



# Northern Illinois University

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## Doctoral Program in Counselor Education and Supervision Handbook

Counseling and Higher Education | 815-753-1448 | [cedu.niu.edu/cahe](http://cedu.niu.edu/cahe)

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## WELCOME

Welcome to the Counselor Education and Supervision Ph.D. program! Congratulations on embarking on an advanced degree in the field of professional counseling. Northern Illinois University (NIU) takes pride in providing a doctoral program that will prepare you for a career in counselor education and supervision. Throughout this program, you will continue to enhance your counseling skills as well as develop as a researcher, educator, and clinical supervisor.

This handbook is a key resource for you as a student in our Counselor Education and Supervision program. It provides information that serves as a guide throughout the program and contains key policies, procedures, and other important information about successful completion of this program. Thank you for choosing our doctoral counseling program to develop your talents and work toward your degree.

### MISSION STATEMENT FOR THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE IN COUNSELOR EDUCATION AND SUPERVISION

*The Department of Counseling and Higher Education makes strong contributions to both the NIU mission and to the goals of the Illinois Commitment. All programs, including the doctoral program, prepare multiculturally competent counselor educators and supervisors who develop an expertise in the core CACREP competencies of teaching, research, leadership and advocacy, counseling, and supervision. Students develop critical thinking through personal and professional growth experiences that promote awareness of self and impact on others. Students involve themselves in appropriate program and professional association activities. Students generate new knowledge and skills that result in meaningful research that promotes social justice in a pluralistic society as well as advances the profession of counselor education and supervision. Preparing professionals with a counselor identity to work as multicultural, ethical counselor educators and supervisors is the program's highest priority.* (Passed 12-09-10)

### THE COUNSELING FACULTY

The faculty offer the benefits of their diverse backgrounds and varied educational, occupational, and professional organization experiences. All faculty members are active in professional associations such as the American Counseling Association and its divisions, the Illinois Counseling Association and its divisions, Chi Sigma Iota, and the National Board for Certified Counselors.

*Suzanne Degges-White, Ph.D., LCPC* is department chair and professor who received her Doctorate in counseling and counselor education, graduate certificate in women's studies, Master of Science in counseling from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Master of Science in counseling, and Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Degges-White is a licensed counselor whose focus includes working with individuals and families facing transitions. Her academic research explores development over the life span with a strong focus on women's relationships and women's developmental transitions. She is a past president of the Association for Adult Development and Aging, a division of the American Counseling Association. She has also served on the American Counseling Association's Governing Council.

*Melissa J. Fickling, Ph.D., LCPC, ACS* is an associate professor and current counseling program coordinator. She joined the NIU faculty in 2017. She completed her doctoral work in counseling and counselor education in 2015 at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and her master's degree in counseling at Roosevelt University. Her primary research interests include the intersections of work, mental health, and meaning. She also conducts research in the areas of clinical supervision and career counseling. Fickling has practiced professional counseling in higher education, community, and private practice settings and is a licensed clinical professional counselor in Illinois. Her clinical interests include adult career transition, grief and loss, identity, and spiritual issues. She is an Associate Editor for NCDA Career Convergence and an editorial board member for ACES Teaching Practice Briefs. Fickling was the 2016-2017 Edwin L. Herr fellow for Chi Sigma Iota and 2020 recipient of the National Career Development Association's Diversity Initiatives Award.

*Yenitza Z. Guzman, Ph.D, LPC, NCC, PEL* is a clinical assistant professor at Northern Illinois University. She earned her PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision from Governors State University in August 2022. She received her Master of Arts in School Counseling from Governors State University and her Bachelor of Arts in Teaching of English from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Guzman comes to NIU with over a decade of clinical experience working with youth in Chicago Public Schools. She also has experience teaching a variety of graduate courses in both the school counseling and clinical mental health counseling programs. Her primary research interests include advocacy in the school counseling profession, multicultural issues, and intersection of the parent-child relationship in counseling. Guzman has presented at both local and international conferences.

*Kimberly A. Hart, Ph.D., LPC, PEL:SC, NCC, ACS* serves NIU as the Counseling Programs Admissions Coordinator, Director of the Community Counseling Training Center, and Coordinator of Field-based Experiences in counseling. Hart came to NIU with 10 years of group facilitation experience working with children, adolescents and adults of diverse backgrounds. She has presented over a two dozen presentations at national, regional and state conferences in areas such as experiential education, adventure-based counseling, cross-cultural facilitation, multiculturalism in counseling and the culture of counselor preparation programs. Hart specialized in clinical mental health counseling, school counseling and consultation, clinical supervision in counselor education, and mental health first aid.

Hart served as Illinois Counseling Association President in 2019 to 2020 as part of her four-year president's term beginning in 2017 as president-elect. She has held office in the Illinois Counselors Association under the Illinois Association for Specialist in Group work as well as Illinois Counselors for Social Justice. Hart is a past recipient of the Illinois Counselor Educators and Supervisors Site Supervisor of the Year Award, Mental Health First Aid Maximus Instruction Training Award, Illinois Association for Specialists in Group Work Beverly Brown Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Field of Group Counseling, and the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women Outstanding Women Award. Hart continues to conduct

research on multiculturalism and cultural inclusion among counseling professionals with an emphasis on increasing multicultural consciousness and curiosity.

*Dana T. Isawi, Ph.D.* is an assistant professor of counseling and the CACREP liaison at Northern Illinois University. She joined the NIU faculty in 2017. Isawi holds a Ph.D. in counselor education and supervision from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and a master's degree in school counseling from Marymount University. She has experience in teaching a variety of graduate courses in mental health counseling, school counseling and play therapy as well as providing supervision for graduate students. Isawi has clinical experience in the school and community settings both locally and internationally. Her professional experience also includes counseling intervention development, implementation, and evaluation. Isawi's research interests include multicultural and social justice issues in counseling, especially on the traumatic experiences of refugees and counselors working with trauma survivors. She also conducts research on cultural humility in counselor education and supervision. Her presentations also focus on cultural considerations in play therapy and in working with families from diverse backgrounds.

*Injung Lee, Ph.D., NCC*, joined the Department of Counseling and Higher Education in Fall 2022. Prior to joining Northern Illinois University, she was an assistant professor at Purdue University Northwest. She received her Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision from the University of Iowa in 2019. Lee worked with school-aged individuals and young adults in diverse settings, including K-12 schools, a youth counseling center, and a university counseling center. Her research interests include professional identity development of counselors-in-training, ethnic/cultural minority populations in counselor education, as well as trauma-informed teaching. Using both quantitative and qualitative approaches, Lee has been actively publishing in peer-reviewed counseling journals, including *Counselor Education and Supervision* and *Journal of Counseling and Development*. She has served on the editorial boards of *Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision*, *Journal of International Students*, and *Journal of Asia Pacific Counseling*. She has also served as a regional facilitator for the International Students and Faculty Interest Network (ISFIN) at ACES since 2018. She was an emerging leader of ACES (2017) and NCACES (2018), and an editorial fellow of *Counselor Education and Supervision* (2020-2021) journal.

*Timothy "T.J." Schoonover, PhD, LPC (AR, IL), PEL:SC, RPT, NCC* is an assistant professor at Northern Illinois University. He completed his doctoral work at University of Arkansas in July 2021 and his master's degree in counseling at Northern Illinois University in May 2017. His primary research interests focus on childhood trauma, play therapy, school counseling, creative counseling supervision interventions, and the development of counseling students. Dr. Schoonover's primary clinical work has been at community mental health organizations working with children and adolescents. Additionally, his school counseling experience has been at title 1 elementary schools and schools for children who been exposed to trauma. He has received grants from the Association for Specialists in Group Work and the North Central Association for Counselor Education and Supervision to further his research agenda. Additionally, he was the recipient of the 2022 Humanistic Dissertation Award from the Association for Humanistic Counseling.

*Peitao Zhu, PhD, NCC* joined the NIU faculty in Fall 2020. He received his Ph.D. in Counseling and Counselor Education from Syracuse University. Professor Zhu's research agenda is most focused on cultural humility and its implication in counseling and counselor education, while

expanding his scholarship in group work, counselor education pedagogy, and theoretical/philosophical issues in counseling. He is passionate about a broad range of quantitative and qualitative methodologies and have been publishing actively and consistently in indexed, competitive counseling and counseling-related journals such as the *Counselor Education and Supervision*, *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, and *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*. Professor Zhu serves on the editorial board of several top-rated journals, such as the *Journal for Counseling and Development* and *Journal for Specialists in Group Work*. Professor Zhu has been awarded numerous research grants by national counseling organizations and received various recognitions such as an ACES Emerging Leader (2021) and NYU Steinhardt Faculty-First Look Scholar (2019-2020). Professor Zhu is a National Certified Counselor (NCC); he has a particular clinical interest in complex trauma and adopts a relationally-focused approach to his counseling work.

