherence to the highest ethical standards of the counseling profession and the Christian faith.
- Fundamental respect for people in their ethnic, socio-economic, religious and gender diversity.
- Importance of life-long continuing education in counseling, psychology and theology beyond the Master’s degree in counseling.
- Commitment to the advancement of the counseling field and in particular, Christian counseling, through such activities as participation in a professional association, excellence in scholarship, and education of the broader Christian community.

Mission Statement

The Alliance Graduate School of Counseling is committed to developing students for the role of mental health practitioners that are professionally licensed, who are emotionally mature, clinically sound, professionally competent, and spiritually grounded, to do God’s healing work in broken lives, couples and families.

Purpose

The purpose of the Master of Arts in Mental Health Counseling is to provide a comprehensive academic and training program to prepare individuals seeking employment as mental health clinicians in mental health settings such as hospitals, social service agencies, private practice, and church counseling centers.

The program is designed to meet the educational requirements for licensure as a Mental Health Counselor in New York State. Graduates of the program are eligible to seek employment towards meeting the supervised experience (3,000 clinical hours) required for licensure. To meet the examination requirement for licensure as a Mental Health Counselor in New York State, you must pass the National Clinical Mental Health Counselor Examination (NCMHCE).

The National Counselor Examination (NCE) from NBCC is **not** acceptable for licensure in New York State.

The practice of Mental Health Counseling, as defined by New York State, is:

- “the evaluation, assessment, amelioration, treatment, modification, or adjustment to a disability, problem, or disorder of behavior, character, development, emotion, personality or relationships by the use of verbal or behavioral methods with individuals, couples, families or groups in private practice, group, or organized settings; and
- the use of assessment instruments and Mental Health Counseling and psychotherapy to identify, evaluate and treat dysfunctions and disorders for purposes of providing appropriate Mental Health Counseling services.”

For further information see: <http://www.op.nysed.gov/prof/mhp/mhclhc.htm>

MHC Program Goals:

1. To provide a curriculum aligned with the 2016 CACREP clinical mental health standards that will equip students for competent practice as mental health counselors who will “empower diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals”.
(MHC professional Knowledge)
2. To produce students who are able to demonstrate acquisition of advanced counseling skills utilizing diverse modalities. (MHC professional Skills)
3. To engage students in a life-long process of reflective practice that will result in increasing self-awareness. (MHC counselor Self-awareness)
4. To facilitate the students’ understanding and application of the 2014 ACA code of ethics and professional values. (MHC professional Identity)
5. To assist in students’ transformational process modeling the integration of Christian faith with learning that is empathic and compassionate, honoring the dignity and diversity of others.
(MHC professional Identity)

MHC Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will demonstrate satisfactory acquisition of the CACREP knowledge fund of mental health counseling. Students must meet the standard of obtaining a sum total score that is at least 1 standard deviation below the national sum total score as assessed by the CPCE.
Assessment: Passing score on CPCE
2. A. Students will demonstrate skills in conducting an intake interview and formulate an initial treatment plan for conducting counseling.
Assessment: Passing Grade on “Intake” assignment in GCN 601 Principles of Counseling.

B. Students will demonstrate basic counseling skills and beginning ability to adapt those skills appropriately with diverse clients.
Assessment: Passing score on Site Supervisor’s evaluation of clinical skills and Passing Score on “Internship Readiness Evaluation” form in GCN 791 Practicum
3. Students will engage in reflective academic assignments and personal and group counseling in order to understand their familial, personal, and cultural experiences on their emotional and relational well-being and demonstrate self-care and emotional growth.
Assessment:
 - Completion of 15 sessions of personal counseling,
 - completion of 10 sessions of grp. Counseling in GCN 604 Group Dynamics,
 - Passing Grade on Family Genogram in GCN 605 Marriage & Family Counseling,
 - Passing Grade on Self-care plan in GCN 501 Perspectives of Counselor Formation.

