



COUNSELOR EDUCATION PROGRAM

Department of Leadership, Policy, and Lifelong Learning

**Doctoral Student Handbook
2024-2025**

Physical Address:

**Counselor Education Program University of South Florida
4202 East Fowler Avenue, EDU 158
Tampa, FL 33620**

Website: <https://www.usf.edu/education/areas-of-study/counselor-education/>

Email: koyuncu@usf.edu

Telephone: (813) 974-3463

Fax: (813) 974-5423

Postal Address:

**University of South Florida
Department of Leadership, Policy, and Lifelong Learning
4202 East Fowler Avenue, EDU105
Tampa, FL 33620**

**The Ph.D. Program in Counselor Education and Supervision
Table of Contents**

Table of Contents

<i>Handbook Scope</i>	4
<i>Program Mission</i>	5
Student Learning Outcomes	5
<i>Program Overview</i>	6
Cohort Model	6
Commitment to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion	6
<i>Admission to the Doctoral Program</i>	7
Admission Process	7
Application Procedures	7
How to Access the Application	8
Application Checklist (To-Do-List)	8
<i>Program of Study</i>	9
Program Elements	9
Sample Program of Study	10
Sequencing & Course Progression	10
<i>Doctoral Program Stages of Advancement</i>	10
Stage 1: Completion of Coursework and Forming a Dissertation Committee	11
Stage 2: Comprehensive Examination:	11
Stage 3: Proposal Defense.	11
Stage 4: The Final Defense: Oral Defense of the Dissertation	11
<i>Comprehensive/Qualifying Exams</i>	12
Qualifying Exam Eligibility	12
Qualifying Exam Clearance	13
Advisors and Committees	13
<i>The Dissertation Process</i>	14
Dissertation Proposal Components	14
The Final Defense: Oral Defense of the Dissertation	15
Completed Dissertation Format	16
<i>Credentialing and Employment</i>	16

Creating an Employment Strategy	17
<i>Financial Support & Assistantships</i>	18
<i>Expectations Related to Program Completion</i>	19
Academic Expectations	19
Supervision Expectations	19
Internship Expectations	20
Liability Insurance	22
Professional Development and Behavior.....	23
Ethical Standards.....	23
Appropriate Student Activities.....	23
Expectations of Students	24
Professional Involvement.....	24
Websites for Professional Counseling/Counselor Education Organizations:.....	24
Academic Integrity & Dishonesty.....	25
Appeals	25
Use of Artificial Intelligence	25
Dual Relationships in Coursework	25
<i>Technology Resources and Competence Needed to Complete the Program</i>	25
Hardware and Software Requirements	26
<i>Professional Dispositions and Skill Standards</i>	26
Student Retention Policy	27
Student Review Procedures	27
<i>Evaluation in the Program</i>	29
<i>University Resources and Services</i>	30
The Academic Success Center.....	30
USF Counseling Center.....	30
Career Services.....	30
Students Accessibility Services.....	30
APPENDIX A: PhD - Personal and Professional Disposition Scale.....	31
APPENDIX B: Notice of Professional Concerns Form	33

Handbook Scope

The Counselor Education Program developed this handbook to assist doctoral students with planning their studies and related developmental activities. This handbook contains statements of procedures and/or regulations, guidelines for professional behavior, and documents related to the PhD in Curriculum Instruction with a concentration in Counselor Education, herein referred to as the Doctorate in Counselor Education Program (CEP). It is recommended that students enrolled in the CEP have a copy of this handbook to use as a reference. This handbook is not meant to be a complete listing of all the University's student policies, which can be found at <https://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/dean-of-students/policies/index.aspx>

Further, the College of Education maintains a comprehensive doctoral student handbook. Students should familiarize themselves with both the program and college of education handbooks.

Program and People

The Counselor Education Program at USF consists of a Masters Degree in School Counseling and PhD in Curriculum Instruction with a concentration in Counselor Education, herein referred to as the doctorate in counselor education (CE). The Counselor Education Program is in the Leadership Policy & Lifelong Learning Department (LPLL) in The College of Education (COE). The following table shows the program's core and non-core faculty, as well as administrative staff.

Core Faculty

Name	Title	Email
Dr. Haley Ault	Assistant Professor	hrault@usf.edu
Dr. Eric Davis	Associate Professor	esdavis1@usf.edu
Dr. Chloe Lancaster	Associate Professor and Doctoral Program Coordinator	Clancaster2@usf.edu
Dr. Cynthia Topdemir	Professor of Instruction, Practicum and Internship Coordinator, & CEP Program Coordinator	ctopdemi@usf.edu

Non-Core Faculty

Name	Title	Email
Dr. Gwen Pearlstein	Adjunct Professor	ggold@usf.edu
Dr. Aaron Norton	Adjunct Professor	alnorto2@usf.edu
Dr. Deirdra Sanders-Burnett	Adjunct Professor	deirdras@usf.edu

Administrator and Staff

Name	Title	Email
Dr. Vonzell Agosto	LPLL Department Chair	vagosto@usf.edu
Kadife Koyuncu	Academic Program Specialist	koyuncu@usf.edu

Program Mission

The mission of the Counselor Education Ph.D. program aims to shape the future of counseling by producing visionary practitioners, counselors, community leaders, and educators who are immersed in a climate of scholarly inquiry and prepared to extend the knowledge base of the counseling profession through various professional roles, including teaching, supervision, research, counseling, leadership, and advocacy.

Student Learning Outcomes

These outcomes reflect the knowledge and skills expected from graduates of the PhD in Counselor Education in the five professional roles as outlined by CACREP

Upon completion of their PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision, students will:

- Integrate counseling theories and evidence-based practices to provide ethical and culturally responsive interventions across diverse settings.
- Develop and apply a personal supervision model that adapts to supervisee developmental levels, supervision modalities, evaluative processes, and culturally responsive strategies.

- Create a teaching philosophy based on evidence-supported theory and practices and demonstrate competency in designing and implementing culturally supportive teaching methods, including online formats.
- Conduct quantitative and qualitative research relevant to counseling and its specialty areas and disseminate scholarly work through publications and presentations.
- Exhibit knowledge and skills in counselor leadership applicable to higher education, professional associations, and counseling environments and develop competency to influence systemic change in the counseling field at individual, professional, and policy levels.

Program Overview

The PhD in Curriculum Instruction with a concentration in Counselor Education is a 3 to 5-year, 60-hour program (minimum) beyond a CACREP master's degree or equivalent degree in counseling. The program consists of advanced coursework in counselor education, 600 clock hours of internship, and a dissertation. All core counselor education courses, excluding internships, are offered online and in hybrid formats. Students can expect to participate in weekly synchronous classes and an in-person class on the Tampa campus one Saturday each month during the Fall and Spring semesters for the first two years of study.

The program has been developed to meet the standards of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling-Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2024), focused on the five domains of counseling supervision, teaching, research and scholarship, and leadership and advocacy. Students develop expertise in all these areas while also pursuing an approved cognate in their own specialty interest in counseling, research, or a closely related field.

Cohort Model

The program is offered in a cohort model in which a select number of students are admitted each fall term. Collaboration, trust, communication, and support are key to success in this program and as a future counselor educator. A cohort model facilitates an environment conducive to building these qualities. Research findings indicate that cohort models promote both personal and professional transformation for students within a cohort.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

USF's Counselor Education Program values diversity, equity, and inclusion as elements at the core of our mission statement. DEI values are embedded in each of our courses and organizational structure, and they are evident in the scholarly productivity and advocacy efforts of core and noncore faculty. Within the Counseling Education Program, numerous axes of DEI are recognized, including gender identity, race and ethnicity, country of origin, socioeconomic status, age, religion, politics, sexual identity, veteran status, and disability, among many other considerations. With our core values in mind, racism, sexual violence, discrimination, and other acts of intolerance are rejected and treated with accountability to create a safe and welcoming environment where students, faculty, and staff can flourish professionally and academically. Our success to date indicates that we have a strong foundation for recruiting, retaining, and graduating diverse student populations.