## **PROGRAM ACCREDITATIONS**

The Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) has awarded accreditation to the Ph.D. program in counselor education and supervision at NIU. Receiving a degree from an accredited program acknowledges that students have been taught the necessary skills to work in the counseling field as an educator and supervisor. The counseling program takes pride in continuously preparing students for careers in the field of professional counseling. Current and prospective students are urged to log in to the [CACREP website](#) in order to learn more about CACREP's history and mission.

## **PROGRAM GOALS AND OUTCOMES**

The counseling program at NIU offers strong didactic and experiential coursework; varied theoretical approaches; a quality faculty who value research, inquiry, and professional involvement; and well-equipped training facilities. We adhere to the professional values outlined in the ACA Code of Ethics (2014, p. 3):

1. enhancing human development throughout the life span;
2. honoring diversity and embracing a multicultural approach in support of the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of people within their social and cultural contexts;
3. promoting social justice;
4. safeguarding the integrity of the counselor–client relationship; and
5. practicing in a competent and ethical manner

### **Program objectives**

The objectives for the Ph.D. Counselor Education and Supervision program at NIU are to address the professional leadership roles of counselor education, supervision,

advanced counseling practice and research competencies expected of all graduates of the doctoral program.

Objective 1: Students will explain the theory of advanced human growth, development and/or learning.

Objective 2: Students will describe advanced knowledge of counseling theories.

Objective 3: Students will demonstrate skills in counseling throughout internship and during sessions in applied settings.

Objective 4: Students will apply learned skills while supervising colleagues in applied settings by completing COUN 752, Supervision in Counseling, with 80 percent accuracy or better as assessed by the instructor.

Objective 5: Students will describe advanced research skills in counseling.

Objective 6: Students will demonstrate competence in an area of specialization related to counseling.

Objective 7: Students will demonstrate proficiency with and sensitivity to issues in counseling related to diversity in race, gender, religion, age, ability, sexual/affectional orientation and other facets of identity and culture.

## Learning outcomes

Doctoral programs in counselor education address professional roles in five doctoral core areas: counseling, supervision, teaching, research and scholarship, and leadership and advocacy. These five doctoral core areas represent the foundational knowledge required of doctoral graduates in counselor education. Students can review all core standards for doctoral programs by reading Section 6 of the 2016 CACREP Standards.

### General Program Outcomes

- Demonstrate knowledge in advanced counseling skills.
- Demonstrate knowledge in advanced teaching skills.
- Demonstrate knowledge in advanced supervision skills.
- Demonstrate knowledge in advanced leadership skills.
- Demonstrate the ability to conduct independent scholarly research.

### Outcome Assessment Methods

- Counseling Competencies Scale (1)
- Facilitator Evaluation Form (4)
- Teaching Evaluations (2)
- Supervisor-in-Training Evaluation (3)
- Candidacy Exam (1-5)
- Doctoral Dissertation (4,5)
- Graduate Exit Survey (1-5)
- Alumni Survey (1-5)



- Employer Survey (1-5)

## PROGRAM INFORMATION

### Cohort model

The Counselor Education and Supervision program operates a *cohort model* program with a new cohort starting each fall semester. A three-year plan and a four-year plan is available. Your initial program of study will be developed in your first semester, during COUN 700. If you have additional questions, please contact your assigned program.

### Matriculation requirements

Students may matriculate into the program once an admission offer is made and accepted in the spring. Student-at-large enrollment is by instructor permission only. Ongoing matriculation is dependent on successful completion of coursework, maintenance of an adequate GPA, and meeting dispositional expectations (Appendix A).

### Orientation for all doctoral students

Each fall, the instructor of COUN 700 will conduct the orientation to the program during the initial class meeting. This is a required meeting. At this meeting, students get an overview of program requirements and expectations. This handbook is distributed prior to the beginning of the semester. Students are expected to have read the handbook prior to the first meeting of the COUN 700 class.

### Coursework

The Ph.D. in CES requires a minimum of 84 semester hours including a maximum of 30 semester hours from the master's degree, six semester hours of CES internship (COUN 786), a minimum of 15 semester hours of dissertation (COUN 799), and core curriculum in counselor education and research.

#### CES coursework (24 credit hours):

- COUN 700 – Prof. Orientation to Counselor Ed: Leadership, Advocacy, and Ethics; 3 credits.
- COUN 701 – Professional Seminar in Counselor Education and Development; 3 credits.
- COUN 730 – Advanced Theories of Counseling; 3 credits.
- COUN 750 – Advanced Practicum in Individual Counseling; 3 credits.
- COUN 752 – Supervision in Counseling; 3 credits.
- COUN 765 – Multicultural Counseling and Social Justice; 3 credits.
- COUN 790 (x2) – Research & Scholarship in Counselor Education; 6 credits.

### Research (9 credit hours):

- ETR 521 – Educational Statistics I; 3 credits.
- ETR 522 – Educational Statistics II; 3 credits.
- ETR 525 – Qualitative Research in Education; 3 credits.

### Advising

When a student is admitted into the doctoral program, the student will be assigned a faculty advisor. When a student is nearing completion of all required coursework (except for 799 and 786), a student will begin to form a candidacy committee which eventually becomes their dissertation committee. This process, along with a candidacy orientation occurs in the spring semester of COUN 790. See candidacy and dissertation sections below for more information.

## DOCTORAL COUNSELING PRACTICUM

Each student will complete a three-credit hour course in applied practicum (COUN 750). This experience occurs during the first semester in the CES program. Applied practicum includes receiving group supervision and one to one and one half hours of individual or triadic supervision each week. The CCTC is a small counseling agency run by the CAHE Department under the direction of a Clinical Counseling Faculty member and maintains the highest ethical and professional standards. As practicum counselors, you will be responsible for meeting clients, completing intakes, maintaining electronic client records, video recording all sessions with your clients, reviewing recordings, and attending all required individual and group supervision. In addition, students may also complete group counseling hours by leading or co-leading a master's level experiential growth group. Doctoral students are required to complete a minimum of 100 clock hours through applied practicum with at least 40 direct contact hours.

### Criminal background check

The counseling program requires that all practicum counselors submit to a criminal background check by the Illinois State Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (Adam Walsh Child Protection Act) prior to approval for counseling practicum and subsequent internship experiences. This is consistent with the state law that requires Illinois school districts to conduct criminal background investigations of applicants for certified and non-certified positions, including counseling licensure. An applicant whose background check results in a status of “no record” may be admitted into counseling practicum.

This policy was passed unanimously by the counseling faculty, Feb. 17, 2011. Current students **must** complete the CBC prior to beginning COUN 750 Applied Practicum in Counseling and COUN 786 Internship in Counseling courses. This requirement is based on the fact that counseling students are working with persons who are vulnerable, non-adult minors and/or have increased risk for vulnerability.

It generally requires three to six weeks to obtain the results of a fingerprint check. During that period, the student is not permitted to participate in field experiences in the schools. Students are responsible for all fees connected with this procedure. Applicants may retrieve background check forms from the Community Counseling Training Center in Graham 416.

The results of this background check are kept confidential from the counseling faculty. If a positive response is found from the background check, this information is shared with the Chair of the Counseling and Higher Education Department, and shared with the student.

Suzanne Degges-White  
Gabel Hall 200

If a student interrupts his/her program for one semester or longer, a criminal background check may be required upon their reentry. A criminal background check is only good for two years. Thus, completion of more than one background check may be required during the course of a students' degree program and/or internship experiences. See appendix D for more information.

## **DOCTORAL INTERNSHIP**

An internship is defined as a supervised learning experience designed to provide students with opportunities to implement knowledge and theory acquired through coursework in actual work settings. Internship consists of developmentally appropriate field-based experiences for students in the doctoral degree program in counselor education and supervision. Internship is an opportunity to apply valuable counselor education and supervision knowledge and skills in a variety of ways. Interns will integrate advanced competencies and knowledge with professional supervision. Internship placements occur primarily on campus. Requests for internship and approval for placement are required prior to registration.

Doctoral internship is broken up into five distinct areas: 1) Teaching, 2) Clinical Supervision, 3) Leadership & Advocacy, 4) Research, and 5) Counseling. All doctoral students are required to complete internships across a minimum of three of the five domains. At NIU, all doctoral students will complete two credit hours each in the domains of teaching and supervision. For doctoral student who came directly from their master's program to the PhD program, one semester of advanced counseling internship will be required. Doctoral students must complete six internship credit hours during their program. The grading system is satisfactory/unsatisfactory. Doctoral internships may coincide with specific coursework or prerequisite experiences each semester in addition to the required COUN 786 internship seminar course. Each internship is experience-based, meaning clock hours do not directly translate to credit-hour equivalencies. New internship experiences will be announced by program faculty via the PhD students' email listserv each semester.

Faculty communicate internship opportunities to doctoral students via the PhD program listserv. Doctoral students are placed into available internship experiences by the faculty according to student need, professional goals, and interests.

