



**COUNSELING
DEPARTMENT**

Student Handbook

VERSION 8.17.2026

This Handbook and the policies contained herein do not in any way constitute and should not be construed as a contract between you and Marshall University. This Handbook and the rules, policies and procedures referenced herein are subject to change at any time.

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Introduction

Welcome to the Counseling Department at Marshall University, also known as the #CounselingHerd!

You begin your journey to become a Counselor with tremendous privilege, responsibility, and opportunity to serve others as they pursue their mental health and well-being across the lifespan. The world needs counselors, and you have answered the call!

As faculty and future colleagues, we take the educational component of your journey very seriously. Our curriculum is designed to help you develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed for entry-level practice to serve your schools and communities as ethical, competent, and culturally sensitive practitioners.

You bring with you a unique blend of personal and professional experiences that at times will aid you, and at other times might challenge you. Active self-reflection is often cited as one of the key predictors of a lengthy career free of burnout, but sometimes the insight that comes from this reflection does not feel good. Therefore, we encourage you to lean into what you know, be curious about what you do not know, create brave spaces of discomfort that promote growth, and use your resources and supports along the way.

This handbook is one of those resources and adds to Marshall University's Graduate Online Orientation (<https://www.marshall.edu/graduate/orientation/>) by including information specific to your journey through the counseling degree program. Please make sure this information is readily accessible to you during your matriculation.

You are responsible for knowing and abiding by the policies and processes contained in this handbook and entitled to a rich experience that is free from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, so please know your rights and resources through Marshall University's Office of Student Conduct (<https://www.marshall.edu/student-conduct/>) and Title IX Office (<https://www.marshall.edu/titleix/>).

We urge you to discuss any questions you may have with your faculty advisor or any other trusted faculty member.

Welcome to the journey!

Sincerely,

Your Counseling Faculty

History of the Counseling Department

Counselor Education at Marshall University can be traced back to approximately 1961 through the College of Graduate Studies (COGS) and later Marshall University, which merged in 1997. The first application for accreditation from the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs (CACREP; <https://www.cacrep.org/>) was submitted in 1985, and our current accreditation cycle runs through 2034!

Throughout our history, the counseling department has offered undergraduate and graduate degrees in several specialty fields to support the needs of graduates and the people they would eventually serve in their communities and schools. Since the early 2000s, the department has experimented with digital learning methods, and in 2017, the department received accreditation for a complete degree option that was delivered 100% remotely. This remote degree option enhanced access to counselor education in West Virginia (WV) and beyond. As the COVID-19 pandemic began in 2020, the department was well positioned to continue their digital delivery while continuing to innovate with a variety of instructional methods.

Given enrollment growth, the former “counseling program” was formally recognized as the “counseling department” in 2022, and we retired the on-ground delivery method in 2023. This pivot allowed the department to focus on elevating the digital delivery method while maintaining a rich and vibrant campus community for those that could relocate or travel to campus. Although our roots and many of our faculty and resources are in West Virginia, we are a national and international program; so, wherever you are, there too is Marshall!

Description of the Department

Mission Statement

The mission of the Marshall University Counseling Department is to prepare professional counselors who embody reflective practice, clinical competence, ethical integrity, and cultural responsiveness, and are committed to advocating for the well-being of individuals, families, schools, and communities while advancing the counseling profession through service, leadership, and lifelong learning.

Educational Pathways

The Counseling Department offers a 60-semester credit hour, CACREP-accredited, Master of Arts degree program in counseling with two specialty tracks (also known as areas of emphasis): clinical mental health counseling (CMHC) and school counseling (SC).

Fun fact: if you complete the school counseling area of emphasis, you can complete the requirements to become a Certified School Counselor and Licensed Professional Counselor in West Virginia! If not in WV, check with your state rules and regulations to explore how our curriculum aligns with each credential.

Additionally, the department facilitates one 18 credit hour graduate certificate program: Violence, Loss, and Trauma (VoLT) Counseling, which is available to students inside and outside of the program. During your program, you can take some VoLT courses as electives in your plan of study or take a few extra courses and complete the entire certificate program.

For more information, visit the graduate catalogue (<https://catalog.marshall.edu/graduate/programs-az/education-professional-development/violence-loss-trauma-counseling-graduate-certificate/>) and/or contact Dr. Kari Mika-Lude (mikalude@marshall.edu) who coordinates the VoLT certificate.

Counseling Program Objectives

The Marshall University Counseling Department objectives reflect the professional identity, program area, and professional practice standards identified by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educations Programs (CACREP) as the foundations for the preparation and ongoing development of professional counselors.

By the end of the program, students will:

1. Develop a strong professional identity as counselors through ethical decision-making, reflective practice, personal and professional wellness, and a commitment to advocacy at individual, institutional, and systemic levels.
2. Develop cultural humility, responsiveness, and advocacy skills to effectively serve diverse and underserved populations.
3. Demonstrate proficiency in counseling skills, case conceptualization, and evidence-based interventions with all populations they serve.
4. Critically evaluate research and apply those methods to inform evidence-based practice while exploring opportunities to contribute to the growing body of counseling scholarship.
5. Competently utilize assessments, resources, and interventions to promote mental health and well-being across diverse contexts.
6. Understand human development across the lifespan, with an emphasis on fostering self-awareness, wellness, trauma-informed practice, and resilience in themselves and the populations they serve.

Where is the Campus?

In remote educational programs, the idea of “campus” is much broader than the traditional idea of a campus bound to a physical location. Although our department operations are primarily housed on the South Charleston and Huntington campuses of

Marshall University in West Virginia, our campus is wherever we come together to engage in the learning and discovery process. If you can relocate or want to visit either physical campus, please let us know so that we can properly welcome you!