The doctoral program infuses the multicultural competency standards of the American Counseling Association. Accordingly, research and programmatic interventions designed to reduce racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression through education and advocacy are a high priority of the faculty in Counselor Education. Doctoral students are expected to collaborate with faculty and peers to conduct research that challenges oppressive practices and promotes equitable environments in school and community mental health settings

Admission to the Doctoral Program

The program enrolls up to 5-7 incoming students each year. Applications are due by February 15th, and interviews typically occur in mid-March. This selective and intensive Ph.D. program can be completed in 3 years of full-time study or 3 to 5 years of part-time study and must be completed within seven years from initial entry. Entering students must possess a master's degree in counseling (concentration open) from a CACREP or CORE-accredited program. Students with a master's degree in counseling from a non-CACREP-accredited program or closely related field may be considered for admission. However, their admission may be contingent on taking additional entry-level specialized coursework concurrent to doctoral-level counselor education coursework so that any missing content can be completed prior to graduation.

Admission Process

The admission process is designed to assess the prospective student's suitability for and commitment to graduate study and a career in the field of counselor education and supervision. Candidates who are admitted to the program are expected to make a strong commitment to their graduate training. All students considered for admission to the program are evaluated at a minimum on the following criteria: (1) academic aptitude for doctoral-level study consistent with program delivery type; (2) previous or current professional experience; (3) professional dispositions consistent with professional practice, (4) oral and written communication skills, (5) commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice; (6) potential for scholarship, and (7) potential for professional leadership and advocacy.

Application Procedures

Applicants must submit:

- Transcripts showing a master's degree from an accredited university in counseling or a closely related professional field
- Current Resume or Vita outlining relevant counseling experience, education, work experience, publications, presentations, etc.
- Three References from individuals who can testify to either your academic or professional abilities and potential for success in a doctoral program.
- A personal statement and interview with the program faculty, writing samples, and professional references

**The personal statement should be a concise and complete report of the applicant's counseling training and experiences, research background and interests, and an outline*

of future career goals. The writing sample could come from a masters-level written assignment, professional publication, or another professional/ scholarly source. If students have no documented writing sample, they will be invited to provide a written response to a writing prompt following their TEAMS interview (see below).

How to Access the Application

Application: <https://secure.vzcollegeapp.com/usf/>

To begin the application process, create an account on USF application processing platform linked above. Once you have completed the pages for Personal Information and Citizenship, you will be directed to the academic interest page. On the Academic Interest page, from the drop-down list of programs, choose “Counselor Education Ph.D. (Curriculum & Instruction)”. Double-check this selection to ensure it aligns with your intended field of study. Continue through Educational History, Conduct Information, Military Information, and Residency sections until you get to My Documents/ Recommendations. Here, you can upload your resume or vita, statement of purpose, and writing samples. Additionally, you can invite the individuals writing your recommendation letters to submit their documents. You cannot submit the recommendation files on their behalf. It is important to note that not all documents, such as transcripts and recommendation letters, need to be submitted before you submit the application. You can upload certain supporting documents after submission but be sure to review the program’s deadlines to ensure all materials are submitted in a timely manner for full consideration.

It is important to note that not all documents, such as transcripts and recommendation letters, need to be submitted before you submit the application. You can upload certain supporting documents after submission, but be sure to review the program’s deadlines to ensure all materials are submitted in a timely manner for full consideration.

Applications will be reviewed for completion, and qualified students will be invited to participate in a TEAMS interview with USF program faculty.

Application Checklist (To-Do-List)

To assist you in the admissions process, please utilize the following Application Checklist. To expedite the processing of your application please upload a copy of all of your supporting documents when you submit your application online. You will also need to send official transcripts and test scores if you are admitted to a graduate major.

- Complete the Graduate Application online and upload all supporting documents
- List post-secondary institutions you have attended where a bachelor’s and/or master’s transcripts and any other higher degree including graduate-level coursework or certificates on the application
- Pay the non-refundable application fee

Upload through the online application a copy of transcripts of all bachelor's and/or master's transcripts and any other transcript with graduate work (including translations and evaluations for international transcripts). If you are admitted, you must ALSO have official and final transcripts sent to the Office of Admissions.

Review and respond to Conduct Clearance Policy (Legal Disclosure Statement)

Review Florida Residency Policy for Tuition Purposes and provide documents, if needed

Sign-in to Student Self-Service to monitor your admission status

Program of Study

The faculty anticipates that the typical doctoral student will be a professional counselor currently employed in an agency, school, or institution of higher education and will plan to take at least two courses each semester (at least 06 credits), including the summer sessions. Students progressing at that rate would typically complete the doctoral program in four to five years. Doctoral students who need no supplemental courses and who pursue full-time study (at least 09 credits) each semester, including summer sessions, could complete the program in three to four years. The exact length of the program, however, depends to a great degree on the student's career goals and the nature of the student's research interests.

Program Elements

Research Methods, Measurement, and Foundations: A minimum of 12 credits of course work in: (a) Statistical Analysis for Educational Research I (03 credits), (b) Statistical Analysis for Educational Research II (03 credits), Qualitative Research in Education I (03 credits), and Qualitative Research in Education II (03 credits).

Concentration Counselor Education: 24 credits distributed as follows:

Advanced Seminar in Counseling (03 credits), Survey in Planning, Evaluation, And Accountability (03 credits), Supervision: Theories and Practicum (04 credits), Advanced Counseling Theories (04), Advanced Instruction in Counselor Education (03 credits), Advanced Internship in Counselor Education I (04 credits), and Advanced Internship in Counselor Education II (04 credits),

Elective or Cognate: 9 credits. Three to four courses that support one or more of the doctoral areas of focus for counselor education: supervision, teaching, research and Scholarship, leadership and advocacy

Shared Core Requirements: 6 Credits. Two courses: Philosophies of Inquiry (03 credits), Design of Systematic Studies in Education (03 credits).

Dissertation: A minimum of 8 Credits.

Sample Program of Study

Major: Counselor Education and Supervision (60 Semester Hr. minimum.)

<u>Courses</u>		<u>Semester Hours</u>
EDG 7067	Philosophies of Inquiry	3
EDF 7410	Design of Systematic Studies in Education	3
Concentration Counselor Education: <i>(All must be 7000 or 6000 level, 24 credit hours)</i>		
MHS 7930	Advanced seminar in Counselor Education	3
MHS 7740	Survey in Planning, Evaluation, and Accountability	3
MHS 7610	Supervision: Theories and Practicum	4
MHS 7401	Advanced Counseling Theories	3
MHS 7611	Advanced Instruction in Counselor Education	3
MHS 7830	Advanced Internship in Counselor Education I	4
MHS 7830	Advanced Internship in Counselor Education II	4
Research Methods, Measurement, and Foundations <i>(12 Credit Hours Minimum)</i>		
EDF 6407	Statistical Analysis for Educational Research I	3
EDF 7408	Statistical Analysis for Educational Research II	3
EDF 7477	Qualitative Research in Education Part I	3
EDF 7478	Qualitative Research in Education Part II	3
Electives or Cognate <i>(9 Credit Hours Minimum)</i>		9
Dissertation <i>(9 Credit Hours Minimum)</i>		
MHS 7980	Dissertation	5
MHS 7980	Dissertation	4

Sequencing & Course Progression

Students take core counselor education courses based on their cohort's assigned course sequence. Students enrolled in the PhD program take the bulk of their coursework during the first three years, generally taking six to seven credit hours per term. Students complete two terms of internship (600 hours in total). Stepping out of cohort course progression will put the student at least a year behind their cohort and, therefore, prolong graduation. Students are strongly discouraged from falling out of a cohort, as classes are offered once a year and for the intended cohort. If the courses are at faculty-to-student ratio capacity, it could take students longer than a year to complete the necessary courses. The school cannot guarantee courses for out-of-cohort students. Once a student drops out of the cohort, the student must meet the requirements of the most current student handbook and degree plan.