All doctoral students should be aware of the following required components of the internship experience:

COUN 750, Doctoral Practicum in Counseling, is the first required field experience prior to beginning the doctoral internship and is generally taken in the first fall semester of the program.

- Doctoral interns maintain their internship paperwork in the Blackboard NIU Counseling Program Community and Anthology systems. Internship placements, plans, hours tracking, live observations, evaluations and other internship documentation must be completed separately for each semester in which doctoral students enroll in COUN 786 internship.
- Complete an Internship Plan agreement before your internship begins each semester. You should meet with your faculty site supervisor to approve your plan. This plan should be as specific as possible, including time you will spend completing internship responsibilities, various activities in which you intend to participate, outside events that you plan on attending, plans to complete required internship experiences, and other goals and objectives.
- Enroll for one credit hour of COUN 786 per each internship experience in each semester you intend to complete an internship experience (maximum of 2 credit hours per semester).
- Doctoral interns are permitted to complete up to two different internship experiences in a semester. Internship responsibilities and goals should be clearly differentiated in the internship plans, and all internship hours accrued in one semester are tracked in the same internship hours log.
- Although you may use the same plan contents if continuing in the same internship placement beyond one semester, provided you are performing the same duties and activities under the same faculty supervision, you must create a new plan with amended dates for the each semester.
- Doctoral students completing an internship in a school need at least 400 hours in a school setting and must commit themselves to a minimum of three consecutive hours per day at their site.

Doctoral students successfully pass internship through the completion of activities and attainment of competencies, not by mere accumulation of hours. Final evaluations will be conducted by site supervisors at the end of each semester of doctoral internship.

By the end of the sixth internship credit hour, each student must have documented a minimum of 600 clock hours of internship in teaching, supervision and a third field experience domain.

Students must attend internship seminar meetings (COUN 786) as scheduled with the university supervisor. Failure to attend the seminar may result in a failing grade, even if you are doing passing work at the site. Absences will be monitored by the instructor and make-up work may be required for missed sessions.

There is no limit to the number of semesters you may enroll in an internship class. However, students are expected and required to attend all seminar classes and a maximum of 15 credit-hours may be counted toward the degree.

### Liability insurance

Students are required to obtain professional liability insurance before working with any clients and/or counseling supervisees. The American Counseling Association offers discounted liability insurance to members through Healthcare Providers Service Organization (HPSO). Students may also seek liability insurance offered through other organizations such as the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC). All doctoral students must show proof of their insurance at the start of the semester and may not counsel a client or supervise a counselor-in-training without meeting this requirement.

## CANDIDACY EXAMINATION

All doctoral students in counseling are required to pass a candidacy exam prior to admission to doctoral candidate status. The process and the policies for the candidacy examination are detailed in the following sections of this handbook. A candidacy exam orientation session will be held during each semester of COUN 790. Students will form their candidacy committees during their spring semester of COUN 790.

Upon completing the last semester of required coursework in the PhD program (except for COUN 786: Doctoral Internship, which can be taken concurrent to enrollment in COUN 799), doctoral students enter their candidacy exam period that extends no longer 12 months. This means that doctoral students must successfully defend their dissertation proposal (chapters 1-3) within one calendar year of completing their required coursework. Student who do not successfully defend their proposal within that timeframe will receive an Unsatisfactory in COUN 799 and may be dismissed from the program for not making sufficient progress toward degree completion.

If a doctoral student wishes **not** to enter the candidacy exam period immediately upon completing their required coursework, they may take a [leave of absence](#) from the graduate school. During this time, the student will not be able to enroll in COUN 799. The twelve-month timeline will apply once the student's leave of absence has ended and they enroll in COUN 799.

Once the candidacy exam and proposal have been successfully completed, doctoral candidates have one calendar year within which to successfully defend their dissertation. If dissertation defense does not occur within this time period, the dissertation committee chair may assign a “U” grade for COUN 799 and may be dismissed from the program for not making sufficient progress toward degree completion.

## Candidacy & Dissertation Committee Composition

In general, a student’s candidacy committee becomes the dissertation committee at the successful completion of the dissertation proposal. A faculty member may decline to serve as the chair or member of any candidacy exam committee, in which case the department will assist the student in seeking a chair or additional committee members.

Membership of candidacy and dissertation examining committees will include representatives of major and minor fields. The number of voting members on such committees normally will be three to five, and at least three are required. All members of the committee must hold the status of full, senior, or provisional member of the graduate faculty or serve as graduate faculty scholars at Northern Illinois University. With regard to the voting members of the candidacy exam and dissertation:

- At least one-half must be tenured or tenure-track faculty members at NIU.
- At least one-half of the members must be senior members of the graduate faculty at NIU.
- All members must belong to the graduate faculty in the student’s program or a closely related one as determined by the department chair (or designee).

A graduate faculty scholar or a full member of the graduate faculty may, with a senior member of the graduate faculty, co-chair a dissertation committee. In addition, the dean of the Graduate School or the dean’s designee will serve as an ex officio, nonvoting member of all committees to conduct the oral defense of the dissertation. The dean or a dean’s designee is to participate in both parts of the defense.

## The Doctoral Candidacy Examination

The format of the candidacy exam is a combined presentation of the dissertation research proposal and an in-depth oral defense of the research area. A complete, written research proposal should be submitted to the full committee no later than two weeks prior to the oral defense date. A proposal will include three chapters which cover: 1) an introduction to the dissertation topic, 2) an in-depth, scholarly literature review of the research area, 3) description of the importance and potential impact of the research, and 4) a detailed plan outlining the methodology and defining how data collection and analysis will progress. The proposal must also

include all front matter (e.g., title page, table of contents, list of tables/figures), references, and appendices. APA Style and/or Graduate School Dissertation Formatting Guidelines must be adhered to.

The candidacy exam oral defense is typically closed and includes only the student, committee, interested graduate faculty, and invited guests approved by the committee chair.

- Counseling faculty members have the right to attend any Counseling candidacy exam.
- The date of the candidacy examination oral defense will be arranged by the candidacy examination committee and student with a minimum of two weeks advanced notice. With the candidacy chair's approval, the student should submit their completed proposal to the committee at least two weeks prior to the oral defense.
- Any major changes of the proposal/dissertation topic must be approved by the candidacy examination committee.

### Assessment and Passing/Failing the Exam

For the student to pass the examination, the committee must agree that the student has the appropriate background and understanding of the research area to conduct the proposed study. If the proposal is deemed inadequate, inappropriate, or of little scholarly merit, the student may fail the candidacy exam.

In the case that the student does not pass, the chair, in consultation with the committee, will inform the student of the committee's reasoning and the problems that must be addressed in order to attempt the exam again. The student will receive this information in writing (email) from the candidacy committee chair.

Students have two opportunities to pass the candidacy exam. A student who fails a second time, or is not granted permission for a second attempt, will not be permitted to continue work toward the doctoral degree, and admission to the doctoral program will be terminated (i.e., dismissal from the university).

At a minimum, faculty expect a proposal to demonstrate the following:

- Knowledge of professional literature: Meaningful citation beyond classroom texts; appropriate use of professional peer reviewed and/or relevant seminal sources.
- Quality of scholarly style: APA structure, citations, seriation, and spelling.
- Quality of writing: Ability to employ elements of scholarly and/or scientific reasoning in the critique and proposal of research.
- Organization and presentation: Structure and flow of argument; ability to form links from theory/research to practice; originality and depth of thought.

Revised: April 7, 2022

## Application for Graduation

All doctoral candidates must apply for graduation. The deadline to apply for graduation is typically several months before the date of graduation, and usually occurs before the dissertation defense is scheduled. See deadlines here: [Graduation Information - NIU - The Graduate School](#). Students may defer their graduation if they apply to graduate but later need to push back their semester of completion.

## DISSERTATION PROCESS, POLICIES, AND FORMAT

(excerpted from [The Graduate Catalog](#))

The dissertation should be a significant contribution to knowledge in which the student exhibits original scholarship and the ability to conduct worthwhile research. The dissertation should demonstrate professional competencies relevant to the student's field of study, including effective communication skills (whether written, graphical, digital, or multimedia). The research must be in a subject area of the student's major, approved and completed under the supervision of a senior member of the graduate faculty from the student's major department.

Credit hour requirements for the dissertation and research are determined by the major department. The dissertation is to be submitted in accordance with the Graduate School regulations found in the Guidelines for Preparing and Submitting Theses and Dissertations, available on the [Thesis and Dissertations page of the Graduate School website](#).