4. A. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the current ethical and clinical standards of MHC practice.
Assessment: Passing grade on “Final Exam” in GCN 702 Ethics and Professional Orientation
- B. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the benefits of membership in ACA.
Assessment: Passing grade on “Professional Organizations” paper in GCN 522: Foundations of Mental Health Counseling
5. Students will develop an integrated understanding of Biblical truths as applied to the practice of MHC.
Assessment: Passing grade on “Final Exam” in GCN 701: Psychology and Theology.

MHC Professional Knowledge

Clinical Mental Health Curriculum (63 credit degree)

The curriculum has been set up to meet both the New York State requirements as well as the 2016 CACREP standards. The curriculum plan has been set up as a three-year degree. However, some students could complete it in two years (see 2 and 3-year curriculum plans in Appendix. The degree must be completed within seven years of initial enrollment. A minimum GPA of 3.00 must be maintained in order to remain in the program.

Foundation courses: The foundation courses will provide students with the opportunity of gaining a wholistic view of the field while establishing the foundation of a knowledge base which is pre-requisite for secondary level courses. The six foundation courses (16 credits) are: Foundations of MHC, Perspectives of Counselor Formation, Theories of Counseling, Research, Psychopathology, and Human Development. Students will also commence their professional identity development as a mental health counselor. Student membership in ACA is highly recommended.

Secondary level: The secondary level courses will serve to continue the acquisition of professional knowledge, development of professional identity, and the commencement of foundational clinical skills. The five secondary level courses (14 credits) are Principles of Counseling, Measurement and Assessment, Group Dynamics, Ethics, and Practicum.

Mid-level courses: The mid-level courses will provide students with advanced knowledge on interventions with specific populations. The five mid-level courses (15 credits) are Marriage & Family Counseling, Career Development, Social and Cultural Foundations of Counseling, Counseling Clients with Chemical Addictions, and Crisis Interventions Strategies of Trauma & Abuse.

Advanced level courses: The advanced level courses (18 credits) will allow students to acquire advanced clinical skills (6 credits: Internship), select specialization (6 credits: students are required to complete 2 electives), and enhance their understanding of the Theology of Mental Health Counseling (3 credits) and its integration with mental health counseling (3 credits)

CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH CURRICULUM STRUCTURE

ADVANCED LEVEL COURSES of specialization

Advanced Knowledge, Professional Identity, and Advanced Skills

GCN 618 Theology of Mental Health Counseling	Electives: Two of the following GCN 710 Counseling Issues & Human Sexuality GCN 711: Counseling the post-abortive client GCN 716: Disorders of Childhood & Adolescence GCN 717: Play Therapy GCN 722 Anxiety & Mood Disorders GCN 723 Personality & Dissociative Disorders GCN 724: Counseling & Divorce Recovery GCN 731: CBT GCN 732: Eating Disorders GCN 738 Brief Solution-Focused Therapy GCN 739 Counseling & Life Coaching GCN 742 Counseling for Grief & Loss GCN 770 Seminars GCN 780 Study Abroad / ACA Conference	GCN 792 Internship (6 credits) Pre-req.: GCN 501, 502, 503, 504, 522, 601, 602, 603, 604, 702, 791.
GCN 701 (Capstone) Psychology and Theology Pre-req.: GCN 501, 502, 503, 504, 522, 601, 602, 603, 604, 618, 702		

MID-LEVEL COURSES

Professional Knowledge, (continuing development of) Professional Identity, and (commencement of) Professional Skills

GCN 605 Marriage & Family Counseling	GCN 610 Career Development	GCN 615 Social and Cultural Foundations of Counseling	GCN 616 Counseling Clients with Chemical Addictions	GCN 617 Crisis Intervention Strategies of Trauma and Abuse
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SECONDARY LEVEL COURSES (foundational)

Professional Knowledge, (continuing development of) Professional Identity, and Foundational Skills