Our primary places for meeting are MyMU (myMU.marshall.edu), the Blackboard learning management system (LMS), Zoom, and Microsoft Teams. We also have a new connection platform, Inscribe, where you can search and find people with common interests and in the similar geographic regions (if you are willing to share) – [Check it out!](#)

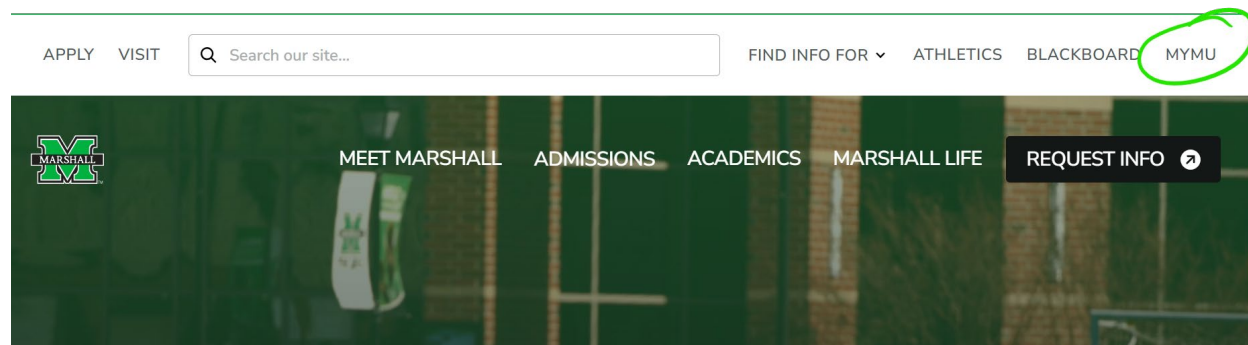
Also, most answers and resources can be found on our department homepage, so make sure to bookmark it for easy access: [Counseling Department](#)

If you are unfamiliar with these platforms or have general technology questions, then please contact Marshall University IT (<https://www.marshall.edu/it/services/>) who will guide you through all things technology such as hardware suggestions, access to needed software, email, and other general inquiries. Also be sure to check out the free software and other resources available to you as a Marshall student.

Getting Started at MU

You have already started your journey after receiving your acceptance letter, so, let us recap the next steps to help you get the most out of your Marshall experience:

1. Connect with your faculty advisor, complete your plan of study, and be prepared to register for classes (if you are not already enrolled) - [Plans of Study – Counseling Department](#)
2. Log in, check, and use your MU email address regularly. Given the enhanced security of the MU email system, you will need to ensure all communication goes through your MU email address. Your MU email is required for all communication.
3. Check out MyMU, which you can access from www.marshall.edu in the upper right corner of the page as displayed below:



4. Complete the Marshall Graduate Student Orientation here: <https://www.marshall.edu/graduate/orientation/>.
5. Get your books and other resources ready for the start of classes!

Building a Sense of Community

Many students wonder if and how they will connect with their peers and faculty when attending school at a distance. This is a valid concern, and one that requires a little more intentionality than if you attended on a physical campus.

For instance, there are no informal conversations while entering a building or waiting in the hall before class, but you also do not have to worry about traffic or inclement weather.

So, how do we make genuine and authentic connections in our virtual campus?

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Here are some mechanisms to build connections to Marshall and the Counseling Department:

1. Connect with your faculty advisor again! Your advisor will be helpful as you plan the courses you will take, the sequence you will take them, and the pace that will set you up for success. They will also be helpful as you think about your plans after graduation like licensure, certification, doctoral studies, and much more.
2. Connect with Marshall Online (<https://www.marshall.edu/online/student-experience>). The Marshall Online Student Engagement team partners with the department to support your success, and you will be assigned an online student success advisor (different from your faculty advisor) to keep you informed about student programming and outreach. They will also help you connect with other academic and student support services and resources. You can contact them at: online@marshall.edu
3. Connect with the #CounselingHerd on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/marshall-university-counseling-department/?viewAsMember=true>
4. Connect on Inscribe. [Check it out!](#)
5. Review the experiences of our faculty (<https://www.marshall.edu/counseling-department/faculty/>) and find people with similar interests, then email them to set up a meeting. We welcome it!
6. Build your personalized cohort! Since we do not use a forced cohort model, you might find it helpful to identify a group of peers with whom you can share ideas and support. You might even find yourselves coordinating your enrollments in the same sections or scheduling local meetups. Consider forming discussion groups, texting groups, or any other method of communication that meets your needs.
7. Join Chi Sigma Iota (CSI; <https://www.csi-net.org/>). CSI is an international honor society of counseling professionals and students dedicated to excellence in scholarship, research, and clinical practice. CSI's purpose is to promote and recognize exemplary achievement in the study and practice of counseling. Mu Epsilon is Marshall University's local chapter, dedicated to supporting our faculty and students and promoting the counseling profession through various activities. Students with qualifying grade point averages are invited to join. Contact the CSI Faculty Advisors, Dr. Kari Mika-Lude (mikalude@marshall.edu) and Dr. Jill Minor (minorj@marshall.edu).

Getting Connected to the Counseling Profession

So much of graduate school, especially those with professional degrees, is about getting connected to the global profession, which is often accomplished by joining and

participating in professional associations. There are a few benefits to joining professional associations as a student:

1. Reduced membership rates.
2. Increased volunteer opportunities.
3. Reduced rates on conferences and continuing education programs.
4. Access to journals and magazines.
5. **Free liability insurance (if you join the American Counseling Association, American Mental health Counselors Association, or American School Counselors Association), which you will need during practicum and internship.**
6. Access to member services (e.g., ethics consultations, legal defense fund, and library resource use).
7. Networking that could lead to practicum and internship sites and/or future employment.

Here are some links to the most common professional associations for your exploration:

- American Counseling Association: <http://www.counseling.org/>
- American Mental Health Counselors Association: <http://www.amhca.org/>
- American School Counselor Association: <http://www.schoolcounselor.org/>
- West Virginia Counseling Association: <http://www.wvcounseling.org/>
- West Virginia Licensed Professional Counselors Association: <http://www.wvlpca.org/>
- West Virginia School Counselors Association: <https://wvsca.wildapricot.org/>

We know money is tight, and it is hard to figure out how to fund your education on top of the needs of life and those you care about. If you must prioritize, consider one of the national associations that includes your liability insurance, which you will need during practicum and internship, and then if you can, your state/local branch or division of ACA, ASCA, or AMHCA, which can help you network and find the best practicum/internship experiences.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

We strive to create a diverse and inclusive community of students and faculty. The process of developing an accessible, diverse, equitable, inclusive, and just learning community requires a strong commitment to self-reflection as individuals and as a community, continuous and systematic evaluation, and action. We ask you to join us in the process of continuous improvement as we aim to live into our values and elevate our mission in pursuit of the mental health and wellness of all people.

There are times we will get it right, and other times we will get it wrong. There will be times when the impact of something we do does not match our intentions. There will be times when we celebrate and other times when we are disappointed. In all things, we

invite you to share information about your experiences in a manner that makes most sense to you. One place to share those experiences, both the celebrations and disappointments, is using this Real-Time Feedback link:

<https://forms.office.com/r/3DqH4QP6xi>

Although we strive to create safe learning communities, safety is not something that any program can guarantee. However, we hope that our collective commitment to the processes and policies outlined in this handbook will help us nurture our learning community and everyone in it, together.