### Course registration

A student who has formally begun the dissertation or its equivalent must register in course number 799 (doctoral dissertation). In any semester or term, a student may enroll in 799 for the maximum number of hours stated in the course description; during a doctoral program students may register for an unlimited number of dissertation hours. Once a student has begun registration in course number 799, the student must continue to register in course number 799 in each subsequent term until the dissertation is submitted to and formally approved by the Graduate School. Students must complete a minimum total of 12 semester hours of course number 799 for the doctoral degree. Registration for this purpose may be in absentia. The designation of a dissertation adviser should be approved by the conclusion of the term in which a student first registers for 799. A student who fails to complete this procedure will, upon recommendation of the department, have all accumulated hours in the dissertation course converted to audit (no credit).



If circumstances prohibit continuing progress on the dissertation, a graduate student must request a leave of absence from the office of the dean of the Graduate School. If a student interrupts registration in course number 799 without obtaining a leave of absence then the student's admission to the degree program will be terminated. (See the "Leave of Absence" policy located in the "General Requirements" section of the Graduate Catalog.)

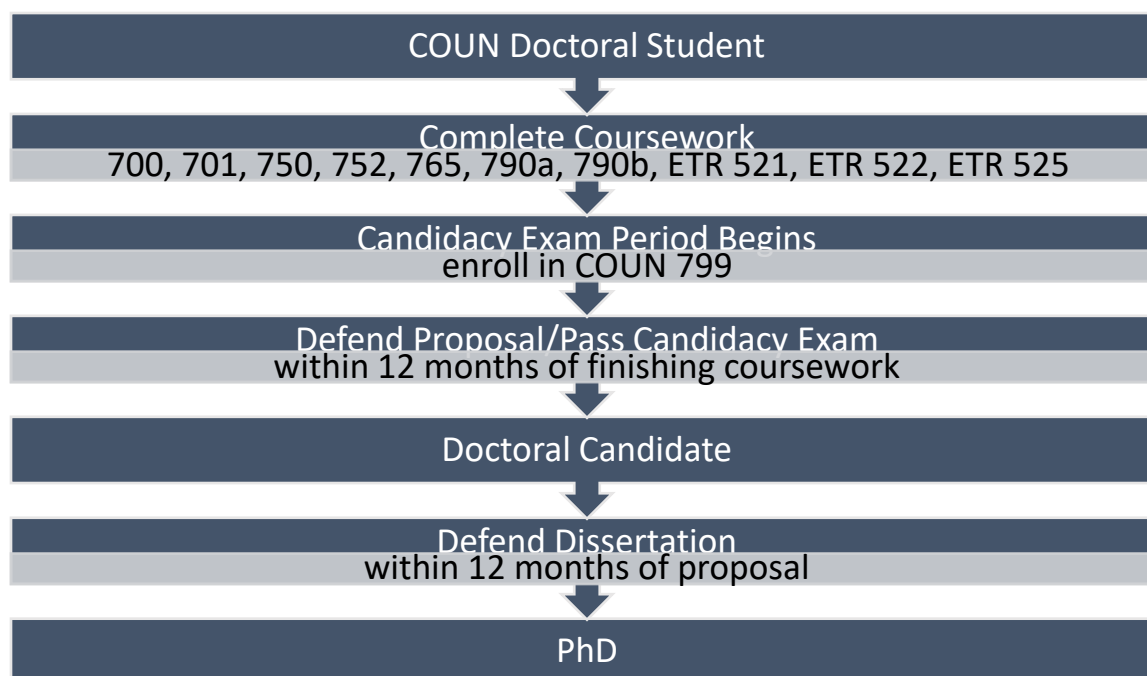
After the dissertation has been reviewed and approved by the Graduate School, the approved version will be deposited electronically with ProQuest and must be accessible through their global digital library of dissertations and theses, as well as NIU's digital institutional repository, Huskie Commons, a unit of Founders Memorial Library. The abstract is also published in ProQuest Digital Dissertations, formerly *Dissertation Abstracts International*. This facilitates wide dissemination of the scholarship to interested parties.

### Oral defense of dissertation

After the student has completed all other requirements for the doctorate, including the writing of a dissertation, an oral defense of the dissertation will be scheduled. The defense will consist of two parts, in either order in accordance with department policy: a public presentation with opportunity for questions from any interested parties, and a restricted examination session with the dissertation defense committee. At the discretion of the department, members of the university's graduate faculty and/or graduate students from the candidate's department may be permitted to be present at the restricted session. The examining committee will inform the dean of the Graduate School, at least three weeks in advance, of the date, time, place, and dissertation title for the public presentation, and the dean will publicize this on campus, inviting attendance of interested persons.

The presentation and defense of the dissertation are culminating scholarly activities of the doctoral program. They provide the candidate with the opportunity to present, and other interested parties the opportunity to examine and respond to, the results of the finished dissertation research. Therefore, the dissertation presentation and defense should be scheduled only when both the student and the dissertation committee are satisfied that the scholarly work and its analysis are substantially complete, and believe that they reflect a level of rigor appropriate to a doctoral degree. Further research, analysis, or rewriting may be required by the committee as a result of discussions arising during the defense.

A student must be registered in the term of the oral defense of the dissertation. A student must be in good academic standing, both overall and in the degree program, to be eligible to submit a dissertation to the Graduate School or to have a dissertation defense.



**Figure 1. Progression through candidacy and dissertation, with deadlines.**

## **RETENTION, REMEDIATION AND DISMISSAL**

### **Retention Policy**

The faculty in the counselor education and supervision (CES) program is confident that each student admitted has the potential to be successful in graduate study. Success in coursework, clinical practice, candidacy exam, and the demonstration of the core dispositions (Appendix A) are examples of continuation standards within the program. Such successes facilitate students' progress toward completing the PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision. However, admission into the counseling program does not guarantee degree completion. Faculty expect students to fully engage in all aspects of the learning environment, showing openness to new experiences and risk taking necessary to develop as a person, professional counselor, counselor educator, clinical supervisor, and researcher. The student's advisor plays an integral role in giving feedback to a student, thus providing opportunities for continued growth and development. Personal counseling services are available at NIU's [Counseling and Consultation Services](#) as well as in the community. Students are encouraged to take advantage of personal counseling when requested.

### **Remediation**

If faculty have concerns regarding a doctoral student's progress, the student will be notified in a timely manner. Students can also see their standing in the counseling program Blackboard community. Students will be given specific feedback on the

nature of any concerns as well as steps to remove any barrier(s) to progress toward professional competency when appropriate. In many instances, a Remediation Plan (RP) will be crafted, in consultation with the student, department chair, and program faculty, to provide clear and specific ways the student can meet expectations and continue to progress in the program. In rare cases (e.g., student poses a potential harm to self or others), faculty may vote to remove the student from the program without an RP.

The RP represents a formal agreement between the CES program and a student who is under remediation. Upon receipt of the RP, the student will review the plan and provide their signature indicating an understanding of the requirements expected and agreement to meet those requirements. A student who chooses not to sign the RP should understand this will initiate a faculty meeting to discuss the student's failure to meet continuation standards, and a vote for dismissal may be considered, guided by Graduate School policy. A remediation plan can be enforced without a student's signature, though collaboration in meeting retention requirements is the desired goal of the faculty. The CAHE department chair will inform the student of the appeals process.

## Dismissal policy

### Student disposition dismissal

Counseling faculty members have a professional responsibility to serve as gatekeepers for the counseling profession (ACA, 2014, Section F.6) to protect the public welfare. Gatekeeping is defined as, "the initial and ongoing academic, skill, and dispositional assessment of students' competency for professional practice, including remediation and termination as appropriate" (ACA, 2014, p. 20).

Faculty systematically discuss and evaluate students' dispositional progress in the program (see Appendix A). When impediments are identified, the student will be informed verbally and in writing.

If others (i.e., faculty, site supervisors) have made similar observations, the program coordinator, advisor, and/or other faculty will initiate a meeting with the student to discuss the apparent impediment to progress toward professional competence. Remedies and expected behavior changes will be discussed and outlined in a Remediation Plan.

### Student dismissal for academic dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating and plagiarism. For the complete academic integrity statement, please refer to the current NIU Graduate Catalog on the [Graduate School website](#), Student Resources menu. Examples of ethical violations include, but are not limited to the improper use of technology, failure to secure informed consent, breach of confidentiality, professional ethics violation, recycling or reusing assignments, falsifying documents, and not complying to class assignment protocols. Lack of professional comportment, includes, but is not limited to a lack of engagement in course requirements, issues within interpersonal

relationships with peers, doctoral students and faculty, and inappropriate use of power with clients and other students. The faculty believes enactment of the core dispositions embodies the values of the counseling profession, and deficiencies in these areas could lead to dismissal. All students are encouraged to seek counseling and attend to their mental health. A student's unwillingness to attend to intra- or inter-personal impediments contributing to impairment may lead to dismissal.

Dismissal of a student can be initiated for a variety of circumstances including, but not limited to, the following:

- When students violate the criteria established by the NIU Graduate School ([See Withdraw or Dismissal in the Graduate Catalog](#))
- Failure to meet continuation standards related to academic and clinical competency: 1) Earns below a B in any course on the students program of study. The Department of Counseling follows the [Appeal Process detailed in the Appeals and Dismissals section of the NIU Graduate Catalog](#).

