CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

This online graduate Clinical Mental Health Program, housed in a traditional women's college, serves multiple purposes. The relational approach that is the foundation for the program empowers women's experiences and realities, while addressing all social identities as befits an ethical and equitable stance in serving all clients.

Licensed Clinical Mental Health counselors are trained master's level professionals who counsel families, individuals, groups and couples across the lifespan to promote optimal mental health and well-being. This program would enhance the development of community and seek to alleviate the distress that so many members of marginalized communities experience.

Some of the many issues that counselors help people deal with includerelational problems, trauma, anxiety, stress management, addictions, parenting, family, suicidal ideation, and problems with self-worth. They can help people address emotional and mental health stressors from ongoing oppression, through both reflection and advocacy for social justice and equity.

While focused on preparing generalist practitioners who can serve multiple populations and work with varied issues, the program also offers students as well the option to focus on a particular issue, by taking additional courses in that area. These include microcredentials in Trauma Studies, Couple and Family counseling, Multicultural Counseling, Counseling Children and Adolescents, Addictions, Holistic Health, etc. Current licensed practitioners can also enroll in these elective courses for ongoing professional development in advanced topics such as Private Practice, Clinical Supervision, as well as specific focus on counseling approaches such as EMDR, Dialectical Behavior Therapy, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Internal Family Systems, or Motivational Interviewing.

This program values and centers academic excellence in providing a comprehensive and dynamic curricula.The online program fits with trends in Higher Education for career-aligned academic programs while being accessible to lifelong learners for continuing professional development or career changes.

The online course delivery allows for study on demand and diverse learner needs for content and skills. It also supports rural learners and adult learners who are juggling competing demands of distance, work, and family. In keeping with current needs, the program will offer Relational-Cultural and Trauma-informed approaches while acknowledging and accommodating Neurodiversity. St. Kate's current support systems for instructional design, learning simulations, and curricular design will enhance the delivery of this program with a range of learner support resources. This program ensures more availability of providers for the increasing mental health needs in society.

Mission

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program at St Kate's mission is to prepare socially conscious, ethically grounded, and culturally responsive professional counselors who center inclusion and access in all aspects of their practice. We are committed to cultivating a learning environment where all identities are affirmed, systemic inequities are addressed, and students are empowered to lead change within their communities. Through rigorous training, reflective engagement, and trauma-informed pedagogy, our program advances the counseling profession by equipping graduates toadvocate for mental health equity, serve historically underserved populations, and promote healing in individuals, families, and systems.

Objectives

1. Develop cultural responsiveness and advocacy competence
2. Expand access and representation in the counseling field
3. Integrate compassion-centered practice into counselor identity
4. Promote equitable learning environments

Master's

- Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (MCHC) (https://catalog.stkate.edu/graduate/health/clinicial-counseling/mchc/)

COUN 6001 Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice in Counseling — 3 credits
This course introduces students to the profession of clinical mental health counseling with emphasis on professional identity, ethical practice, legal standards, counselor roles and responsibilities, credentialing, advocacy, and professional dispositions. Students examine the ACA Code of Ethics, ethical decision-making models, scope of practice, interprofessional collaboration, counselor self-care, and gatekeeping as foundational elements of competent and ethical counseling practice. The course integrates awareness, knowledge, and skills competencies consistent with CACREP 2024 standards.

COUN 6003 Lifespan Development in Counseling — 3 credits
This course examines human development across the lifespan from conception through older adulthood, emphasizing biological, cognitive, emotional, social, and cultural influences on development. Students explore normative and non-normative development, developmental risk and resilience, and the implications of developmental theory for assessment, diagnosis, and intervention in clinical mental health counseling. The course integrates awareness, knowledge, and skills competencies consistent with CACREP 2024 standards.

COUN 6006 Group Facilitation and Counsel — 3 credits
This course introduces students to group dynamics, leadership styles, and therapeutic factors. Including experiential learning in group facilitation, ethics, and culturally responsive group practice. The course integrates awareness, knowledge, and skills competencies consistent with CACREP 2024 standards.

COUN 6008 Research and Program Evaluation in Clinical Mental Health Counseling — 3 credits
This course prepares clinical mental health counseling students to be informed, ethical, and critical consumers of research and evidence-based practice. Emphasis is placed on understanding research design, statistics, program evaluation, and outcome assessment as they apply to counseling practice. Students develop skills in interpreting research literature, evaluating evidence-based interventions, and applying research findings to clinical decision-making and program improvement consistent with CACREP 2024 standards.

COUN 6993 Topics — 3 credits