If at any point you feel unsafe or experience discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, domestic misconduct, stalking, or retaliation, please contact the Title IX Office immediately (<https://www.marshall.edu/titleix/>) verbally or in writing. Reports can be made at any time by phone, email (titleix@marshall.edu), or by completing and submitting the [Incident Reporting Form](#). Marshall has policies that prohibit retaliation against an individual who files a complaint in response to conduct that they reasonably believe violates policies, or against an individual who participates or cooperates with an investigation. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible to effectively respond to a reported incident of sexual harassment.

If you are a student with a disability or disabled student (depending on your preference for person vs. identity first language), you will likely benefit from the Office of Accessibility and Accommodations: <https://www.marshall.edu/disability/>. Documenting the need for reasonable accommodation protects you and your faculty as we strive to create the most inclusive learning environment possible to help you achieve your goals.

Resources and Supports

Graduate school can be difficult. Life does not stop because you are in graduate school, so we want you to know about several resources that can support your matriculation. As a remote student, Marshall strives to provide you with the same supports as students on the physical campuses. If you run into any problems accessing supports, please let your faculty and student success advisors know, so that we can address them.

Here is a sample of supports that you might find useful:

Academic Supports: <https://www.marshall.edu/online/student-experience/>

1. Counseling Library Guide: <https://libguides.marshall.edu/counseling>
2. Information Technology: <https://www.marshall.edu/it/services/>
3. Tutoring Services: <https://www.marshall.edu/uc/tutoring-services/>
4. Writing Center: <https://www.marshall.edu/writingcenter/>
5. Office of Accessibility and Accommodations: <https://www.marshall.edu/disability/>
6. Research Portal: <https://livemarshall.sharepoint.com/sites/ResearchPortal>

7. Office of Student Research: <https://www.marshall.edu/student-research/>

Student Supports:

1. Career Services: <https://www.marshall.edu/careereducation/> (can also be helpful in practicum and internship exploration).
2. Counseling Center: <https://www.marshall.edu/counseling/> and www.bettermynd.com
3. Student Affairs: <https://www.marshall.edu/student-affairs/>
4. Wellness Center: <https://www.marshall.edu/wellness/>
5. Office of Student Conduct: <https://www.marshall.edu/student-conduct/>
6. Behavioral Intervention Team: <https://www.marshall.edu/bit/>
7. Military and Veterans Affairs: <https://www.marshall.edu/military/>
8. Collegiate Recovery Community: <https://www.marshall.edu/collegiate-recovery-community/>
9. Office of Student Success: <https://www.marshall.edu/student-success/>
10. First-Generation Student Support: <https://www.marshall.edu/firstgen/>

We know that asking for help can be challenging, which is sometimes amplified in graduate school if we experience stigma from others, internalized stigma, or general fear that we might be judged, or it will be held against us.

Much like we do with those we serve as Counselors, we honor this resistance and seek to understand it. We encourage you to give us the opportunity to build trust and reach out for support when needed.

Reach out early and often; the earlier you reach out, the more opportunities and potential solutions we have.

BetterMynd @ **MARSHALL**

MENTAL HEALTH IS HEALTH

Try it Out.
Talk it Out.

Going to therapy is a sign of

- ✓ Strength (*not* weakness)
- ✓ Self-care (*not* self-indulgence)
- ✓ Self-respect (*not* shame)

You deserve to feel safe and supported.

Scan me to register

**Marshall University students
get FREE 50-minute online
therapy sessions**

**Something on your mind?
Online therapy can help.**

Learn more and register at www.bettermynd.com

Personal Growth and Vicarious Exposure

The foundational work of Skovholt and Ronnestad (1992) identified that the “...optimal therapeutic self consists of a unique personal blend of the developed professional and personal selves” (p. 507). Therefore, a graduate degree in counseling requires both personal and professional growth that differs from more technical degrees, which require more factual and procedural knowledge. You are not just learning theories and skills; you are becoming a Counselor.

This developmental process requires commitment to active self-reflection and exposure to various academic and clinical exercises. You may experience content in courses and your clinical placements that bring undesirable responses. You may notice the vicarious exposure to the stories of others can lead to undesirable consequences. You will likely increase your awareness about your own developmental histories and experiences with mental health. Depending on your unique life experiences, you might be more/less susceptible to these undesirable responses.

According to the [ACA Code of Ethics](#) (2014; Section F.5.b):

“Students and supervisees monitor themselves for signs of impairment from their own physical, mental, or emotional problems and refrain from offering or providing professional services when such impairment is likely to harm a client or others. They notify their faculty and/or supervisors and seek assistance for problems that reach the level of professional impairment, and, if necessary, they limit, suspend, or terminate their professional responsibilities until it is determined that they may safely resume their work.” (p. 9)

Therefore, please monitor your own well-being, access your supports, and if this escalates to the point of safety concerns, please go to your local emergency room, call 988, and/or the Marshall University Crisis Hotline at 304-696-2550.

You might also find these resources useful:

- MU Counseling Center: <https://www.marshall.edu/counseling/>; phone - 304-696-3111; or email address: counselingcenter@marshall.edu
- The Trevor Project: Text 678-678 or visit: <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/>
- Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741 or visit <https://www.crisistextline.org/>
- Veterans Crisis Line: 988 then option 1 or visit <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net>
- BetterMynd Virtual Counseling: www.bettermynd.com

If your faculty or supervisors determine there is a significant risk to your safety, the safety of your peers, or those you serve, we may immediately limit, pause, or suspend your academic and/or clinical responsibilities until a plan can be developed.

Matriculation and Degree Requirements

In this section we will highlight the matriculation and degree requirements that can serve as your road map to graduation at Marshall University.

Here are the steps in your matriculation:

1. Maintain standards of conduct and ethical practice.
2. Select an area of emphasis (clinical mental health counseling or school counseling).
3. Complete of an advisor-approved plan of study that includes a minimum of 60 semester credit hours within 7 years of the first term taking class
4. Register and complete the required courses and credits in your plan of study; courses not listed in your plan of study may not be eligible for financial aid or count towards your graduation.
5. Earn no more than three credits of Cs (note: no Cs will be accepted for COUN 608, 691, or 698).
6. Meet the threshold on all individual assessment points (or complete the required developmental alternatives as outlined in a retention and remediation plan).