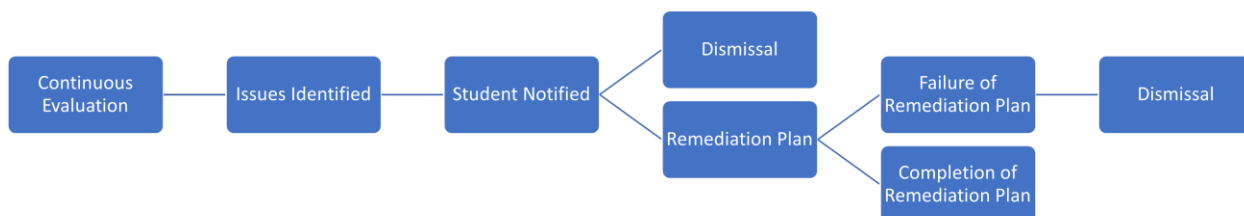
Due to the nature of the program, students can be dismissed for professional competence concerns (i.e., unrelated to success with course assignments and grades). The American Counseling Association Code of Ethics (2014) requires counselor educators provide remediation and/or dismissal from counseling programs when “they become aware of limitations that might impede performance” or when students are unable to demonstrate “they can provide competent counseling services to a range of diverse clients (F.6.b., p. 14).” As stated above, gatekeeping is an ethical mandate for counselor educators and designed to protect counselors in training and their current and future clients. Professional competence concerns that could lead to dismissal include, but are not limited to impairment, academic dishonesty, ethical violations, lack of professional comportment, and personal attitudes or value systems that conflict with effective counseling relationships (ACA Code of Ethics, 2014, A.4.b).

In all cases of dismissal, the student will be notified in writing.

In addition to the ACA Code of Ethics, the Department of Counseling adheres to NIU policies with regard to [student conduct](#), [academic integrity](#), and [ethical compliance](#).

## Dismissal process

The student evaluation process is continuous from the start of the program through graduation.



**Figure 2. Evaluation, Remediation, and Dismissal Process**

## Time limitation

All doctoral students must complete their program within **nine** years of starting their first semester as a student. If all courses are not completed within this time frame, students may have to retake courses for credit or demonstrate current knowledge of the subject matter as requested by the professor. If these steps are not taken, any outdated coursework must be deleted from the student's file and other coursework must be substituted in the program of courses. Transfer courses falling outside the limitation of time cannot be used in a graduate program. The 30 credits transferred from a master's degree are not subject the time limitation. Please refer to the program of courses for additional information.

## Transfer credit

With the approval of the student's department and the office of the dean of the [Graduate School](#), some graduate courses taken at other accredited (U.S.) or recognized (foreign) institutions may be accepted toward meeting the credit hour requirements of a graduate degree at NIU. The student must have earned graduate credit in the course according to the institution at which the course was taken (so, for example, courses in which undergraduate credit, medical school credit or other professional post-baccalaureate credit was earned cannot be accepted in transfer).

No transfer credit accepted from another institution may be in correspondence courses. Typically, correspondence courses are noted as such on a transcript. They

are defined as courses in which interaction between the instructor and the student is neither regular nor substantive and in which interaction is primarily initiated by the student. Most often, correspondence courses are self-paced.

A grade of B- or better must have been earned in each graduate course accepted in transfer toward meeting NIU graduate degree requirements, and the overall GPA in all graduate transfer courses thus accepted must be 3.0 or higher. Courses for which grades of S, Pass, Credit or the like have been earned will be accepted in transfer only if the Graduate School can officially verify that the student's performance was at a level equivalent to a grade of B or better.

To receive consideration for graduate work done elsewhere, the student must submit to the Graduate School an official transcript showing the coursework in question. Transfer credit is considered to be accepted toward meeting degree requirements only at the time a student is cleared to graduate from the program.

In transfer, three quarter-hours are considered to be equivalent to two semester hours. Therefore, if the graduate credit earned in a course accepted in transfer from another institution was reported in quarter-hours, the transfer credit will be granted at the ratio of two semester hours per three quarter-hours.

Students should consult the Requirements for Graduate Degrees section of the graduate catalog for more specific information on limitations on transfer credit and the combined total of transfer and other courses applicable to individual degree programs. ([NIU Graduate Catalog](#))

Please Note: Transferred hours have time limitations. Courses transferred into a master's program are only valid for 6 years from when they were taken. Courses transferred into a doctoral program are only valid for 9 years from when they were taken. Transfer courses falling outside the limitation of time cannot be used in a graduate program.

## Financial aid

Financial aid is available in the form of graduate assistantships, federal loans or grants, scholarships, and fellowships. Graduate assistantships are limited, but first priority for assignment of departmental positions goes to doctoral students. Students are also responsible for all student fees and health insurance (if applicable).

## Graduate assistantships

Counseling program graduate assistantships are prioritized for doctoral students in Counselor Education & Supervision. Graduate assistantship openings are shared with doctoral students as they become available. The number of graduate assistantships for counseling students within the CAHE department is

limited. They include working in the CCTC, serving as a research assistant, or serving as a Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) for one of the undergraduate courses in the Counseling minor.

In addition, [The Graduate Student and Assistantship Recruitment Program \(GSARP\)](#) is an annual program organized by the Counseling and Higher Education (CAHE) department in the College of Education. Participation in GSARP provides incoming and prospective CAHE students with an opportunity to learn about and interview for available graduate assistant positions within the Division of Student Affairs or other partnering departments both on and off campus.

Finding a graduate assistantship requires time and planning. Students are strongly encouraged to seek out graduate assistantships available throughout campus. [NIU's Graduate School](#) provides information for positions outside of department. Students cannot hold a graduate assistantship and regular NIU employment, such as a Supportive Professional Staff position, concurrently.

If students do not secure a GA position through the Counseling program or GSARP, they should work with their advisor to identify additional opportunities. Additional places to inquire for open positions could include the Student Housing Offices in Neptune Hall East; Gender and Sexuality Resource Center; CHANCE program; Office of the Ombudsperson; Career Services; Counseling and Consultation Services; Center for Black Studies; Latino Resource Center; and the Disability Resource Center to name a few.

### **Scholarships and fellowships**

Eligible students may wish to consider applying for fellowships and scholarships available through NIU. For more information, please go visit the [fellowships website](#).

### **Disability Statement (ADA compliance)**

Northern Illinois University will take reasonable steps to ensure that all qualified employees and applicants are treated fairly and equitably, regardless of any physical or mental impairment. The University reserves the right to request verification of an individual's disability. The University will make a reasonable accommodation to all qualified individuals to allow them to perform the essential functions as a student.

### **Disability Resource Center**

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) at NIU has been created to see that qualified individuals who request services are provided appropriate accommodations in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. DRC provides direct support services to students with disabilities and serves as a resource to other offices in the university, which enables them to meet the needs of persons with disabilities more effectively. DRC advocates accessible opportunities by providing a wide range of support services tailored to the

individual student, including admissions arrangements, auxiliary aids (interpreters, note-takers, readers, etc.), books in alternative formats, advising/counseling, adapted equipment/computers, special residence hall arrangements, etc. For more information please visit the [DRC website](#).

## Counseling & Consultation Services

As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can negatively impact your learning, such as anxiety, depression, interpersonal or sexual violence, difficulty eating or sleeping, loss/grief, and/or alcohol/drug problems. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and affect your ability to participate in day-to-day activities. In order to support you during such challenging times, Northern Illinois University provides a number of confidential resources to all enrolled students, including [Counseling and Consultation Services](#) (815)753-1206

## Technology Assistance

Have a question about something techy? The [Technology Oasis](#) is open to students, faculty and staff of the College of Education. For password support, the [Division of Information Technology](#) is the best place to start.

# ENDORSEMENT POLICY

## Professional Educator License: School Counseling in Illinois

In order to be licensed as a school counselor in the public schools of the state of Illinois, a person must be of good character, in sound health, a citizen of the United States and at least 19 years of age. The Illinois licensure law also requires that an individual complete an approved preparation program at a recognized institution.

The university's licensure officer is responsible for reviewing the record of each graduate of an approved counselor education program and for recommending or withholding recommendation of that individual for certification by entitlement and endorsement. Licensure is not an automatic procedure. In order to qualify for licensure, each student in an entitlement program must complete an application for licensure and provide evidence of having completed the general requirements; courses in professional education appropriate to the program being followed, including a minimum of 600 clock hours of approved school counseling experience.

The following licensure is available at the graduate level only and are approved by the Illinois State Board of Education: School Service Personnel – School Counselor.

Questions about these endorsement programs should be addressed to the appropriate department.



## Professional Counseling License in Illinois

In order to be a licensed professional counselor in the state of Illinois, a person must be of good character and must have completed an approved preparation program at a recognized institution.