Doctoral Program Stages of Advancement

The doctoral program may be conceptualized as having four (4) stages of advancement. These stages allow students to gauge their progress in the program beyond counting the months or years they have been enrolled in the program. The program's milestones are (1) the completion of coursework and internships, (2) the comprehensive examination, (3) the proposal defense, and (4) the dissertation defense.

Stage 1: Completion of Coursework and Forming a Dissertation Committee. This stage is the longest and is completed when students have taken and passed core courses, internships, cognate courses, and College of Education required courses and hold a GPA of at least 3.0. In addition to completing coursework, two critical tasks are embedded into this phase: (1) forming a dissertation committee and (2) applying for the comprehensive exam. Students should identify their dissertation committee when they have no more than 18 hours of coursework remaining, around the end of their 2nd year (or 39th hour of coursework). Students should refer to the [College of Education Doctoral Student Handbook](#) for processes and requirements of forming a committee. It is important that students finalize their committee, as they will be unable to complete *Stages 2-4* without a committee in place. For the second task of stage 1, students may apply for their comprehensive exams when they have their committee formed and no more than 9 hours of coursework left. The Office of Graduate Support must also verify students have completed all required coursework.

Stage 2: Comprehensive Examination: During this semester, students can concurrently complete their remaining coursework (a maximum of 9 hours and a minimum of 2 hours). Review the comprehensive exam section of this handbook to understand the specifics of the comprehensive exam and related processes. Upon completion of their comprehensive exam, the student's Major Professor will fill out the [Verification of Qualifying Exam Results Form](#), stating whether the student passed or failed the exam, and obtain signatures from the entire supervisory committee. Once signed, the Major Professor will submit the Verification of Qualifying Exam Results Form to the Graduate Support Office. If the committee passes the students at the comprehensive exam level, the student may then complete the [Admission to Doctoral Candidacy Form for Candidacy form](#).

Stage 3: Proposal Defense. Students who have been admitted to candidacy may schedule a proposal defense. Forms can be found on the Graduate Support Office's ["Doctoral Dissertation Process"](#) webpage. During the defense, doctoral candidates present their proposals for dissertation research and then answer questions regarding the substance of their proposals from their examining committees. Upon successful defense of the proposal, students can submit an IRB to conduct their study and, upon IRB approval, begin their dissertation research.

Stage 4: The Final Defense: Oral Defense of the Dissertation

The final defense must be held at least three (3) weeks prior to the end of the term in which the candidate plans to graduate. After the major professor has determined that the dissertation is ready for defense, the candidate should distribute copies of the completed dissertation to all the members of their committee. This should happen at least four (4) weeks prior to the intended examination date. In order to schedule the defense, the candidate must submit a copy of the "Request for Ph.D./Ed.D. Degree Final Oral Examination Form", found on the Graduate Support Office's ["Doctoral Dissertation Process,"](#) The form must be signed by all the members of the advisory committee and two copies of the dissertation to office of the COEDU Graduate Studies Office at least three weeks prior to the defense. Upon successful completion of the dissertation defense, students will have met all curricular requirements for

the doctoral degree in Counselor Education and Supervision. During this stage, it is the student's responsibility to monitor graduation timelines and required paperwork, as an oversight in submitting forms within the required timelines will delay the student's graduation. Students should review the required forms available at the [Graduate Support Office](#) and apply for graduation through Student Self-Service (formerly OASIS) before the deadline listed on the [Office of the Registrar](#)

Comprehensive/Qualifying Exams

The purpose of the Doctoral Qualifying Examination is to evaluate the student's ability to apply and synthesize the skills and knowledge acquired during graduate study. This exam is an important benchmark in a doctoral student's progress toward candidacy. The Qualifying Exam is required for all doctoral students (both Ph.D. and Ed.D. programs). The Counselor Education students take a modified qualifying exam option 2, consisting of 5 essay questions administered over three days that cover the five doctoral areas of Counseling, Supervision, Teaching, Research & Leadership, & Advocacy. Doctoral Exams will be administered each October and February, utilizing Honorlock, a remote examination proctoring system. Students may use five preidentified sources for each area, excluding full textbooks (specific chapters are acceptable), and will not be able to access web-based or other resources during the examination.

Doctoral students will have two (2) attempts at passing the qualifying exam. If a student fails on both attempts, they will be dismissed from their program and the College of Education. Students must be in active degree-seeking status and enrolled in a minimum of two (2) hours of graduate credit at the time they take the Qualifying Examination. If the Exam is taken between semesters, students must be enrolled for a minimum of 2 hours of graduate credit in the semester immediately before or after the Exam.

Qualifying Exam Eligibility

All students must meet the eligibility criteria below and must follow the procedures outlined for applying to take the Qualifying Examination in the [COE Doctoral Student Handbook](#).

To be eligible for the qualifying exam:

- The student must have an approved Planned Program of Study on file in the Graduate Support Office (EDU 320).
- The student must have an approved Advanced Graduate Student Supervisory Committee form on file. Any changes made to the committee must be formally approved and recorded on a Change of Committee form.
- The student must have no more than nine (9) hours of coursework left to complete by the start of the semester in which the qualifying examination will be taken.
- The student cannot have any "I" or "M" grades on their transcript.
- All coursework must have a grade of "B" or better.
- The student must be registered for a minimum of two (2) graduate credit hours in the semester(s) in which the exam will be taken. Students may choose to enroll in Directed Research credit hours in preparation for their dissertation; see the "Using Directed Research Hours."

- The student must submit the Application for Doctoral Qualifying Exam to the Graduate Support Office by the published deadline for the semester in which they plan to take the qualifying exam.

Qualifying Exam Clearance

Once a student's Application for Doctoral Qualifying Exam has been received by the Graduate Support Office by the semester deadline in which the student plans to take the exam, the clearance process will begin. The Graduate Support Office will check the student's records for all items listed in the exam eligibility section above. If it is determined that there are outstanding items that need addressing, the student, their Major Professor(s), and their department's Academic Program Specialist will be notified of the issue.

Once a student has been cleared and their Application for the Doctoral Qualifying Exam has been approved, the student will receive an email from the Graduate Support Office directing students to contact their department for dates, times, locations, and guidelines regarding their qualifying exam.

Advisors and Committees

One of the major differences between master's education and doctoral education in counseling is the role that the student's advisor and advisory committee play in determining the student's plan of study during the doctoral program. Although all Ph.D. students have a similar set of courses that they must take, their cognate courses and their research projects are typically the result of consultation with their advisors. All students who are admitted to the doctoral program will be assigned an advisor. An advisor is a faculty member who agrees to serve as a temporary advisor for a student and, as such, agrees to help that student to select courses, develop a plan of study, and manage the complexities of the academic environment. However, students must eventually select a formal advisor who is also called the major professor.

Students may select a major professor at any time (including prior to admission), but the selection must be made prior to the end of the second year in the program. The major professor or advisor is responsible for helping students select the members of their advisory committees' the dissertation proposal, and the dissertation defense.

The student's advisory committee is typically formed sometime during the student's second year in the program. The committee is comprised of at least four (04) members, including the major professor. A typical doctoral committee in Counselor Education will have two (02) members from the CEP, one (01) methodologist from the Educational Measurement & Research Program, and (01) member from outside the LPLL Department. If the outside faculty member is from a college other than the College of Education, the faculty member may need to complete a special form allowing them to serve on COEDU committees.