7. If enrolled in the school counseling area of emphasis: Pass the Praxis II prior to internship.
8. Apply for practicum and internship the semester before you plan to start.
9. Obtain student malpractice insurance by joining a professional association that offers it as a member benefit.
10. Connect with your clinical training software, and log all approved hours needed for clinical training.
11. Earn a B or higher in practicum and internship (or complete the required developmental alternatives as outlined in a retention and remediation plan).
12. Maintain a 3.0 graduate point average.
13. Complete the comprehensive exam during your first term of internship.
14. Apply for graduation. <https://www.marshall.edu/registrar/forms/>
15. Graduate and celebrate!

Core Curriculum

The Master of Arts degree program in Counseling is a planned 60-hour program of study, which contains 45 hours of core courses and 15 hours of courses aligning with your area of emphasis (*Note*. Your internship will also be related to your area of emphasis).

Although our curriculum is built on the educational requirements of WV licensure and certification, there is some flexibility if your state requires a different course or specific elective. Please download your licensure/certification applications and consult your faculty advisor about any potential changes needed to your plan of study. We cannot guarantee that our curriculum will meet each individual state credentialing requirements, so you are responsible for reviewing your state requirements to best plan your educational goals.

You can find your state licensure board by performing a web search of “counseling and licensure board” as well as reviewing Marshall’s licensure disclosures:

<https://www.marshall.edu/licensure/>

Our curriculum is offered 100% remotely, meaning you can access our curriculum and complete your degree from wherever you are located; there are no mandatory on-campus requirements.

You can choose to stay where you are, travel the world (at least until your practicum and internship), and/or relocate to the enriching physical campuses in South Charleston, WV and Huntington, WV.

All core courses and most electives are offered three terms per year, in the Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters.

Many courses have pre-requisites that set up a smooth developmental arc throughout the curriculum. Be sure to collaborate with your faculty advisor to ensure you are taking courses in the correct sequence.

You can pick your pace through the program. If you haven't already, please review the Course Sequencing and Plan of Study guidance document with your welcome packet (<https://www.marshall.edu/counseling-department/plans-of-study/>).

You will likely want to take as many classes as possible; we get it. Please assess your time availability, responsibilities, and ways that you are staying healthy yourself. We recommend budgeting about 10 hours/week per course, and planning for unexpected challenges (often outside of your control) that will make things take a little longer than you expect. This should tell you how many courses you can successfully complete per term.

On average, graduates complete the program in 6.4 terms. We recommend 2-3 courses per term. You can take 3-12 hours per term, depending on your advisor-approved plan of study; be sure to consult with financial aid regarding the number of credit hours needed to obtain the amount of financial aid required, which changes during the summer term.

If you wish to take more than 12 hours, you will need to request this and have it approved by your advisor, the department chair, and dean. Requests are considered on a case-by-case basis and are not guaranteed.

Time Limit for Program Completion

All work offered for the Master of Arts degree in Counseling, including accepted transfer credit, must be completed within seven years from the date that your earliest course applied toward the degree was completed. If you exceed this time limit, revalidation of expired coursework may be made, at the discretion of the relevant instructors and the student's faculty advisor, via examination, independent study, repetition of the expired coursework, additional coursework, or portfolio. Revalidation is considered on a case-by-case basis and is not guaranteed.

Praxis Exam for School Counseling Students

If you are seeking certification as a school counselor (pre-K-adult) in West Virginia, you must take and pass the PRAXIS II #5422 (School Counselor) exam prior to enrolling in COUN 698, which is your internship course.

The exam can be taken at either of the approved testing sites:

Charleston – 5224

Huntington - 7522

Prometric Testing Center
2 Players Club Drive, Suite 104
Charleston, West Virginia 25311
(304) 344-8094

Marshall University
1 John Marshall Drive
G45 Morrow Library (Testing Center)
Huntington, West Virginia 25755

[Marshall Testing Center Website](#)
(304) 696-2604

If your state does not require the PRAXIS for credentialing, then please consult with your faculty advisor and the [School](#) Counseling Area of Emphasis Coordinator, Dr. Breanna Ellington: ellingtonb@marshall.edu) to discuss options. Alterations to the plan of study are evaluated on a case-by-case basis and are not guaranteed.

Clinical Placement

The clinical placement component of the curriculum is the culminating experience of your graduate training. It consists of two major components: practicum (3 credit hours) and internship (6 credit hours). You are responsible for finding your clinical placement sites, but our Clinical Placement Coordinator (Dr. Jerry Dooley) will share resources to help identify potential sites. Please pay attention and star, favorite, and bookmark his emails!

In general, it is best to complete your clinical training sequence in the final three terms of the program, without a break in between.

During practicum and internship, your responsibilities may extend beyond the university calendar. You are responsible for knowing and following the schedule and holiday calendar for the placement site, which may differ from the university calendar. Maintaining an active presence at your site and performing appropriate closure activities is an important ethical imperative given the need to maintain continuity of care for the people you serve.

Application must be made before the semester in which you intend to start practicum or internship. The application should be fully approved 3 weeks prior to the semester starting. Please review the <https://www.marshall.edu/coepd/counseling/counseling-program-handbooks/> and [Practicum and Internship Handbooks](#) for more information and steps for planning for Practicum and Internship.

A mandatory Practicum and Internship Orientation is held each semester (Fall, Spring, and Summer) to guide you through the planning and placement application process for the subsequent semester. The Orientation is announced by direct e-mail to all currently enrolled students and in individual courses.

In Practicum, the primary focus is becoming oriented and integrated into a clinical setting as well as demonstrating individual counseling skills. You complete a supervised site-based practicum that totals a minimum of 100 clock hours, including a minimum of 40 direct service clock hours. The experience promotes competence with basic counseling skills under the close supervision of a faculty member and the site supervisor, an opportunity to perform some of the activities that a regularly employed

staff member in the field setting would be expected to perform, and a chance to become familiar with professional activities other than direct service work. This is completed at one site.

During Internship, the focus shifts to the actual practice of the role of the Counselor as an entry-level practitioner. After successful completion of Practicum, you will complete a supervised internship for a minimum total of 600 clock hours, including a minimum of 240 direct service clock hours. The Internship provides: 1) an opportunity for the student to perform all the activities that a regularly employed staff member in the field setting would be expected to perform; 2) familiarity with professional activities other than direct service work; and 3) supervised experience in the use of professional resources.

Practicum and Internship are challenging and time consuming. You should plan accordingly.

Here are some other considerations:

- You are responsible for finding and arranging appropriate clinical field placements.
- You are responsible for your own transportation to and from clinical assignments.
- You must provide proof of independent Professional Liability Insurance which is uploaded to the clinical training software application. Information on obtaining Professional Liability Insurance is provided in the Practicum and Internship Handbooks.
- You can anticipate paying for your Criminal Background Checks (CBC) at most schools and agencies as part of consideration for field placement or employment, particularly if the work involves children or vulnerable populations.