The university's licensure officer is responsible for reviewing the record of each graduate of an approved counselor education program and for recommending or withholding recommendation of that individual for certification by entitlement and endorsement. Licensure is not an automatic procedure. In order to qualify for licensure, each student in an entitlement program must complete an application for licensure and provide evidence of having completed the general requirements; courses in professional education appropriate to the program, including a minimum of 600 clock hours of approved clinical counseling experience. For more information, please see the [Illinois Department of Financial & Professional Regulation - LPC](#).

For students already meeting the requirement for terminal licensure, Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC), please contact the [Illinois Department of Financial & Professional Regulation - LCPC](#). For direct assistance, please see your advisor or chair.

### Letters of recommendation

In most cases, faculty in the Counselor Education and Supervision program will write letters of recommendation for doctoral students, candidates, and graduates, but they also have the right to decline requests for letters. Please discuss this with the individual faculty member. Before assuming a faculty member will write a letter, please secure their permission to list them as a professional reference. Please give the faculty member adequate time to draft the letter, typically a minimum of two weeks.

When asking for a letter of recommendation, please provide the following:

- The name or title of the position or award you are applying for.
- Required and preferred qualifications for the position/award.
- Contact information associated with the position/award.
- Your current résumé or curriculum vita.

## COUNSELING ORGANIZATIONS AT NIU

All students are encouraged to join our student organizations to become actively involved in the counseling program community and on campus. Through these experiences, doctoral students develop as leaders, grow their personal and professional networks, and contribute to the development of counselors and the counselor profession.

## Northern Illinois University Counseling Association

The Northern Illinois University Counseling Association (NIUCA) is a chapter of the Illinois Counseling Association, which is a state branch of the American Counseling Association. NIUCA is a not-for-profit organization of counseling and human development professionals and students who are being prepared to practice in education, health care, residential, private practice, community/agency, government and business/industry settings. This organization is designed for all students in the master's and doctoral counseling programs at NIU. NIUCA also welcomes students-at-large and students from other helping-related programs on campus.

The mission of NIUCA is to enhance the professional growth and development of counseling students as well as those employed in human service professions. NIUCA seeks to increase a sense of community with the NIU counseling program.

The benefits of becoming a NIUCA member include:

1. Exposure to current information about trends and changes in the counseling profession.
2. Networking with other chapter members and faculty currently in the field.
3. Sharing with colleagues their ideas, knowledge and philosophies about counseling.
4. Participating in social and educational activities that promote interaction and friendship among participants.

Past events NIUCA has hosted include speakers on equine therapy, ACA conference preparation, practicum and supervision question and answer sessions, and play therapy presentations. Members have also participated in events such as Challenge Day through participating high schools in the area, and social outings, such as bowling and tailgating. NIUCA is a great way for students to become a part of the NIU community and share with colleagues their ideas, knowledge, and philosophies about counseling. *Get connected — with NIUCA!*

For more information, visit the [NIU Counseling Association Huskie Link webpage](#) or email [niuca001@gmail.com](mailto:niuca001@gmail.com).

## Chi Sigma Iota

Rho Alpha Kappa is NIUs' chapter of Chi Sigma Iota, the international honor society of professional counseling and for professional counselors.

The mission of Chi Sigma Iota is to promote scholarship, research, professionalism, leadership, advocacy and excellence in counseling, and to recognize high attainment in the pursuit of academic and clinical excellence in the profession of counseling.

All students, regardless of membership, can attend and participate in Rho Alpha Kappa events. Only members may serve on the board or be eligible for awards.

*To be eligible for membership, a student must meet the following eligibility standards:*

1. Completion of at least nine credit hours of graduate courses.
2. Maintaining an overall grade point average of 3.5 or better on a 4.0 scale.
3. Professional identity as a counselor.
4. Receive an invitation from Rho Alpha Kappa President and Chapter Faculty Advisor

## **Black Counselors Association**

### **Mission**

The Black Counselors Association (BCA) is an organization dedicated to academic, scholastic and social excellence and advancement of African-American graduate students at NIU. The BCA identifies its mission as an organization that provides support and forum for graduate students in the field of counseling. It is the mission of the BCA to promote social justice, multicultural competency and professional networks for African-American, as well as other students of color.

We provide opportunities for counseling students to participate in community outreach, mentoring, professional development programs, as well as our annual spring social.

Email: [blackcounselors.niu@gmail.com](mailto:blackcounselors.niu@gmail.com) or login to [NIU Huskie Link: BCA](#)

## **NIU Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues in Counseling**

NIUALGBTIC is comprised of students and professionals in the counseling field. As we seek officially recognized organization status, the vision and mission of the organization is to educate the public and empower people who identify as LGBTQ+ at intersections of their identities.

## **NATIONAL AND STATE COUNSELING ORGANIZATIONS**

The following professional counseling organizations offer opportunities that are valuable at any stage in your counselor development. Membership is available to both students and professionals.

### **American Counseling Association**

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

By providing leadership training, publications, continuing education opportunities and advocacy services to nearly 45,000 members, ACA helps counseling professionals develop their skills and expand their knowledge base.

ACA has been instrumental in setting professional and ethical standards for the counseling profession. The association has made considerable strides in accreditation, licensure and national certification. It also represents the interests of the profession before congress and federal agencies, and strives to promote recognition of professional counselors to the public and the media.

There are several [ACA Division and Branches](#) that focus on counselor advocacy and best practices in specific regions, in unique specialization areas and/or with specific client populations. The [Illinois Counseling Association](#) is a chapter of the ACA, and NIUCA is a division of the Illinois Counseling Association.

### **Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES)**

The [Association for Counselor Education and Supervision](#) (ACES) emphasizes the need for quality education and supervision of counselors in all work settings. Program faculty are active members of ACES and its state or regional divisions, and frequently present at ACES conferences with students. Conferences typically take place in the fall and doctoral students are highly encouraged to attend, if possible.

The Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) is the premier organization dedicated to quality education and supervision of counselors in all work settings. ACES members are counselors, supervisors, graduate students, and faculty members who strive to improve the education and supervision of counselors in training and in practice. ACES and the regional associations host conferences to highlight research and best practices in supervision and in the training of counselors. In addition ACES publishes a quarterly journal, Counselor Education and Supervision, which presents current issues, relevant research, proven practices, ethical standards and conversations in counselor training and supervision.

The ultimate purpose of the association, in accordance with the purpose of ACA, is to advance counselor education and supervision in order to improve the provision of counseling services in all settings of society.

The [Illinois Counselor Educators and Supervisors \(ICES\)](#) is the Illinois chapter of the ACES.

The [North Central Association for Counselor Education and Supervision \(NCACES\)](#) is the regional association of counselor educators and supervisors.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the responsibility of students to know and observe all regulations and procedures relating to the program they are pursuing, as well as those of the university and [Graduate School](#). In no case will a regulation be waived or an exception be granted due to lack of awareness of the regulations or procedures. Questions on regulations and their interpretation pertaining to studies at the graduate level should be addressed to the office of the dean of the Graduate School after speaking with the Program Coordinator and/or CAHE Department Chair.

Students planning to graduate should familiarize themselves with the dates relating to application for graduation and other pertinent deadlines. (See the [Graduate School Calendar](#)). It is necessary to apply for graduation by the specified deadline in order to graduate in a particular term, whether the student plans to attend the commencement ceremony.

Students must satisfy the degree requirements of the catalog in force during the term for which they have been admitted and begin coursework in the degree program; or they may, with the consent of their advisors, meet graduation requirements by complying with the degree requirements of a later catalog. Students readmitted to a degree program must meet degree requirements of the catalog in force at the time of the later admission (or of a subsequent catalog, as provided above). Aside from degree requirements, all students are subject to the regulations and policies stated in the catalog currently in force. Exceptions to regulations and requirements contained in the Graduate School catalog require the written approval of the office of the dean of the Graduate School, unless otherwise stated in the catalog.

Each student has the responsibility for obtaining and adhering to current university information. The university reserves the right to make changes in admission requirements, fees, degree requirements and other specifications set forth in this catalog. Such changes may take precedence over catalog statements. While reasonable effort is made to publicize such changes, students should remain in close touch with departmental advisors and appropriate offices, because responsibility for complying with all applicable requirements ultimately rests with the student. The office of the dean of the Graduate School is the authoritative office for verifying deviations from provisions in this catalog. ([NIU Graduate Catalog](#))

## **SELECTED UNIVERSITY AND PROGRAM POLICIES**

(For more information, see the NIU [Graduate Catalog](#))

### **Advisory system**

Each student is assigned by their major department an advisor or advisory committee whose purpose is to guide the student's studies and recommend them for the degree when the student is properly qualified.

A program of study is formulated by the student in consultation with the departmentally assigned advisor or advisory committee. See "The Program of Study" for details.