GCN 601 Principles of Counseling Pre-req: GCN 502	GCN 602: Measurement & Assessment Pre-req.: GCN 503, 504	GCN 604: Group Dynamics Pre-req.: GCN 502	GCN 702 Ethics and Professional Orientation Pre-req.: GCN 501, 502, 503, 504, 522, 603,	GCN 791 Practicum Pre-req.: GCN 501, 502, 503, 504, 522, 601, 602, 603, 604, 702
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FOUNDATIONAL LEVEL COURSES

Foundational Knowledge and (commencement of) Professional Identity

GCN 501 Perspectives of Counselor Formation	GCN 502 Theories of Counseling	GCN 503 Research	GCN 504 Psychopathology	GCN 522 Foundations of Mental Health Counseling	GCN 603 Human Development
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Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE)

The CPCE is an exit examination required of all MHC students. The comprehensive examination is a summative evaluation of the core knowledge areas of counseling and is used as an assessment instrument for acquisition of mental health knowledge.

The CPCE is researched, developed, and distributed by both the Research and Assessment Corporation for Counseling (RACC) and the Center for Credentialing and Education (CCE), two affiliate corporations of the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC).

The CPCE is a 160 item, multiple choice, knowledge-based examination that reflects the 8 Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) common-core areas as defined by their Standards for Preparation:

1. Human growth and development
2. Social and cultural foundations
3. Helping relationships
4. Group work
5. Career and lifestyle development
6. Appraisal
7. Research and program evaluation
8. Professional orientation and ethics

The CPCE is a nationally-normed examination, allowing the program to compare our students with other counseling students' performance across the nation. It also allows a standardized evaluation of students in the program. The campus coordinator is **Dr. Carol D. Robles**, Associate Dean of AGSC.

Preparing for the Exam

The following books and study materials have been utilized by AGSC students to study for the CPCE:

- The "*Encyclopedia of Counseling*" by Howard Rosenthal.
- The NCE study material published by The Association for Advanced Training in the Behavioral Sciences.
- "*The Counseling Primer*"
- "*Mastering the NCE*" by Erford
- Counselingexams.com

This is not an endorsement of specific study materials.

Grading Process

The program administers the CPCE and sends students' answer sheets to the publisher for scoring. The program typically receives the results back from the publisher in four to six weeks. The program uses the standard cut-off score of one standard deviation below the national mean for the given form of the test. Based on the obtained score, the following grades are posted on the student's transcript:

- "PD" (Passing with Distinction) (2 sd above the mean)
- "P" (Pass)
- "F" (Fail) (less than 1 sd below the mean)

Distribution of Exam Results

Upon written request, the individual results of the exam will be communicated to students via email.

Chart of CPCE scores for MHC students' from 2011 to 1026.

See following page for percentage of students per cohort "meeting, exceeding or not passing standard" of 1 standard deviation below the mean.

CPCE Scores for AGSC MHC Students <i>from 2011 to 2016</i>						
YEAR	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Number of students completing exam	40	48	42	56	55	56
Test version of CPCE	100209	100211	100212	100113	100214	100215
Eight Content Areas	% of students meeting content area standard Standard (passing score) is national group mean -1 SD					
1. Human Growth & Development	87.5	85	86	86	84	80
2. Social & Cultural Foundations	85	77	62	87.5	73	87.5
3. Helping Relationships	80	85	78.5	77	76	66
4. Group Work	90	83	88	86	89	68
5. Career & Life Development	80	94	93	87.5	82	87.5
6. Appraisal	80	60	90	80	84	59
7. Research & Program Evaluation	80	89.5	74	89	78	64
8. Prof. Orientation & Ethics	80	85	71	87.5	82	66
	Data on sum total scores Standard (passing score) is national sum total mean -1 SD					
Number of students completing exam	40	48	42	56	55	56
Total Passing score {National sum Mean - 1 standard deviation}	76	77	69	71	70	67
Number of students whose sum score did not meet standard	7	6	5	8	9	17
Number of students whose sum score met standard	27	40	34	35	41	38
Passing with distinction score {95th % rank: natl mean}	110	111	102	108	109	108
Number of students whose sum score exceeded standard	6	2	3	13	5	1
Total meeting & exceeding Standard (% of total)	33 (82.5%)	42 (87.5%)	37 (88.1%)	48 (85.7%)	46 (83.6%)	39 (69.6%)