Enrollment space is limited in Practicum and Internship courses. Application must be completed and approved through the clinical training software portal. Please contact the Clinical Placement Coordinator: Dr. Jerry Dooley dooley24@marshall.edu for more information.

Comprehensive Exam

All students will take a comprehensive examination, the Counselor Education Comprehensive Exam (CECE) during their first term of internship. You can find information here: <https://www.marshall.edu/counseling-department/comprehensive-exam/>

What is the CECE?

The CECE is a 120 multiple choice exam which covers the CACREP content areas:

- a) Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice,

- b) Social and Cultural Diversity,
- c) Human Growth and Development,
- d) Career Development,
- e) Counseling and Helping Relationships,
- f) Group Counseling and Group Work,
- g) Assessment and Testing, and
- h) Research and Program Evaluation.

You will have 3.5 hours to complete the exam. There is no cost for the students to complete the exam. The CECE will be offered once per semester.

When should I take the CECE?

Students in their first Internship will be contacted and be provided with the information to sign up for the CECE.

What happens after I take the CECE?

To pass the CECE, you must earn a score higher than one standard deviation below the mean.

You will be notified within 10 business days of the availability of the CECE if you have passed the exam. If you passed the CECE, you will have the information regarding them passing sent along for graduation. The administrator of the CECE will send the scores of those who passed to those responsible for graduation.

If you do not pass the CECE, you may be required to retake the CECE next semester or complete additional retention and remediation plans.

You can take the CECE as many times as needed until the student passes the CECE. There is no cost to retake the CECE.

By January 1, 2026, only the scores on the CECE will be used to determine if students are able to graduate from the counseling program.

Application for Graduation (yes, you will have to apply to graduate)

There can be many stressors as you approach graduation. You will finish your internship, plan for life after graduation, and apply for graduation.

The application for graduation typically takes place very early in the term of graduation, or in the case of August graduation, early in the term before graduation. You will still need to complete all degree requirements before your degree can be conferred.

Please follow the graduation deadline dates as published in the University Calendar (<https://www.marshall.edu/academic-calendar/>).

All information to apply for graduation can be found here:
<https://www.marshall.edu/registrar/forms/>

Hooding Ceremony

Each Fall and Spring semester, the College of Education and Professional Development hosts a *Hooding Ceremony* to honor our graduates with their master's degree stole (hood), recognize their accomplishments, and attend a reception. This is the perfect time to invite family and friends to celebrate your significant accomplishment. Information on the date and location of the *Hooding Ceremony* is distributed by e-mail to each graduation applicant who has successfully completed the degree requirements. Currently, only Marshall University faculty are eligible to hood you during the ceremony.

Obtaining endorsements for credentialing, licensure, employment, and future academic/training programs

In alignment with the ACA *Code of Ethics* (2014), faculty and supervisors will consider endorsement for "...certification, licensure, employment, or completion of an academic or training program only when they believe that supervisees are qualified for the endorsement. Regardless of qualifications, supervisors do not endorse supervisees whom they believe to be impaired in any way that would interfere with the performance of the duties associated with the endorsement" (F.6.d., p. 14).

You should request a meeting to discuss your endorsement needs with your supervisor or faculty well in advance of the need for endorsement, which normally takes the form of a letter of recommendation. Requesting an endorsement does not guarantee that one will be given, so please plan accordingly.

Additionally, you can contact Dr. Thomas Cooper (thomas.cooper@marshall.edu) during your matriculation and after you graduate to get assistance with required documents from the university for your credential applications.

Adding a Certificate to your Plan of Study

The Counseling Department offers an 18-hour Certificate of Advanced Studies in Violence, Loss, and Trauma, (VoLT; <https://catalog.marshall.edu/graduate/programs-az/education-professional-development/violence-loss-trauma-counseling-graduate-certificate/>). The VoLT Certificate, eligible for federal financial aid, offers both foundational and in-depth understanding of how violence, loss, and trauma affect people's lives and prepares them for expressive, integrated treatment planning to foster resilience and a well-lived life. You can take some VoLT courses as electives and/or

add the additional courses beyond those required for your MA in Counseling degree plan of study.

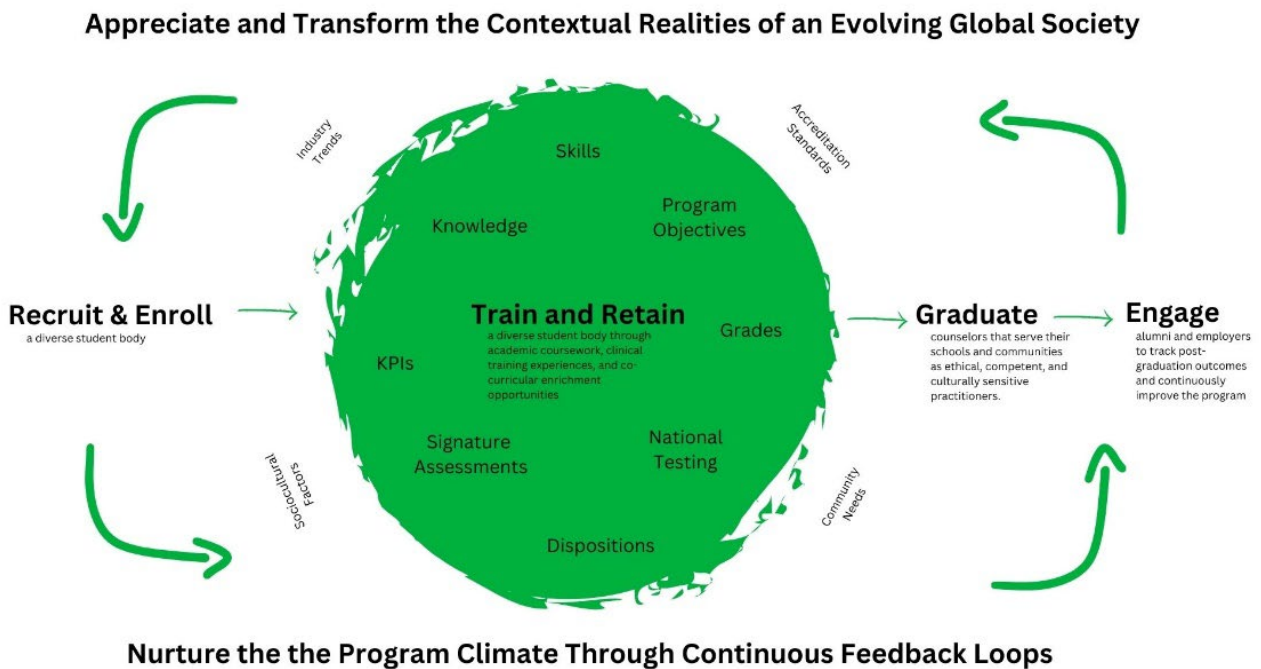
Making Changes During Your Program

Life happens, and we understand that your needs, interests, passions, etc. might change throughout the program. For instance, you might want to work with a specific faculty and request a new advisor. You might decide to switch from the clinical mental health to school counseling specialty. In all things, please consult with your faculty advisor first.