The advisory committee is responsible for providing consultation on the dissertation proposal and also for serving as the examining committee for the comprehensive examination, the proposal defense, and the dissertation defense. The advisory committee verifies through their signatures that the student has mastered certain milestones toward degree completion.

The Dissertation Process

Upon successful completion of their comprehensive examination, students may then develop their dissertation proposals and apply to the Graduate School for *Admission to Candidacy*. The dissertation process is very bureaucratic; therefore, it is important to familiarize yourself with the necessary forms and deals. See the [College of Education Doctoral Student Handbook](#) for specific information about the dissertation process and access related forms at the [Graduate Student Resource Page](#) on the Graduate Support Office website.

The application process for Candidacy may take from two to four weeks, but students must be admitted to candidacy before they will be allowed to schedule their proposal defense through the College of Education Graduate Studies Office.

The dissertation proposal typically contains the first three chapters of the student's proposed dissertation, and the purpose of the defense is to test students' ability to design and conduct high-quality independent research projects. The following is an example of a typical dissertation proposal format for a quantitative study. During the dissertation process, students must be enrolled in at least 2 hours of MHS 7980 Dissertation and complete a minimum of 4 hours of MHS 7980 to graduate. Thus, in the rare case a student anticipates being able to propose and defend their dissertation in a single semester, they must enroll in 4 hours of MHS 7980.

Dissertation Proposal Components

The following is an overview of the components of a dissertation proposal

Title page

Chapter I Introduction

- Background of the problem or issue
- Statement of the problem (one or two paragraphs that describe basic difficulty or area of concern, felt need, etc.)
- Significance of the study (brief discussion of why this study is important: how does it add to the current body of knowledge related to this topic)
- Purpose of the study (goals and objectives)
- Research questions to be answered (if a quantitative study) or Questions Guiding the Inquiry (if qualitative)
- Conceptual or substantive assumptions regarding the problem
- Conceptual Framework---a graphic representation of the relationships among major variables plus a narrative delineation of the research problem and explication of relationships among the major variables.
- Definition of major terms (operational definitions)
- Scope and delimitation of the study (narrowing of focus)

Chapter II Literature Review

- Historical background of the problem or issue
- Review and critical evaluation of studies pertinent to the problem area.

- Clear statements of the concepts, assumptions, and theoretical framework underlying the problem being investigated
- Presentation of deducible consequences or predictions that are logically consistent with the hypotheses or research questions (if quantitative research).

Chapter III Design and methodology

- Discussion of logic, structure, and design of study
- Specification of control of threats to external and internal validity (quantitative designs) or of procedures to increase the trustworthiness of the findings (qualitative designs)
- Second presentation of formal hypotheses (quantitative research) or guiding questions (qualitative)
- Description of the sample (quantitative designs) or the participants (qualitative designs)
- Instruments (quantitative designs) or Description of the Researcher (qualitative designs)
- Data collection procedures
- Statistical analysis (quantitative designs) or data analysis (qualitative designs)
- Statement of any methodological assumptions

References

The Final Defense: Oral Defense of the Dissertation

The final defense is very similar to the proposal defense. The major difference is that the student's presentation will also include the results of the dissertation research. Another difference is that the final defense is a public meeting. The time, date, and location of the defense, as well as the title of the dissertation, will be published and disseminated throughout the university, and any member of the university committee may attend. After the student has presented the findings of the study, the advisory committee will again question the student on the findings, methodology and implications of the research. The candidate's competence will be assessed through the quality of the candidate's answers.

After the advisory committee has exhausted its questions, it meets in the examination room in the candidate's absence to decide whether the candidate has passed or failed the examination. Candidates who successfully pass the defense will make whatever changes the advisory committee suggests as a result of the meeting and submit their revised dissertations to the Graduate School. Candidates who do not successfully pass the dissertation defense may be dismissed from the program and the university.

The final defense must be held at least three (3) weeks prior to the end of the term in which the candidate plans to graduate. After the major professor has determined that the dissertation is ready for defense, candidates should distribute copies of the completed dissertation to all the members of the advisory committee and to the outside chair.

This should happen at least four (4) weeks prior to the intended examination date. In order to schedule the defense, the candidate must complete all forms available on the [Graduate Student Resource Page](#) on the Graduate Support Office website.

Completed Dissertation Format

The following is a standard template for a completed dissertation:

Title page

Abstract

Acknowledgments (optional)

Table of Contents

- **Chapter I Introduction** (essentially the same elements as the proposal- Updated for past tense as needed)

Chapter II Literature Review (essentially the same elements as the proposal)

Chapter III Design and methodology essentially the same elements as the proposal)

- Updated for past tense

Chapter IV. Results

- Exposition in terms of the framework of the hypotheses (quantitative designs) or of the guiding questions of the inquiry (qualitative designs).
- Appropriate use of charts, tables, figures, and graphs
- *Summary*

Chapter V. Summary and Conclusions

- *Organization*
- Restatement of the problem, methodology followed, and findings
- Conclusions
- Recommendations for additional research---new research questions
- Recommendations for use of present findings.

References

Appendices

Successful defense of the dissertation typically indicates the end of one status for the student and the beginning of another. Accordingly, it would be a prudent course of action for all students to have an employment strategy that they might engage.

Credentialing and Employment

The PhD Program in Counselor Education at USF is designed to prepare graduates to work as counselor educators and supervisors, researchers, and practitioners in academic and clinical settings who extend the knowledge base of the counseling profession in a climate of scholarly inquiry who publish and/or present the results of scholarly inquiry; who inform professional practice by generating new knowledge for the profession in areas relevant to counseling practice, counselor education, and/or supervision; who are equipped to assume positions of leadership in the counseling profession and/or their area(s) of specialization.

Graduation from the PhD Program in Counselor Education and Supervision DOES NOT equate to a professional license to provide counseling or psychotherapy. Doctoral students are expected to obtain a professional counseling license and/or appropriate certifications before or during their first two years based on entry-level education and supervision requirements. Students should speak with their faculty advisor about licensing procedures in their state or go to <http://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/licensure-requirements>.

Creating an Employment Strategy

Doctoral students and their advisors are expected to meet periodically to discuss students' plans for employment after graduation. These meetings may occur at any point as the student progresses through program milestones, but they are particularly important as students finish their coursework. By this point, students should have a fairly clear idea of where they plan to seek employment (geographically) and their target position (e.g., faculty, clinical practices, higher education/ agency leadership). Those students planning to pursue a faculty role should know the type of institution where they would like to seek employment (e.g., research-intensive teaching). These planning discussions may influence the direction of the student's research as well as the conferences and workshops the student attends. Also, students will have the opportunity to make any final adjustments in any elective coursework they may need to make in order to enhance their chances for employment. The planning discussions plus the actions students take as a result of them are termed the employment strategy. Students who seek positions that match their training, interests, and career goals, who tailor their letters of application to the job description, and who have references that address their specific strengths relative to these positions are those most likely to become finalists and, ultimately, new hires. On the other hand, doctoral students who have no employment strategy are most likely to find that seeking employment becomes a frustrating, expensive, and demoralizing experience.

Although each doctoral student's employment strategy will be somewhat different, there are a few general suggestions that should guide strategic planning relative to employment. These are the following:

1. **Start early.** It is never too early to start to think about possible places for employment, and share your ideas with your advisor for feedback.
2. **Be available.** If you are seeking an academic position, it is important for you to have an opportunity to meet potential employers before positions become available. This means you should be a member of organizations that focus on counselor preparation, such as ACES (American Association of Counselor Education and Supervision, SACES (Southern Association of Counselor Education and Supervision), and FACES (Florida Association of Counselor Education and Supervision), and you should make presentations at their annual meetings. This is where your potential employers will be recruiting for open and soon-to-be-announced positions and where you might possibly be pre-interviewed for the position.
3. **Be specific.** Apply for positions that match your credentials. Be sure that the position description matches your training and interests. Do not apply for a position at a teaching university if you are really interested in a research-intensive position, and vice versa. Do

not apply for a position in counseling psychology because your program is in counselor education. Do not send generic reference letters. Always provide your references with a position description so that they can address your skills relative to the position.