CPCE content areas

Human Growth & Development:
 Social & Cultural Foundations:
 Helping Relationships:
 Group Work:
 Career & Life Development:
 Appraisal:
 Research & Program Evaluation:
 Prof. Orientation & Ethics:

MHC course

GCN 603
 GCN 615
 GCN 502, GCN 601
 GCN 604
 GCN 610
 GCN 602
 GCN 503
 GCN 522, GCN 702

MHC Professional Skills

Practicum/Internship

Central to our program is the goal of equipping our counselors to meet the needs of people with hurting or broken lives and relationships. We endeavor to prepare our graduates to function professionally within churches, crisis centers, day treatment programs, hospitals, mental health clinics, para-church agencies, and private practice settings. Toward this end, the AGSC Practicum/Internship Program is vital for our students' preparation. The *Practicum/Internship Handbook* (which is available on-line) provides important information about the expectations, purpose, and requirements of the internship experience.

Philosophy of Training

The Practicum/Internship Program within AGSC is designed to take the theoretical and academic and to refine that knowledge with applied and practical experience. It is an integrative learning experience designed to bridge the gap between the scientific research based approach to human behavior and the practice of counseling with real life problems, dynamics, and circumstances.

The model for the internship-training program is consistent with the goals and objectives of the mission of AGSC. The program emphasizes experiential learning in the integration of modern counseling theory and practice with relevant value and faith issues, sensitivity to multi-cultural/ethnic and cross-cultural issues, mentoring through supervision and nurturing of professionalism, multi-modal instructional experiences, and case study applications.

Training Plan

The internship experience is an *integrative learning experience* designed to bridge the gap between the social science of human behavior and the practice of counseling people with real life problems in the context of their environment.

The Practicum/Internship Program engages in positive efforts designed to ensure that interns will have opportunities to learn about and experience cultural and individual diversity as they relate to the practice of counseling.

Practicum/Internship placements arranged through AGSC are located primarily in the tri-state area, representing a variety of clinical treatment modalities including outpatient prevention programs, outpatient mental health and/or substance abuse clinics, inpatient psychiatric hospital units, day treatment programs and substance abuse rehabilitation facilities. Students may also locate their own internships, provided they meet NBCC and CACREP guidelines.

Seminar Class

The seminar class, led by an AGSC faculty member, meets on a weekly basis for 1.5 hours of group supervision.

MHC Professional Identity

Counselor-In-Training Requirement

Among the potential benefits of receiving counseling as a person entering the counseling profession are: *In vivo* learning of therapeutic techniques, learning counseling from a client perspective, becoming aware of blind spots that may interfere with providing effective counseling, becoming comfortable with the degree of interpersonal intensity required in counseling, and increased emotional maturity.

All matriculated AGSC students, must engage in individual, marital, or family counseling with a professional therapist, from the list approved by the AGSC faculty, for a minimum of 15 standard sessions during their first year in the AGSC program. The student will cover all expenses related to this service. This counseling is not available in-house at the college at this time. Refer to the "Lifeline" for list of approved counselors and copies of the compliance and completion forms. Students who have had counseling sessions within the 18-months prior to admission, may have these hours counted toward their

counseling session requirement pending school approval. The student must contact the respective program director with a written request within the first semester of admission into AGSC.

Note: *Counseling via Skype will not be accepted as a fulfillment of the Counselor-In-Training requirement.*

MHC students have a second counseling requirement. Participation in group therapy is a requirement of *GCN 604 Group Dynamics & Therapy* and therefore, may not be counted as meeting the requirement for counselor-in-training. Further details will be provided by the *GCN 604 Group Dynamics & Therapy* faculty. The MHC student will cover all expenses related to this second requirement.