Please note that registering for courses outside of your plan of study will risk your financial aid and progression in the degree program.

For your reference, most forms that will be needed to facilitate these changes can be found here: <https://www.marshall.edu/graduate/current-students/forms-and-information/> and here: <https://www.marshall.edu/registrar/forms/>

Individual Student Assessment, Support, Retention, Remediation, and Dismissal Process



As part of your journey in this program, you will engage in the **Individual Student Assessment, Support, Retention, Remediation, and Dismissal process**, which is aligned with our **Comprehensive Assessment Plan (CAP)**. This process is designed to help you develop into an ethical, competent, and culturally responsive practitioner who serves schools and communities effectively. It ensures that your assessments and any required interventions are clear, transparent, and equitable (see Appendix A for more details).

Your Learning Journey

As a student, you are expected to grow in the **knowledge, skills, conduct, and dispositions (KSDs)** needed for entry-level counseling practice. Your achievements will be celebrated, and any challenges will be addressed through targeted support and intervention, both of which are expected and integral parts of your development.

How You'll Be Assessed

Your progress will be continuously and systematically assessed in alignment with the CAP. You'll have opportunities to demonstrate your development in these areas:

1. Your interactions with faculty, peers, supervisors, administrative staff, and clients.
2. Your performance on signature assignments and developmental experiences.
3. Data gathered from key assessment measures.
4. Completion of degree and matriculation requirements.

Assessment Domains

Your KSDs are evaluated in six domains:

1. **Cumulative GPA:** You must maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative graduate GPA.
2. **Course Grades:** A grade of B or higher is required in all courses. You may count a maximum of three credits (not courses) with a grade of C toward your degree. Note: no Cs will be accepted in COUN 608, 691, or 698)
3. **Clinical Course Grades:** All clinical training courses (COUN 608, 691, and 698) must be passed with a grade of "C." A grade lower than a C will not count toward degree completion.
4. **KPI Assessments:** You need to meet department thresholds for the 22 key performance indicators (KPIs). The standard for signature assignments is generally 80%, but thresholds may vary and will be noted in course syllabi. Earning a grade below the threshold may initiate a retention and remediation plan, regardless of overall course grade.
5. **Standards of Conduct and Ethical Practice:** You must adhere to university, professional, and ethical standards.
6. **Academic Integrity:** Upholding university and departmental policies on academic integrity is essential.

KPI Assessments

KPIs are specific benchmarks that measure your development across knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Meeting these is critical for your success. Each KPI is evaluated through at least two methods (grades on a signature assignment; CSDA; Supervisor Evaluation; and/or National Testing) over two or more points of time.

Our program developed 22 KPIs that are linked to each core curricular area of 2024 *CACREP Standards* as well as our program objectives (in parentheses), which include a blend of knowledge, skills, and dispositions:

1. KPI 1.1: Students will understand the professional roles, ethical standards, and advocacy responsibilities within the counseling profession. (CACREP 2024, 3.A., PO 1, 3, 6)
2. KPI 1.2: Students will apply ethical reasoning and advocacy skills in counseling practice, supervision, and other professional settings. (CACREP 2024, 3.A., PO 1, 3, 6)
3. KPI 2.1: Students will understand how culture influences the counseling process. (CACREP 2024, 3.B., PO 2)
4. KPI 2.2: Students will integrate multicultural and social justice competencies into counseling practice. (CACREP 2024, 3.B., PO 2)
5. KPI 3.1: Students will understand developmental theories and their application across the lifespan. (CACREP 2024, 3.C., PO 4, 6)
6. KPI 3.2: Students will apply developmental, wellness, and trauma-informed principles to identify barriers and foster resilience. (CACREP 2024, 3.C., PO 4, 6)
7. KPI 4.1: Students will understand and apply career development theories, strategies, and interventions. (CACREP 2024, 3.D., PO 4, 5)
8. KPI 4.2: Students will administer, interpret, and apply career assessments. (CACREP 2024, 3.D., PO 4, 5)
9. KPI 5.1: Students will understand the common factors of effective counseling processes as well as the key principles of counseling theories. (CACREP 2024, 3.E., PO 1, 2, 3, 5)
10. KPI 5.2: Students will apply skills in assessment, case conceptualization, diagnosis, intervention planning, treatment delivery, and advocacy. (CACREP 2024, 3.E., PO 1, 2, 3, 5)
11. KPI 6.1: Students will evaluate principles of group dynamics, group stages, roles, behaviors, and therapeutic factors. (CACREP 2024, 3.F., PO 3)
12. KPI 6.2: Students will apply skills in planning, implementing, and facilitating group interventions/programs. (CACREP 2024, 3.F., PO 3)
13. KPI 7.1: Students will know the purpose, principles, and ethical use of assessment in counseling. (CACREP 2024, 3.G., PO 4, 5)
14. KPI 7.2: Students will demonstrate competence in selecting, administering, scoring, interpreting, and reporting results for assessment instruments. (CACREP 2024, 3.G., PO 4, 5)

15. KPI 8.1: Students will understand research methods to develop and evaluate counseling practice. (CACREP 2024, 3.H., PO 4)
16. KPI 8.2: Students will locate, analyze, and synthesize counseling research. (CACREP 2024, 3.H., PO 4)
17. KPI 9.1: Students will understand the ASCA National Model and the role of school counselors in promoting academic, career, and social/emotional development. (CACREP 2024, 5.H., PO 1, 3, 6)
18. KPI 9.2: Students will demonstrate skills in planning, implementing, and evaluating comprehensive school counseling programs. (CACREP 2024, 5.H., PO 1, 3, 6)
19. KPI 10.1: Students will demonstrate competence in intake, assessment, diagnosis, treatment planning, and evidence-based interventions. (CACREP 2024, 5.C., PO 1, 3, 6)
20. KPI 10.2: Students will apply trauma-informed, resilience-focused, and culturally responsive practices in clinical mental health counseling. (CACREP 2024, 5.C., PO 1, 3, 6)
21. KPI 11.1: Students will demonstrate the dispositions necessary of all professional counselors. (CACREP 2024, 2.C., PO 1, 3, 6)
22. KPI 12.1: Students will demonstrate ethical, intentional, and developmentally appropriate evaluation and application of technology related to the full spectrum of counseling services. (3.E.5; 3.F.6.)