4. **Be prepared.** Update your vita each semester.
5. Review the *Chronicle of Higher Education & Higher Ed Jobs.com*, *CESNET*, & *LinkedIn*, to keep abreast of position openings and position trends.
6. Seek an opportunity to serve as a student member on a search committee and keep in contact with your colleagues who have been recently employed. In the event the CEP is conducting a hiring search, be sure to attend the open interviews to get a better sense of what to expect when you participate as a candidate in the hiring process.

Financial Support & Assistantships

Financial Aid Office

Students should actively look for financial aid options by exploring options with the [Financial Aid Office](#). Scholarships and funding opportunities are also available through the [Office of Graduate Studies](#). Note that some students have successfully secured fellowships through the National Board for Certified Counselors Minority Fellowship Program at <https://www.nbccf.org/programs/>

LPLL Assistantships

Students are eligible to apply for part-time Research Assistantships (RAs) through the LPLL Department. These competitive assistantships provide students with exposure to various aspects of the five areas of Counselor Education and Supervision. RAs provide assistance to faculty members engaging in research and scholarly projects, developing course curricula, managing curriculum and assessment projects, and other related activities as assigned. Contact the PhD Program Coordinator or faculty advisor for questions regarding RA opportunities.

Conference Assistantships

The College of Education is committed to promoting and assisting students in their pursuit of professional development. Doctoral students who are first or second author presenting research results at a national conference in their field of study may apply for a \$500 travel award from the College of Education Dean's Office. To apply, fill in the **[COEDU travel award request](#)** and forward it to EDU-Travel@usf.edu along with the required supporting documents (your acceptance letter and abstract).

Tuition Waivers for Qualified Supervisors

Doctoral students who serve as qualified supervisors in areas schools are eligible to receive tuition waivers after they serve as internship supervisors. Tuition waivers defray the cost of up to two classes with 06 credit hours within a single semester. For more information, follow the [Link to the application](#)

College of Education Scholarships

The College of Education awards more than \$400,000 in scholarships to high-achieving students each year through private funding. To learn more about funding opportunities available to students in the USF College of Education, download the [Scholarship Information Guide](#).

Expectations Related to Program Completion

Academic Expectations

Faculty expectations of students' academic, professional, and personal development are explicit in admission, grade point policies, course syllabi, and evaluations. Additionally, meeting deadlines, knowledge of school policy, and periodic contact with the faculty advisor are expected. The faculty also expects that students will read the PhD Student Handbook (this document), the College of Education Doctoral Students Handbook, and the Doctoral Internship Manual.

Supervision Expectations

Supervision practice is a cornerstone of a PhD in CES. As such, students are expected to participate in the supervisory process at multiple points during their program. MHS 7610 Supervision: Theories and Practicum provides a supervision induction experience comprised of a didactic class focused on supervision theory and a supervision practicum during which doctoral students serve as the individual clinical supervisors to master's-level novice counselors enrolled in MHS 6800 Practicum. For the practicum component of MHS 7610, it is expected that doctoral students supervise at least two masters level supervisees (up to four if triadic), to whom they provide two hours of supervision (one hour per supervisee/ or supervisee dyad) every week for the entirety of the semester. Students can meet either through TEAMS or in person.

An essential component of supervision is to support masters-level students' clinical skills through listening to their tapes and providing feedback. In the broader sense, doctoral students assist their supervisees in developing efficacy and competency as masters-level practitioners by leveraging their own expertise in the field.

During the doctoral students' two-hour synchronous class seminar, in addition to developing knowledge of the various supervision theories, time is dedicated to processing doctoral student supervision experience. Given that master's students have multiple supervisors (site, group, and individual), it is imperative that supervisors work towards a shared supervision goal through regular communication. Thus, doctoral students are expected to attend the Masters level practicum group class at least twice during the Spring semester. It is preferred that students attend these classes in person. However, arrangements can be made to participate via TEAMS.

Doctoral students continue their supervision journey during Internship, wherein they complete 100 clock hours (minimum) serving as group and individual/ triadic supervisors.

Internship Expectations

Internships I & II include supervised experiences in at least three of the five doctoral areas (Counseling, Teaching, Supervision, Research, Leadership, and Advocacy). During internships, students receive an average of one hour per week of individual and/or triadic supervision, in addition to 1½ hours per week of group supervision provided by a core or non-core CEP faculty member. Students must complete an internship application and submit it to their advisor the semester before. Fall internship applications are due March 1, and Spring Internship applications are due October 1.

For students who are earning an initial school counseling certification, internship application deadlines for Spring are 7/1 and for Fall 2/1 (6 months ahead of when they will start)

Students will complete 100-hour mini-internships for a total of 600 clock hours over the course of Internships I & II (300 hours in each). The broad components of each 100-hour mini-internship are described below. However, the specifics of each internship contract will be determined by the student in consultation with their advisor and internship supervisor. All students must complete at least one 100-hour internship in the three areas of counseling, teaching, and supervision. The additional 3X100 hours can be earned in the same areas or in any of the remaining doctoral areas (e.g., Research, Leadership, and Advocacy). Students can take up to 2X 100 hours in a single area in concurrent or consecutive areas as noted below, as long as they meet the 600-hour requirement across Internships I & II and the minimum thresholds in counseling, teaching, and supervision. Further, students cannot take more than 200 hours in a single area or divide an internship into less than 100 hours.

In summary, the CEP *requires* doctoral students to earn a minimum of:

- 100 hours in Counseling
- 100 internship hours in Teaching
- 100 internship hours in Supervision
- 100 Internship hours in any doctoral area of the student's choosing
- 100 Internship hours in any doctoral area of the student's choosing
- 100 Internship hours in any doctoral area of the student's choosing

Internship – Counseling (100 hours- concurrently repeatable up to 2X)

Internship I, Fall only. Students must complete one Internship focused on developing advanced counseling skills. The Internship in Counseling is designed to develop and refine advanced counseling skills. Students will complete their internship at various sites, acquiring a combination of direct and indirect counseling hours. Current practitioners can utilize their current employment site as long as they have access to a qualified site supervisor with at least two years of professional counseling experience, relevant certifications and/or licenses in their geographic location required for practice, and training in supervision.

While there is no minimum number of direct counseling hours required, the doctoral counseling internship must include secure audio or video recordings and/or live supervision of students' interactions with clients that are in compliance with applicable institutional, state, federal, and international privacy requirements for all program delivery types. In addition,

students will have weekly individual or triadic supervision by a licensed program supervisor with a doctorate in counselor education, as well as regularly scheduled group supervision with peers and the internship instructor via TEAMS conferencing. The nature of the doctoral-level Internship-counseling experience will be determined in consultation with the student's faculty advisor and internship instructor. For students conducting their internship at their site of employment, their internship activities must be qualitatively distinct from their everyday work roles. Examples may include working towards an advanced certification, operating a new group, and developing a counseling training or group work protocol. The doctoral students must be covered by individual student/professional counseling liability insurance policies while enrolled in any internship course and providing counseling or supervision as part of their doctoral program.