Student Review

Because counseling is an interpersonal process with considerable influence and power, continued enrollment in the program is also predicated upon the student maintaining:

- **an appropriate level of social and emotional maturity** (e.g., good relational health, dependability, realistic self-awareness).
- **the ability to communicate effectively** (e.g., empathy, affect regulation, attainment of counseling skills).
- **appropriate professional attitudes and behaviors** (e.g., maintenance of appropriate boundaries, adherence to ethical standards, accepting of constructive feedback).
- and other personal attributes (e.g., **spiritual and psychological growth**) believed by the faculty to be necessary for success in the counseling profession.

The faculty will meet annually to review all students regarding their academic and professional achievement in accordance with the guidelines of the American Counseling Association (ACA).
(see student evaluation form on page ____)

Significant concerns in any of these areas may result in the following: a remediation plan requiring completion within a specified timeframe, or dismissal from the program.

Professional Associations

Membership in ACA is strongly encouraged to facilitate the student's professional identity as a Mental Health Counselor. The following are professional association websites that students are encouraged to explore.

American Counseling Association www.counseling.org

American Association of Christian Counselors www.aacc.net

American Mental Health Counselors Association www.amhca.org

New York Mental Health Counselors Association www.nymhca.org

Connecticut Counseling Association www.ccmain.com

New Jersey Mental Health Counselors Association www.njmhca.org

MHC Graduation Requirements

The degree will be granted when all of the program requirements have been satisfactorily met. Participation at the Nyack College Commencement ceremony is contingent on completion of all requirements. All AGSC graduates will be invited to participate in the AGSC Hooding Ceremony Banquet.

Graduation applications must be submitted to the Registrar's Office at the beginning of the semester prior to the student's final semester.

1. Sixty-three Semester Hours of Graduate-Level Coursework
Transfer coursework credit from accredited colleges or universities with a minimum grade of B (3.0), which have been completed within seven years of admission into the program, may be requested. These transfer coursework credits may not exceed 15 semester hours. Graduate transfer credits may not be used both for transfer credit and prerequisites. Students must take 51 of their 63 credits at their designated primary site.

New York City students must meet the NYS residency requirement by enrolling in GCN 610 Career Development at the Rockland campus.
2. Internship Experience
A minimum of 700 clock hours of supervised practicum and internship experience in an approved setting, 40% of which must be direct client contact. For a full time student, this sequence would typically be taken during the second year of study, starting in June, at the end of the first year, through the end of April of the following second year.
3. Attainment of appropriate professional attitudes and behaviors indicative of social and emotional maturity.
4. CPCE
Students are required to enroll in *GCN 799 Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam* in the last semester of study in the program. Students will only be allowed to take the CPCE once. GPA is not affected by the results of the comprehensive exam.
5. Exit Interview
Satisfactory completion of an exit interview with your advisor. The interview is to be scheduled by the student during their last semester of study.
6. Counselor-In-Training Therapy
Completion of required C-I-T therapy. (See section: *Counselor-In-Training* Pg. 14)
7. Complete All Financial Obligations
If you have obtained loans through Federal loans, it is a Federal requirement that you meet with your Student Financial Services counselor for an Exit Interview. Degree will not be granted until all financial charges (tuition, fees) are paid.

It is the student's responsibility to remain informed of all requirements, prerequisites, deadline dates and procedures within the program. It is also the responsibility of the student to maintain contact with his/her advisor and to remain current with class and schedule changes.

Information for Graduates of AGSC National Certified Counselor

The National Counselor Examination for Licensure and Certification® (NCE)

The NCE is used for two purposes: national counselor certification and state counselor licensure. The purpose of the NCE is to assess knowledge, skills, and abilities viewed as important for providing effective counseling services. The NCE is designed to be general in nature. It is intended to assess cognitive knowledge which should be known by all counselors regardless of their individual professional specialties.

Satisfactory performance on the National Counselor Examination (NCE®) is one of the criteria used by NBCC to identify professionals who may be eligible to become a National Certified Counselor (NCC).

The NYC and the Rockland campuses are **approved sites** for the NCE Administration for **current** students.