Standards of Conduct and Ethical Practice

Students, staff, faculty, and supervisors are expected to maintain the standards of:

1. Marshall University (<https://www.marshall.edu/student-conduct/>)
2. Complete MU Catalog (<https://catalog.marshall.edu/>)
3. Title IX (<https://www.marshall.edu/titleix/>)
4. Marshall Office of Academic Affairs (<https://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/policies/#ProbationGrad>)
5. The College of Education and Professional Development
6. The Counseling Department
7. The ethical codes of the American Counseling Association, American School Counseling Association, American Mental Health Counselors Association, and National Board of Certified Counselors
8. State board policies regulating the practice of counseling in West Virginia and the state where you reside.
9. The legal statutes governing practice of counselors in WV and the state where you reside. Note: If you have any past, current, or future violations of legal statutes, please disclose this to your faculty advisor immediately as this could interfere with your ability to successfully complete a background check and practicum/internship. Violations could also prevent you from receiving professional credentials.

These are assessed on an ongoing basis, and any concerns will be responded to in accordance with our retention and remediation process.

Academic Integrity

All policies related to academic integrity can be found at the following links:

<https://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/policies/> and <https://catalog.marshall.edu/>.

Academic integrity is assessed on an ongoing basis, and any concerns will be responded to in accordance with our retention and remediation process.

Developmental Concerns

Developmental concerns may emerge through two primary avenues:

1. **Real-Time Observations:** During coursework, site placements, or informal interactions.
2. **Formal Assessment Points:** Through semesterly reviews of your knowledge, skills, and disposition (KSD) data.

Possible KSDs Concerns

Although the KPIs outline performance expectations, here are some examples of concerns that may result in a more informal or formal retention and remediation process:

1. Missed live session.
2. Missed asynchronous work.
3. Missed or failed an assignment.
4. Unresponsive to emails or messages.
5. Technological challenges.
6. Over-engaged: seems to need a lot of support and encouragement.
7. Excessive self-disclosure.
8. Unresponsive or resistant to feedback.
9. Challenging interpersonal behavior.
10. Lack of awareness of impact on others.
11. Life stressors.
12. Microaggressions.
13. Boundary violations
14. Suspected academic integrity concern.
15. Potential breach of ethical standards.

When these occur, you will either be notified by your instructor, supervisor, advisor, department, or the R&R committee to address early and collaboratively.

Retention and Remediation Process

If you do not meet program standards, you may enter the retention and remediation process. This developmental approach is designed to support your growth. This process is designed to provide structured support at key developmental milestones, promoting your growth and success. You are also encouraged to proactively seek assistance when challenges arise, meaning you could initiate the retention and remediation process on their own. While the goal is to help you progress successfully through the program, failure to meet established standards may ultimately result in dismissal, regardless of other academic performance metrics. For instance, a student with a 4.0 GPA could violate an ethical standard during their field placement and still be dismissed from the program.

The purpose of the retention and remediation process is to equip you for a successful career as counselors by addressing developmental challenges in a supportive and constructive manner. We acknowledge that terms like “retention,” “remediation,” and “dismissal” can carry significant weight. However, we aim to frame these processes with a developmental tone, emphasizing that making mistakes is a normal part of learning. Growth often occurs through reflection and response to challenges, not by avoiding them, and the retention and remediation process is a key mechanism for fostering that growth.

Our ultimate goal is to support and retain a diverse student body prepared to serve schools and communities as ethical, competent, and culturally responsive practitioners. This process is one way we achieve that mission.

The retention and remediation process is sequential (unless the severity of the concern or a specific university policy mandates expedited action, such as in cases of academic integrity concerns or risk of harm to self/others) and outlined in Table 1:

1. **Informal Intervention:** Initial support is provided by instructors, advisors, supervisors, or other faculty members.
2. **Formal Referral (or during individual student assessment days):** If informal efforts are unsuccessful, you may be referred to the Counseling Department’s Retention and Remediation Committee (R&R Committee) for review.
3. **Review and Action:** The R&R Committee evaluates the referral and individual student assessment data, determines the level of concern, and recommends appropriate interventions.

Determining the Level of Severity and Intervention Needed

The R&R Committee evaluates the level of severity and appropriate intervention whenever a Student Encouragement and Support Referral Form is received, as well as during the semesterly Individual Student Assessment Day. If a concern is identified, the

R&R Committee determines the appropriate level of concern and intervention as outlined below and in Table 1:

1. Level 1: early indications and not severe – coaching by advisor and/or a program email
2. Level 2: patterns and low severity – advisor outreach and potential for advisor initiated formal R&R plan
3. Level 3: recurrent, unresponsive, and/or increased severity – R&R team outreach and formal R&R plan
4. Level 4: pervasive, unresponsive, and/or most severe – R&R Committee outreach, formal R&R plan, and/or dismissal

The R&R Committee considers your receptiveness to prior interventions, receptivity to feedback, developmental level, and program progression when determining the appropriate level of concern. For instance, a first-year student exhibiting diffuse personal disclosure issues may require a Level I intervention with the faculty advisor. However, the same behavior from an internship student, particularly during client sessions, could warrant a Level II or III response due to the risk of harm to clients and misalignment with developmental expectations.

The process may escalate to involve the Department Chair or Dean depending on the severity and circumstances of the concern. In urgent or serious cases, the intervention level may progress more quickly. The retention and remediation process is intended to be developmental. By addressing concerns early and collaboratively, we aim to provide the necessary resources and guidance for you to achieve success as reflective practitioners.

For concerns involving potential Title IX violations, the R&R Committee should immediately follow the University's Title IX reporting process, available here: <https://www.marshall.edu/titleix/>. Reports can be made at any time by phone, email (titleix@marshall.edu), or by completing and submitting the [Incident Reporting Form](#). For other issues of student conduct, well-being, and academic integrity that are more severe, the Committee will also consider the need for a university report and response here: <https://www.marshall.edu/student-conduct/submit-a-report/>.