Internship – Teaching (100 hours concurrently and consecutively repeatable up to 2X)

Available during Internship I & II. During either Internship I (Fall) or Internship II (Spring), Ph.D. students must co-teach one course with program faculty. Students will work with their faculty advisor to identify a course or courses to co-teach that meets their career goals. However, it is strongly encouraged that students obtain teaching or co-teaching experience in both online and brick-and-mortar delivery formats. The exact nature of the teaching internship will be determined by the student in consultation with their advisor and teaching supervisor. However, teaching internships will likely entail direct instruction and co-instruction, instructional preparation, grading, etc. Depending on the student's teaching experience, interests, skills, and staffing patterns, students can serve as the instructor of record for one of the program's two undergraduate classes that are offered each semester and paid at an adjunct rate. Students with a strong proclivity for teaching can do two teaching internships, either concurrently (in the same semester) or consecutively (e.g., Internship I & then Internship II), for a total of 200 hours.

Internship – Supervision (100 hours consecutively repeatable up to 2X)

Internship II, Spring only. Supervision internships are typically conducted in the Spring when the program has multiple sections of masters level practicum. Students must complete a minimum 100-hour supervision internship wherein they lead or co-lead a master-level practicum group and provide individual/triadic supervision for up to six students. Students serving as group leaders must also meet for one hour of individual supervision with the masters-level practicum and internship coordinator. The specific nature of students' supervisory activities will be identified by the students in consultation with their faculty advisor and the practicum/internship coordinator. Nonetheless, the overarching focus of internship supervision is for doctoral students to develop expertise as university supervisors of masters-level counseling students. Thus, doctoral students who are supervisors at their respective sites can count supervision hours towards their supervision internship however over 50% of activities must come from university supervisory activities. Students with a strong proclivity for Supervision can do two Supervision internships concurrently (in the same semester) for a total of 200 hours. On a limited basis during the Fall, opportunities exist for students who'd like to assist in the supervision of Masters level internships.

Internship -Leadership & Advocacy (100 hours concurrently and consecutively repeatable up to 2X)

Available during Internship I & II. During this internship, students will complete a supervised doctoral-level leadership and advocacy internship totaling a minimum of 100 hours. The nature of the doctoral-level Internship- Leadership & Advocacy experience must be determined in consultation with the student's faculty advisor and internship instructor. Students with a strong proclivity for Leadership & Advocacy can do two leadership internships, either concurrently (in the same semester) or consecutively (e.g., Internship I & then Internship II), for a total of 200 hours.

Internship Research (100 hours concurrently and consecutively repeatable up to 2X)

Available during Internship I & II. During this internship, students will complete a supervised research internship totaling a minimum of 100 hours. The nature of the doctoral-level Internship- Research experience must be determined in consultation with the student's faculty advisor and internship instructor. Students with a strong proclivity for Research can do two teaching internships, either concurrently (in the same semester) or consecutively (e.g., Internship I & then Internship II), for a total of 200 hours.

Examples of a 600-hour internship

Example 1

- In Fall, during Internship I, student A takes 2X 100 hours in counseling and 1X100 hours in teaching.
- In the spring, during Internship II, student A will spend 100 hours in supervision, 100 hours teaching, and 100 hours in research.

Example 2

- In the Fall, during Internship I, student B takes 100 hours in Counseling and 2X100 hours in Teaching.
- In the Spring, during Internship II, student B takes 100 hours in Supervision and 2X100 hours in Research.

Example 3

- In the Fall, during Internship I, student C takes 100 hours in counseling, 100 hours in Teaching, and 100 hours in Advocacy & Leadership.
- In the Spring, during Internship II, student C takes 100 hours in Supervision, 100 hours in Teaching, & 100 hours in Research.

Example 4

- In the Fall, during Internship I, student D takes 100 hours in counseling and 2X100 hours in Teaching.
- In the Spring, during Internship II, student D takes 100 hours in Supervision and, 100 hours in Leadership & Advocacy, & 100 hours in Research.

Liability Insurance

Students must carry professional liability insurance for counseling and supervision internship experiences. At the doctoral level, students must obtain liability insurance independent of

professional counseling associations that provide free coverage for master's-level students. Students must provide proof of coverage prior to initiating an internship experience and proof of coverage as a class assignment. Please note that student/professional liability insurance only covers work within the scope of professional practice experiences. Also, note that employee insurance does not cover these professional practice experiences.

ACA partners with HPSO to provide discounted liability insurance. Students cannot conduct counseling or supervision sessions or accumulate internship site hours unless they have professional liability insurance coverage and are enrolled in an internship course. Students will repeat the internship course if they fail to fulfill this requirement; refer to the respective course syllabus for further information.

Professional Development and Behavior

Students should be aware that all interactions within the program are considered professional interactions, and students are expected to behave accordingly. Students should be considerate of others and respectful to their peers, faculty, staff, supervisors, and supervisees. Counselors are expected to be better than average communicators; therefore, as counselor educators and supervisors who train counselors-in-training, doctoral students are expected to practice professional communication at all times.

Ethical Standards

The Counselor Education Program expects all students to follow the ACA Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. The Code was developed to protect the client, the counselor, and the student. Ethical practices and topics such as informed consent, confidentiality, and multiple relationships will be continually examined throughout the program. Additionally, doctoral students training to become counselor educators, supervisors, researchers/ scholars, and leaders/ advocates must pay special attention to Sections F and G, which specifically address supervision, training, teaching, and research. If a student has an additional license or certification (e.g., school counseling, clinical mental health counseling, rehabilitation counseling), they should follow the ethical code of that area. As a counselor educators-in-training, acting unethically may be cause for dismissal from the program.

Appropriate Student Activities

The Counselor Education Program at the University of South Florida encourages students to engage in activities that advocate for the counseling profession within the context of their community, state, region, and nation. Activities are not limited to but include advanced clinical counseling; best practices in teaching, online course development, and counseling supervision; supervision of counselors and counseling students who provide individual and group counseling; engaging in research and scholarly activity, such as publications and professional presentations at state, regional, and national conferences; program evaluation of counselor education programs and clinical counseling sites; leadership, mentoring, and consulting; and, active change advocates. Students may also engage in personal counseling to prevent impairment/burnout. The process of seeking personal counseling will be discussed between the student and the faculty advisor as needed.

Expectations of Students

As part of the development as a counselor educator, the Counselor Education Program at the University of South Florida has expectations that doctoral students will be willing and eager to commit to professional service, scholarship, teaching, supervision, counseling, and leadership opportunities in order to better prepare students for their role as a counselor educator. These opportunities often fall outside of scheduled coursework but can ultimately be included in one's vita. These expectations will further be discussed with the faculty advisor and course instructors.

Professional Involvement

If the counseling profession is to be an evolving field sensitive to the needs of society, counselor educators and supervisors must be committed to professional involvement. Student membership in the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) is expected. Student membership in other important organizations, such as the American Counseling Association (ACA), the American Mental Health Counseling Association (AMHCA), and/or the American School Counseling Association (ASCA), is also strongly recommended. Students should also consider becoming involved in their appropriate state and regional counseling and counselor education branches. Note that doctoral students are required to maintain and show proof of professional liability insurance throughout the duration of their studies, and membership in one of these organizations may provide students with discounted rates.

Individual faculty members model this commitment to professionalism through extensive involvement in national and state/regional counseling associations. Most professional organizations offer reduced membership rates to students as well as the following benefits: free student liability insurance; receipt of professional publications (journals and newsletters); reduced registration fees for professional meetings (seminars, conventions, workshops) sponsored by the organization; eligibility for member services (library resource use, legal defense funds and services, group liability insurance); involvement in activities and issues which are directly or indirectly pertinent to the profession (legislation and professional credentialing including licensure, certification, and program accreditation); and affiliation with other professionals having interests and areas of expertise similar to one's own.