National Board for Certified Counselors

3 Terrace Way Greensboro, NC 27403

www.nbcc.org

National Certifications

The NCC certification was launched by NBCC in 1982 as a result of the efforts of members of the American Counseling Association (ACA). Since that time, NBCC has become an independent entity and more than 80,000 counselors have become NCCs. The NCC is one of two NBCC certifications that are accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). The NCC is the prerequisite for all specialty certifications (below) with NBCC. *The National Counselor Examination for Licensure and Certification (NCE) is required for this certification.*

Specialty Certifications

NBCC also offers three specialty certifications. All three require the National Certified Counselor certification as a prerequisite or corequisite.

The Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor (CCMHC)

The CCMHC was launched originally in 1979 by the National Academy for Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselors. In 1993, the Academy and NBCC reached an agreement for NBCC to take over administration and testing for the CCMHC certification. Nearly 1,000 NCCs currently hold the CCMHC certification. *The National Clinical Mental Health Counselor Examination (NCMHCE) is required for this certification.*

The National Certified School Counselor (NCSC)

The NCSC certification was launched in 1991 in cooperation with the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). There are more than 2,500 NCCs who also hold the NCSC certification. *The National Certified School Counselor Examination (NCSCCE) is required for this certification.*

The Master Addictions Counselor (MAC)

The MAC certification was first offered in 1995 and testing with the EMAC began in 1996. The MAC is one of two NBCC certifications that is accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). The MAC is also recognized and accepted by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) as qualifying for the Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) training and credential. More than 600 NCCs currently hold the MAC. *The Examination for Master Addictions Counselors (EMAC) is required for this certification.*

National Certification and State Licensure

What is national certification?

National counselor certification from NBCC proves to the public and employers that the counselor has met the national standards set by the counseling profession. It is not a license to practice. In some states, holding a national certification can assist the counselor in obtaining a state license. National certification travels with the counselor no matter the state or country of residence. The basic national certification offered by NBCC is the NCC (National Certified Counselor). NBCC is the largest national counselor certification program in the world.

What is a state license?

A state license in counseling is literally permission from a particular state to practice counseling or to call oneself a licensed counselor. Some states have a single license and some have a two-tiered system. The names of state licenses vary from state to state. Some examples are LPC, LCPC, LPCC, LMHC, LPCMH, LCMHC, and LPC-MH.

	National Certification	State Licensure
Name of Credential	<p>National Certified Counselor (NCC) – Issued by NBCC</p> <p>NBCC also offers three specialty certifications for NCCs in addictions, clinical mental health and school counseling.</p>	<p>Differs from state to state. Most common titles are: Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC), Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC), and Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC). Issued by each state regulatory board.</p>
Purpose	<p>To promote and represent the counseling profession through a national certification program where the standards are set by members of the counseling profession. Compliance with continuing education requirements and the NBCC <i>Code of Ethics</i> ensure that NCCs stay current with the profession’s best practices.</p>	<p>To protect the public by defining practitioners who can legally use the title of a licensed counselor and/or who can provide counseling services in a particular state. These standards are set by state legislatures.</p>
Examinations	<p>The National Counselor Examination for Licensure and Certification (NCE)</p>	<p>NCE and/or NCMHCE: State counselor licensure boards contract with NBCC to use one or both of these examinations.</p>
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master’s degree in counseling or with a major study in counseling from a regionally accredited institution • 3,000 hours of counseling experience and 100 hours of supervision both over a two year post-master’s time period • Post-master’s experience and supervision requirements are waived for graduate students enrolled in or who have completed CACREP accredited tracks. • Passing score on NCE 	<p>Varies from state to state. All require some combination of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master’s degree • Counseling experience and supervision • Passing score on NCE and/or NCMHCE. Some require mental health laws exam of that state.

Nyack College Academic Information & Policies

*See Nyack College 2016-2017 Institutional Catalog online.
http://www.nyack.edu/files/NYACK_Catalog_2016-17.pdf*