Departmental advisors can assist students in understanding and satisfying departmental and university requirements. However, they are not responsible for informing students of published regulations, such as those in this catalog, nor, except as explicitly provided in this catalog, do they have the authority to modify those requirements. See "Student Responsibility" above.

## Attendance policy

Students are expected to attend all classes meetings, but individual instructors determine attendance policies for the courses they teach. The university recognizes that, on occasion, examinations or other scheduled academic activities may conflict with the religious observances of some members of the academic community, and accordingly encourages the instructional and administrative staff to make reasonable accommodations to minimize the resulting difficulties for individuals concerned. Students faced with such conflicts should notify the appropriate instructor or administrative area as much in advance of the examination or other activity creating the conflict as possible. Students believing that they have been unreasonably denied an educational benefit due to their religious beliefs or practices may bring the matter to the attention of the department chair for resolution. If for any reason this route would not be appropriate, the matter may be brought to the college dean or dean's designee.

## Residency requirement

The Doctorate in Counselor Education and Supervision does not have a residency requirement.

## Academic integrity

Good academic work must be based on honesty. The attempt of any student to present as their own work that which they have not produced is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense. Students are considered to have cheated, for example, if they copy the work of another or use unauthorized notes or other aids during an examination or turn in as their own a paper or an assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else. Students are guilty of plagiarism, intentional or not, if they copy material from books, magazines or other sources without identifying and acknowledging those sources or if they paraphrase ideas from such sources without acknowledging them. Students guilty of or assisting others in either cheating or plagiarism on an assignment, quiz or examination may receive a grade of F for the course involved and may be suspended or dismissed from the university.

A faculty member has original jurisdiction over any instances of academic misconduct that occur in a course which the faculty member is teaching. The student shall be given the opportunity to resolve the matter in meetings with the faculty member and the department chair. If the facts of the incident are not disputed by the student, the faculty member may elect to resolve the matter at that level by levying a sanction no greater than an F for that course. The faculty member shall notify the student in writing whenever such action is taken, and the office of Student Conduct shall receive a copy of the Academic Misconduct Incident Report indicating final disposition of the case, which will be placed in the student's judicial file. In all matters where the charge of academic misconduct is disputed by the student or if the faculty member feels a sanction greater than an F in the course is appropriate (such as repeated offenses or flagrant violations), the faculty member

shall refer the matter to the office Student Conduct, making use of the Academic Misconduct Incident Report. Additional sanctions greater than an F in a course can be levied only through the system of due process established and overseen by the office of Student Conduct or through the university's research misconduct procedures noted below. Suspension or dismissal from the university for academic misconduct will result in a notation of that action on the transcript of a graduate-level student.

The university has adopted additional policies and procedures for dealing with research misconduct among its students, faculty and staff. The guidelines, entitled Research Integrity at Northern Illinois University, are available in department offices, in the [office of the dean of the Graduate School](#), and [online](#), and pertain to the intentional commission of any of the following acts: falsification of data, improper assignment of authorship, claiming another person's work as one's own, unprofessional manipulation of experiments or of research procedures, and misappropriation of research funds.

If a graduate student fails to maintain the standards of academic or professional integrity expected in their discipline or program, the student's admission to the program may be terminated on recommendation of the student's major department. A statement on students' rights to the products of research is available in department offices, in the [office of the dean of the Graduate School](#), and [online](#). ([NIU Graduate Catalog](#))

## Grading system

The [Graduate School](#) grading system applies to all graduate students taking courses for graduate credit. The graduate GPA is computed by dividing the total number of grade points earned by the total number of credit hours that a student has taken in NIU courses earning grade points. In no case are NIU courses taken for undergraduate or law credit or transfer courses included in the computation of the graduate GPA. Grades and their grade point values are as follows.

<i>Grades Earning Graduate Credit</i>	<i>Level of Performance</i>	<i>Grade Points Per Semester Hour</i>
A	Superior	4.00
A-		3.67
B+	Satisfactory	3.33
B		3.00
B-	Marginal	2.67
C+		2.33
C		2.00
S	Satisfactory for courses graded S/U	-

<i>Grades Not Earning Graduate Credit</i>	<i>Level of Performance</i>	<i>Grade Points Per Semester Hour</i>
C-	Deficient	1.67
D		1.00
F	Seriously deficient	0.00
U	Unsatisfactory for courses graded S/U	0.00

Other transcript entries, with their definition, include the following:

- I — Incomplete (see also following section on “Incompletes”).
- IP — In progress.
- WP — Passing at time of withdrawal.
- WF — Failing at time of withdrawal.
- O — Audit (no grade and no credit).

Students doing less than satisfactory work will be assigned the grade of C-, D, F or U. Graduate credit is given only for those courses in which a grade of S (or C or better) is earned. A grade of S indicates that the student has performed at a level equivalent to at least a B.

### **S/U and IP grading**

Certain graduate courses are graded on an S/U basis. Such grading, however, is restricted to courses titled externship, independent study/research, institute, internship, practicum, seminar or workshop. Individual students may not elect S and U grading. Other graduate courses are graded on an S/U/IP (Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory/In Progress) basis. Thesis and dissertation courses, as well as similar project courses that require completion of work over multiple semesters and that are designated as 699 or 799, are graded on an S/U/IP basis. IP is a neutral grade — that is, the grade does not carry quality points — but IP grades awarded for 699 and 799 count toward the completion of a degree. While a student is working on the thesis, dissertation or continuing project, a grade of U or IP will be awarded. In the final semester in which the thesis, dissertation or project is successfully completed, a grade of S will be awarded. Grades of IP previously awarded will remain on the transcript, except in the case of ongoing internships or similar courses, as designated in the catalog. In those cases, IP grades must be changed to an appropriate letter grade by the instructor in order for the course to count toward degree. No student may graduate with a U on their transcript in such courses.

### **Incompletes**

When a student is passing a course, yet special circumstances prevent a student’s completing the requirements of a course, the instructor may, at their discretion,



direct that the symbol I (indicating incomplete) be entered in the student's record. When a grade of I is assigned, the instructor will file in the departmental office and in the Graduate School an Incomplete/Reversion Grade Form outlining the work to be completed, the deadline for completion of the work and the grade that will be awarded if the student fails meet the deadline. In no case may the deadline be later than 120 days after the last day of final examinations during the term for which the incomplete is assigned. The incomplete must be removed within 120 days.

If the instructor does not change the incomplete within the period allowed for resolution, the incomplete (I) will be converted to an F or to the stipulated reversion grade. If no reversion grade is recorded, a grade of F will be awarded at the conclusion of 120 days. An administratively awarded grade, like one assigned by an instructor, may be changed at the discretion of the instructor of record prior to a student's graduation. A student may not graduate with a transcript entry of I on their record.

### Grade Appeals

A graduate-level student may formally appeal a course grade alleged to have been assigned capriciously. The definition of capricious grading is limited to; a) The assignment of a grade to a particular student on some basis other than performance in the course, b) The assignment of a grade to a particular student by more exacting or demanding standards than were applied to other students in that course, or c) The assignment of a grade by a substantial departure from the instructor's standards announced during the first one-fourth of the course. A grade appeal may not be based upon disagreement with the judgment of an instructor in assessing the quality of a student's work. The student must submit a formal written appeal to the departmental Grade Review Board, through the chair of the department offering the course, by the end of the fourth week of the fall or spring semester immediately following the term for which the course grade was assigned. A full description of procedures governing the appeal of allegedly capricious semester grades for graduate-level students may be obtained from the ombudsperson, department offices, college offices and the [office of the dean of the Graduate School](#), and [online](#). Appeal procedures should be consulted before appealing a grade. ([NIU Graduate Catalog](#))

## FINAL COMMENTS

We encourage you to refer back to this handbook as you make your way through the program. Remember that your advisor is designated to help you through the process of obtaining your degree. It is important that you contact them throughout your coursework with the various questions and concerns you may have. Again, congratulations on this important first step to becoming a counselor educator.

## **STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RESPONSIBILITY FORM**

I understand that I am responsible for the information presented in the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Degree in Counselor Education and Supervision Program Handbook.

I have reviewed these materials carefully and accept this responsibility.

If I have questions concerning these materials, I will ask for clarification from a faculty member, my program advisor, the program coordinator, or CAHE Department Chair.

I am aware that failure to adhere to the information in this handbook could keep me from graduating, or delay my graduation, from this program.

***I have read the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Program Handbook and understand that I am responsible for the information contained herein.***

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Student Printed Name

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Signature of Student	Date
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Admission Coordinator

# APPENDIX A: CES STUDENT DISPOSITION ASSESSMENT

## Northern Illinois University Counselor Education and Supervision

### Student disposition assessment

(Adapted from the University of North Carolina-Charlotte's Department of Counseling)

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The Counselor Education and Supervision (CES) program at NIU is responsible for preparing candidates who have the required knowledge, skills and *professional dispositions*\* to become effective counselor educators as well as supervisors of clinical mental health and professional school counselors. The CES faculty will evaluate your demonstration of the *professional dispositions* listed below and provide you with feedback about your progress. Professional dispositions include the attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and nonverbal behaviors as you interact with students, colleagues, and communities. These positive behaviors support student learning and development. They include the ideal of *fairness* and the belief that all students can learn. The American Counseling Association's (2014) Code of Ethics articulates the necessary characteristics expected for all counselors and counselor educators-in-training at NIU.