Websites for Professional Counseling/Counselor Education Organizations:

- Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) – <http://www.acesonline.net/>
- American Counseling Association (ACA) – <http://www.counseling.org>
- American School Counselors Association (ASCA) – <http://schoolcounselor.org>
- American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA) – <https://www.amhca.org/home>
- National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) - <https://www.nbcc.org/>
- Southern ACES (SACES) - www.saces.org
- Florida Mental Health Counselors Association (FMHCA)- <https://fmhca.wildapricot.org>

- Florida School Counselor Association (FSCA)- <https://www.fla-schoolcounselor.org>

Academic Integrity & Dishonesty

Every student is required to practice and adhere to the principle of academic integrity while undertaking studies at the University of South Florida. Maintaining academic integrity is considered an essential academic standard of every graduate course and program. The university does not tolerate academic dishonesty. Furthermore, faculty may use software in Canvas to detect plagiarism.

Academic dishonesty may be an academic issue, a disciplinary issue, or both, depending on its pervasiveness and/or severity. Any student engaged in academic dishonesty may face reprimand, disciplinary warning, a lowered or failing grade(s), and/or probation or suspension from the course, academic program, or university, or expulsion from the university, following the graduate school guidelines for academic integrity found at <https://www.usf.edu/graduate-studies/students/academic-integrity-of-students/violations-and-sanctions.aspx>

Appeals

Once the initial violation of the academic integrity regulation has been documented and fairly discussed by the student and the instructor, the student may appeal the instructor's decision that a violation has occurred. At that point, the student will follow the procedures outlined in the USF's Academic Grievance Procedure Policy. Please see **USF3.027** (Academic Integrity of Students Academic Affairs).

Use of Artificial Intelligence

The Counselor Education Program at the University of South Florida acknowledges that AI technology is a powerful tool and resource. Any use of AI within course assignments should be made with a critical lens and proper APA citations. Written work without a citation or not in your own words is plagiarism, and it will be handled accordingly per university policy. Doctoral students should review the Office of Graduate Studies AI policy found at: <https://www.usf.edu/graduate-studies/students/electronic-thesis-dissertation/additional-information/ai.aspx>

Dual Relationships in Coursework

Dual relationships include (but are not limited to) romantic relationships, close friendships, roommate relationships, family members, etc. Students must immediately disclose if they share a course section with a classmate with whom they have a dual relationship so that modifications may be made as needed.

Technology Resources and Competence Needed to Complete the Program.

Doctoral students are expected to be knowledgeable in basic computer skills, such as word processing, spreadsheet, and email program requirements, to participate in their courses successfully. Failure to meet these requirements may cause problems accessing the course materials.

Hardware and Software Requirements

Please review the hardware and software requirements necessary to participate in online courses. Canvas only requires an operating system that can run the latest compatible web browsers. Your computer operating system should be kept up to date with the latest recommended security updates and upgrades.

- Web Browsers and Internet Speed
 - For best performance, Canvas should be used on the current or first previous major release of Chrome, Firefox, Edge, or Safari. More information about supported browsers.
 - Along with compatibility and web standards, Canvas has been carefully crafted to accommodate low bandwidth environments. It is recommended to have a minimum internet speed of 512kbps.
- Microsoft Office 365 is required to view course materials, complete course work etc. Students receive Office 365 accounts when they are admitted to USF. This means that you will have an Office 365 (@usf.edu) email address, and the associated Office 365 services (Teams, OneDrive, OneNote, etc.). Your username and password are your NetID@usf.edu and NetID password. These tools can be accessed at: <https://portal.office.com/>

Some courses may require additional programs, such as video/audio recording software or statistical/qualitative analysis software. USF offers a variety of online resources and tools for students, faculty, and staff to stay connected to the university. Review the Information Technology's software catalog <https://software.usf.edu/all-software>

Professional Dispositions and Skill Standards

In addition to maintaining high scholastic standards, students enrolled in all Counselor Education programs at USF must, as part of their academic training, develop professional and personal dispositions and skills necessary to work effectively with people with diverse needs. CACREP defines professional dispositions as “The commitments, characteristics, values, beliefs, and behaviors that influence the counselor’s professional growth and interactions with clients, faculty, supervisors, and peers, including working in a diverse, multicultural, and global society with marginalized populations” (CACREP 2024 Standards, p. 35).

Professional behavior is assessed throughout the program and is considered an academic issue, and as such, it can impact academic progress if a student fails to demonstrate appropriate professional behaviors.

Below is a list of expected professional behaviors. Please note that this list is not all-inclusive.

- The student relates to peers, professors, and others in an appropriate professional manner in all courses.
- The student complies with legal, ethical, and programmatic standards during the training program.
- The student demonstrates the ability to receive, integrate, and utilize feedback from peers, instructors, and supervisors.

- The student demonstrates a willingness to self-explore, grow, and compensate for deficiencies.

Students are required to adhere to the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. Students are also expected to adhere to their specialty area Code of Ethics and/or Codes of Conduct. Further, students must adhere to the requirements of regulatory boards overseeing licensure in the State of Florida or the student's state of residence. The CEP uses two different Personal and Professional Disposition Forms for the master's and doctoral programs that are used at regular intervals throughout the program to monitor and provide feedback on the dispositions expected of students. The form for doctoral students is located in Appendix A.

Student Retention Policy

No grade less than a "B" will be acceptable for any of the courses in the students' program of study. If a student earns a "B-" or less, they must re-take the course in order to graduate. Each semester, a retention meeting is held among the faculty to discuss any students who may be having difficulty in the program, as well as appropriate interventions, which may include a letter to the student, a meeting with the student, or other appropriate steps.

The CEP, consistent with other counselor and professional training programs, evaluates the development and progress of its students. The following section outlines the student review process.

Student Review Procedures

The procedures for the evaluation are as follows:

1. Students will be evaluated at the completion of the MHS 7930 Advanced Seminar in Counselor Education and prior to commencing the internship. In each semester, both regular and adjunct faculty will evaluate every student in all classes of their teaching load, both in terms of academic performance and professional development. Dispositional evaluations will be assessed using the **Personal and Professional Disposition Forms**.
3. Evaluations of students enrolled in MHS 7930 are important; students are given opportunities early in their program to correct skill deficiencies. It is also important to identify early in their training those students who will not be successful in this program, prior to student investment of a great deal of time and personal resources.
4. All evaluations of each student will be retained in a secure program file. If sequential notations of problems are found from one semester to another, this is reason for concern.
5. Students may be identified for discussion of skill deficiency through any of the following means:
 1. Faculty Evaluations on the **Personal and Professional Disposition Forms**

2. Failure of any course or earning a grade below a B
 3. Concerns that arise through interaction or observation made by faculty or other professionals
 4. Student placed on academic probation
 5. Concerns expressed by practicum or internship site supervisors
6. The faculty advisor or Program Coordinator will notify the student with the *Notice of Professional Concerns Form* and schedule a meeting to review the faculty concerns and suggest measures for remediation.
7. If a majority of the faculty considers the deficiencies to be significant enough to warrant potential dismissal from the program, the student will be placed on Program Probation for a minimum period of two regular semesters (excluding summers). The student, advisor, and Faculty Review Committee will develop a plan for remediation of the student's behavior, identifying specific skills that require strengthening. The plan will include:
- a) Behavioral definitions of the student's problem
 - b) Expected behaviors or goals
 - c) Possible methods to reach these goals (e.g. personal counseling, group growth experiences, self-structured behavioral change, and additional academic course work or practical experiences, etc.)
 - d) Plan for how the attainment of the goals will be demonstrated
 - e) Date for goal attainment and reevaluation
8. A copy of the plan will be provided to the student and a copy of the plan will be retained in the student file. Both copies of the plan will be signed and dated by the student. The plan will be formally copied to the department chair.
9. Near the date for reevaluation, the advisor will request an evaluation of the student's progress. The advisor will request an appointment with the student to allow the student to present all documentation relevant to progress made on the remediation plan.
10. The faculty will evaluate the student at a regularly scheduled faculty meeting. The student's advisor chairs this evaluation. The process will include a review of the faculty evaluations completed since the initiation of the probationary period, and any documentation provided to the advisor by the student.
11. At this time the faculty will determine whether progress has been satisfactory. The faculty has four options for recommendations:
- a) Continuation in the program: the specified concerns no longer present a significant problem and the student is allowed to continue in the program.

- b) Continued probation and remediation: progress is documented on the first evaluation, an updated behavioral plan is prepared, and a date is set for another reevaluation at the program faculty's discretion.
 - c) Voluntary resignation: recommend that the student resign from the program.
 - d) Dismissal from the program: student has failed to attain the behavioral goals, no expectation that they can reasonably attain them in the near future.
12. The student will be notified in writing by the advisor of the reevaluation decision and of the option to make an appointment with the advisor for feedback concerning the decision.
 13. Any student who is the subject of a retention meeting three (3) times will be recommended for termination. This ordinarily does not include occasions when follow-ups are being discussed unless the student's non-compliance with the retention plan is the subject of the meeting.
 14. If dismissal from the program is recommended, the student will be given 30 days, within the regular academic year, in which to: a) prepare and present to the faculty a written response to the notification; b) request, in writing, a faculty review of the termination recommendation and to meet with the faculty as a whole.
 15. Following the student's presentation or request, the program faculty will:
 - a) Review the student's progress in the program;
 - b) Review the student's the student's professional behaviors;
 - c) Review the student's remediation progress; and
 - d) Render a decision as to whether the dismissal recommendation is to be upheld.
 16. The Program Coordinator will provide written notification of the decision to the student.
 17. If the dismissal decision is upheld, the Program Coordinator will forward a formal dismissal recommendation to the Chair of LPLL and Dean of the College of Education.
 18. If the student is not satisfied with the program faculty's decision, the appeals procedures of the University of South Florida's College of Education are available to the student.

Evaluation in the Program

In addition to monitoring student dispositions, the Counselor Education Program has a comprehensive evaluation plan for systematically evaluating, monitoring, and reporting the

achievement of program objectives annually. Annual evaluations report on academic indicators (e.g., pass rates on credentialing examinations, rubric scores), dispositional indicators (as described above), fieldwork evaluations, evidence of commitment to diversity, graduate student outcomes (e.g., completion rates, and job placement rates) and a process of remediating programmatic areas of weakness. Students currently in the program, program faculty, institutional administrators, and personnel in cooperating agencies (e.g., employers, site supervisors) are notified each year when the report is available on the program website <https://www.usf.edu/education/areas-of-study/counselor-education/programs/master-of-arts/student-outcomes-competencies.aspx>

University Resources and Services

The Academic Success Center

This center is located in the USF Library and can provide assistance for a variety of academic and study skill needs. Students are expected to write extensively in this program and may at times need to refine their writing skills. The Writing Center, housed within the Academic Success Center, can help both undergraduate and graduate students who need to improve their writing skills. Staff will not write your papers; rather, they can help you improve what you have already written, including the organization, style, and grammar. There are no charges for their services.

USF Counseling Center

The Counseling Center provides free counseling services for University of South Florida Students. Students can access a variety of psychotherapy services inclusive of individual, group, and couples counseling.

Career Services

The USF Career Center offers an array of online resources to assist students in transitioning from academic life to professional employment.

Students Accessibility Services

SAS facilitates opportunities for student success by promoting equitable education and providing academic accommodations to students with disabilities. Eligible students can apply for academic accommodations, schedule exams and appointments, and obtain accommodations at the SAS office online.

APPENDIX A: PhD - Personal and Professional Disposition Scale

Scale

- 4 Exemplary: The student consistently demonstrates an advanced ability to meet this disposition.
- 3 Proficient: The student consistently demonstrates a competent ability to meet this disposition.
- 2 Developing: The student demonstrates an emerging ability to meet this disposition.
- 1 Unsatisfactory: The student does not demonstrate the ability to meet this disposition.
- Not Observed: Unable to evaluate.

Note: PhD Students should be proficient or exemplary per the personal and professional dispositions as these lay the foundation for the development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for the five areas of doctoral study.

A. Professional Identity & Values

1. Exhibits a strong capacity for self-awareness and self-reflection, engaging in thoughtful introspection and examination of both personal and professional experiences and behaviors.
2. Models/exemplifies the foundational values of the counseling profession, e.g., empathy, respect for client autonomy, competent practice, professional boundaries, etc.
3. Demonstrates a growth mindset across all activities as a student and emerging counselor educator and shows curiosity about new perspectives, knowledge, and concepts.
4. Shows openness and proficiency in accepting and incorporating feedback from faculty, supervisors, and peers, being receptive and adaptable to suggestions for improvement.
5. Demonstrates critical thinking skills and thinking should be flexible and malleable.

B. Ethical Behavior & Professionalism

1. Consistently upholds ethical standards and behaviors across diverse roles (counselor, teacher, supervisor, researcher, leader, advocate) as specified in the most recent ACA Code of Ethics.
2. Demonstrates integrity in all program-related activities, which includes residencies, supervision, teaching, classroom conduct, and interactions with peers, faculty, staff, and master's level students.
3. Demonstrates personal and professional accountability, particularly when facing difficult life stressors and challenges that may impact their coursework and professional responsibilities.
4. Is punctual and attends to professional responsibilities as required in the Student Handbook, Internship Manual, Dissertation Manual, and course syllabi.
5. Demonstrates personal and professional accountability, particularly when facing difficult life stressors and challenges that may impact their coursework and professional responsibilities.

6. Advocates professionally with peers and colleagues on issues relevant to counselor education and counseling.
7. Engages in professional conversations when advocating for issues and experiences relevant to the profession of counseling and counselor education.

C. Relationally Oriented

1. Demonstrates a professional disposition with an attitude that acknowledges their own strengths and areas for growth
2. Cultivates relational spaces based on empathy, compassion, collaboration, and empowerment that encourage personal and professional development and resilience for all involved.
3. Demonstrates cultural humility by engaging in an ongoing process of self-exploration and self-critique combined with a willingness to learn from others.
4. Demonstrates knowledge and skills in culturally responsive practices by respecting diverse viewpoints and avoiding the imposition of personal values.
5. Develops collegial and professional relationships with cohort, staff, and program faculty through relational awareness and skills requisite in counseling and counselor education work contexts.

D. Development as Counselor Educator and Supervisor

1. Shows emerging ability to navigate between the various roles of student, counselor, counselor educator, and supervisor with flexibility and self-awareness.
2. Models the dispositions expected of master's students and actively supports the development of counselors-in-training.
3. Compassionately provides feedback to master's students, including strengths and areas for growth, while engaging in gatekeeping responsibilities in collaboration with program faculty.
4. Mindfully manages reactions within the classroom, both as instructor and student, by regulating emotions, actively listening, leaning into hard conversations, and reflecting on constructive resolution.
5. Applies due process when evaluating master's students and understands and attends to the power differential between doctoral and master's students within the classroom context.

APPENDIX B: Notice of Professional Concerns Form

(Formal Retention Efforts)

Student: _____

Semester/Year: _____

Completed by: _____

Date submitted to Program Coordinator _____

In the space provided below, write a brief narrative of the academic concerns regarding this student, including academic grades, professional skill development, professional characteristics, and overall appropriateness for the field of counseling and counselor education. Attach a separate sheet if needed.

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

*Please note that signing this form indicates receipt of the Notice of Professional Concern by the student and does not necessarily indicate agreement of the Notice by the student.

Faculty Signature: _____ **Date:** _____