\*Dispositions are assessed indirectly, based on candidates' observable behavior in educational settings (NCATE, 2008).

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1. This evaluation is to be used by any faculty member at any time during a candidate's program of study and for yearly review.
  2. The faculty member who initiates the assessment should schedule a conference with the student to discuss and document the concern.
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### The student demonstrates:

#### 1. Impact.

- A. Demonstrates awareness of own impact on others.
- B. Demonstrates ability to deal with conflict.
- C. Demonstrates flexibility regarding responding to changing demands in the professional and interpersonal environment.

#### 2. Professional identity and continuous growth.

- A. Demonstrates openness to new ideas.
- B. Demonstrates multicultural awareness and sensitivity.

- C. Accepts and uses feedback.
- D. Expresses feelings effectively and appropriately.
- E. Demonstrates professional appearance.
- F. Cooperates with others.
- G. Communicates effectively and appropriately.
- H. Shows initiative and motivation (e.g., meets deadlines, class attendance).

### **3. Ethics.**

- A. Accepts responsibility for personal actions and behaviors.
- B. Attends to ethical and legal responsibilities including the ACA Code of Ethics and the NIU's Student Code of Conduct policy.
- C. Discloses any unethical or unlawful activity from the time application was submitted into the program until the end of the program.
- D. Demonstrates honesty, integrity, fairness, confidentiality and respect for others.
- E. Doctoral students ONLY: Maintains appropriate boundaries when acting in role of instructor or supervisor.
- F. Doctoral students ONLY: Understands limits of confidentiality when acting in role of instructor or supervisor.

## **APPENDIX B: TYPICAL DOCTORAL FIELD EXPERIENCE SEQUENCE**

### **Year one:**

#### **Fall**

- COUN 750 - Practicum
- Facilitate COUN 540 process groups while enrolled in COUN 750.

#### **Spring**

- For students who came straight to the PhD program from their Master's in Counseling program, one semester of Counseling internship (COUN 786)
- Skills supervision of COUN 525 while enrolled in COUN 752.
- Co-facilitation of master's pre-admissions workshops (P.A.W.) while enrolled in COUN 752 and COUN 701
- Co-teaching internship (COUN 586) concurrent with enrollment in COUN 701.

### **Year two:**

#### **Fall**

- Clinical supervision internship of COUN 550 (master's practicum in CCTC).

#### **Spring**

- Clinical supervision internship of COUN 550 (master's practicum in CCTC).

### **Year three:**

#### **Summer, fall, and/or spring**

Additional doctoral internships as available (announced via PhD Community listserv). Must complete a total of six credit hours of COUN 786 internship across three of the five CACREP core doctoral domains

### **Internship totals**

- 2 credit hours of Co-teaching
- 2 credit hours of Supervision
- 1 credit hour of Counseling (if straight from Master's program)
- 1-2 credit hours of supervision in a third, fourth, or fifth doctoral content area

## **APPENDIX C: SAMPLE DOCTORAL INTERNSHIP ACTIVITIES**

### **Teaching:**

Co-teaching graduate level, core counseling courses with program faculty; Classroom teaching; Lesson planning and preparation; Grading and providing feedback to students; Meeting with students; electronic record keeping; email communication with students; Consultation; Blackboard development; Observations.

### **Supervision:**

Individual/triadic supervision with practicum supervisee in CCTC; Live supervision with feedback (one-way mirror/journaling, electronic communication feedback); Facilitation or co-facilitation of practicum/internship group supervision; Assessment/evaluation of supervisees; Reviewing supervisee case notes; Record keeping; Telephone/email communications; Supervision planning and preparation; Case conceptualization with supervisees; Consultation on supervision/counseling issues; Teaching clinical skills or clinic policies & procedures; Crisis intervention; Clinical observations.

### **Leadership:**

Program evaluation; Conference/workshop preparation and presentation; Professional committee meetings; Professional organization service; Professional advocacy service; Student organization executive board leadership

### **Research:**

Supervision of data collection sessions; Hypothesis development; Literature review writing; Study record keeping and/or administrative tasks; Telephone/email contacts; Grant development/grant writing; Conducting interviews/observations; Data analysis; Data transcription; Data cleaning;

### **Counseling:**

Individual, couples, family, group, or career counseling; Crisis intervention; Clinical consultation; Psychological evaluation and assessment; Clinical observations; Program development and evaluation; Literature review and session preparation; Community outreach; Record keeping and case documentation; Case conferences/staffing; Staff meetings; Team or faculty conference; Giving presentations/conducting workshops.

## **APPENDIX D: CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK PROTOCOL**

### NIU Graduate Counseling Program – Current Students

All applicants who are recommended by faculty for admission into practicum must successfully pass a criminal background check before being allowed to see clients. The process consists of the following steps:

- If an applicant has already completed and passed a criminal background check through Northern Illinois University, notify the practicum office at [cahc\\_cctc@niu.edu](mailto:cahc_cctc@niu.edu) to have this confirmed.
- If an applicant has already completed and passed a criminal background check through Northern Illinois University through other means (GA or other employment) or other school/agency requiring your CBC for appointment or employment you must have your hiring supervisor send a letter on their company letterhead indicating that in order to have be hired/appointed to your current position you completed and passed a criminal background check. Have the supervisor include the date it was passed and their signature. This letter should be mailed to: CAHE Department Chair, 200 Gabel Hall, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL 60115.
- All other applicants must complete the NIU volunteer packet, including confirmation of completing mandated reporter training and CBC authorization.
- Forms are available in the Community Counseling Training Center in Graham 416.
- These forms are original documents and must not be copied for duplicate submission. If you make a mistake on a form use the means listed above to acquire a new form.
- Always keep a copy for your own records.
- A search will also be undertaken through the Illinois Sex Offender Registry (SOR) and The Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW) through the U.S. Department of Justice. Convictions from any of the sources may prevent admission into the NIU Counseling Program and/or advancement into practicum.
- Results of the criminal background check must be received by the department chair before seeing your first client. Results of the fingerprint check generally takes three to six weeks to obtain. During that period, the student is not permitted to participate in field experiences in the schools.
- An applicant may not be placed in any schools if the background check determines that they have been convicted of criminal behavior that, by law, automatically prohibits them from attaining professional educator licensure in Illinois.
- The offenses that have automatically prohibited licensure include first degree murder, any Class X felony, juvenile pimping, soliciting a juvenile prostitute, exploitation of a child, obscenity, child pornography, criminal sexual assault, aggravated criminal sexual assault, criminal sexual abuse, aggravated criminal sexual abuse, some offenses set forth in the Cannabis Control Act and some crimes defined in the Illinois Controlled Substances Act.
- Students applying for practicum whose criminal background check reveals an offense other than these may be recommended for approval if, in the judgment of the program faculty, the offense should not disqualify the individual from obtaining a counseling degree. Students are advised that their admission into the counseling program, approval for counseling practicum, and advancement to internship does not guarantee professional

licensure or certification post-degree. These students must follow the additional admission process indicated below.

- Please note that criminal background checks are also conducted as part of the Illinois counseling licensure process. This is a separate evaluation process from NIU's counseling program and may end in different results. Students who are concerned that their backgrounds may prohibit them from obtaining counseling licensure may contact the [Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation](#) for an evaluation prior to applying for practicum.
- Practicum students are responsible for all fees connected with this procedure. They may retrieve background check forms from the Community Counseling Training Center in Graham 416. Students should indicate the current CAHE department chair as the requester/receiver of background check results. The results of this background check are kept confidential from the counseling faculty. If a positive response is found from the background check, this information is shared with the chair of the Counseling and Higher Education Department and shared with the student.

*Follow-up on the results:*

- If the student wishes to continue with the program, they must send a letter to the department chair indicating that; 1) They are aware that the results of the background check will be shared with the counseling faculty, 2) They wish to still be considered for program completion. This letter can also include any additional information that may be helpful to the faculty in making program decisions.
- If the student wishes, they can arrange to meet with a three-person committee of faculty members in addition to submitting a letter to the counseling faculty who will be convened to evaluate the student's request. If program continuation is denied by the three-person committee, the practicum applicant may appeal to the entire counseling faculty. At this point, the entire counseling faculty will evaluate the student and a final decision will be rendered.

For any additional questions about the process, contact the CCTC office at [cahc\\_cctc@niu.edu](mailto:cahc_cctc@niu.edu) or 815-753-9312. Please note, the center director does not have access to any of the criminal background records. All records are reviewed by the CAHE department chair.