Possible Interventions

Depending on the nature of concern, several interventions could result at any level, including, but not limited to:

1. Retaking a course.
2. Redoing a KPI assignment.
3. Referrals to university supports.
4. Referral to university offices and officials
5. Referral to appropriate community officials.

6. Finding a new placement site.
7. Adding a supplemental training site.
8. Extra supervision.
9. Additional educational exercises to address specific deficits.
10. Referral for personal counseling.
11. Participating in rupture/repair practices.
12. Writing an apology.
13. Withdrawal from a class.
14. Leave of absence.
15. Taking fewer classes.
16. Withdrawal from the program.
17. Recommendation for dismissal.

Retention & Remediation Plan Components

If a full R&R Plan is required, it will include the following sections:

1. Participant information and meeting details.
2. Reason for the concern.
3. Prior steps taken to resolve.
4. Additional interventions needed.
5. Consequences for a failed plan.
6. Your participation and response.

Potential Reasons for Dismissal

All threats to your matriculation are complex and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Failure to progress through the tiers of intervention may result in dismissal from the program. In cases of particularly severe or egregious concerns, especially those involving health and safety risks to oneself or others, an immediate recommendation for dismissal may be made. Additional examples that could warrant an immediate dismissal include, but are not limited to:

1. Threats to the health and safety of self/others.
2. Dismissal from a practicum/internship site.
3. Failure to complete retention and remediation plans if required.
4. C or lower in the same class two times.
5. Any two Ds.
6. F, NC, or U in any course in their plan of study.
7. Failure to respond to efforts for retention and remediation planning.
8. Violation of ethical codes, standards of conduct, or academic integrity.

Due Process

You have the right to dispute concerns in accordance with Marshall University policy, as outlined here: <https://www.marshall.edu/graduate/graduate-student-appeals/>. To initiate the process, you should first notify the Department Chair via email. If the issue is not resolved at the department level, you may proceed through the formal MU appeals process.

You are not permitted to withdraw from a course until all appeals are resolved. During the appeals process, you must continue attending classes and completing assignments.

In certain severe cases, concerns may bypass lower intervention levels and proceed directly to a Level 4 intervention. Examples include dismissal from a practicum or internship site, risk of harm to self or others, or instances of verbal or physical harassment or assault. In these situations, you will be immediately prohibited from attending your placement site or classes pending a review by the Clinical Training Director and Department Chair or Program Director. This review will assess the severity of the concern and determine the appropriate level of intervention. You retain the right to appeal these decisions through the established appeals process.

For concerns involving potential Title IX violations, you should immediately follow the University's Title IX reporting process, available here: <https://www.marshall.edu/titleix/>. Reports can be made at any time by phone, email (titleix@marshall.edu), or by completing and submitting the [Incident Reporting Form](#).

Student Appeal Policy

Marshall University policy provides you with a pathway to appeal various issues, including charges of academic dishonesty, program dismissal, final grades, and other concerns. The procedures for appeals vary depending on the type of issue being addressed.

For guidance or questions about the appeals process, please contact the Graduate Studies Office. Detailed information is available here: <https://www.marshall.edu/graduate/graduate-student-appeals/>

Providing Feedback to Promote Continuous Improvement

As a member of the Counseling Department, we all play a role in the creation of a vibrant, diverse, and inclusive learning community. To assist in our continuous improvement efforts, we ask that you join us by sharing your experiences as you matriculate.

There are several formal mechanisms for sharing feedback such as end of term course evaluations, evaluations of supervisors, and an annual enrolled student survey.

However, there are times when you might want to share your feedback immediately. These could be affirmations, suggestions, concerns, etc. with other students, faculty, supervisors, Marshall, or any other party related to your matriculation.

In those cases, you can share here using the following link:

<https://forms.office.com/r/3DqH4QP6xi>

As with all manners of feedback, we encourage you to lean into a relational approach to feedback that encourages ongoing reflection, action, and improvement.

If you have concerns about submitting something using this mechanism, then please contact your faculty advisor, program director, or department chair to discuss.

Preparing for Licensure and Certification

Marshall University cannot guarantee licensure or certification; each state has a unique process, and you are responsible for consulting with your state credentialing boards to ensure you are meeting the requirements. Your state might refer to the license or certification with a slightly different title, such as licensed mental health counselor, licensed clinical professional counselor, certified school counselor, among others, but there are some common pathways, which are reviewed below.

Professional Counselor Pathway

In general, the licensure pathway in most states will include some constellation of the following:

1. **Education:** You will need to complete your graduate level degree in counseling with required coursework including a practicum and internship experience. Your degree from Marshall will set you up well for many states, but it is your responsibility to make sure you have all the necessary courses for your specific state's education requirements.
2. **Exams:** You will likely need to complete a recognized exam. Your state will determine the specific exam and the timing for when you need to complete the exam. Typically accepted exams include: the National Counselor Exam (NCE) and the National Clinical Mental Health Counselors Exam (NCMHCE).
3. **Supervised Practice:** After completing your degree and the requirements by your state credentialing board, you will begin to complete a required number of hours of supervised clinical practice, typically over the course of two years (although this varies by state). This is sometimes referred to as a provisional license.
4. **Independent Practice:** After completing your post-grad supervised clinical practice, you will be eligible to apply for independent practice licensure. Depending on your state, this could include the completion of another exam.
5. **Supervisory Practice:** After a few years of independent practice experience, you might be eligible to apply for supervisory distinction, which is available in

some, but not all states. This often requires some combination of graduate level coursework and/or continuing education related to supervision.

Students are responsible for consulting with their state licensure governing bodies to evaluate their educational requirements. Our curriculum is built to prepare students to complete the requirements for licensure as a professional counselor (e.g., licensed professional counselor) and certification as a school counselor in WV as well as national certification as a National Certified Counselor, Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor, and National Certified School Counselor through the National Board for Certified Counselors (<https://nbcc.org/>).

Some state licensure boards offer streamlined processes for graduates of CACREP-accredited programs like Marshall's Counseling Department offers. Many states also offer endorsement or reciprocity options for people already licensed in other states for a designated period. Additionally, once the Counseling Compact (<https://counselingcompact.org/>), of which WV is a participant, is fully operational, it will be easier for people licensed in one state to gain practice privileges in another.

Although our curriculum is built on the requirements for licensure and certification in WV, we will work our best to provide flexibility and elective offerings to meet the needs of your professional goals, so please consult with your faculty advisor while developing your plan of study. It is best to download your application for licensure or certification and use it as a checklist throughout your matriculation at Marshall in consultation with your faculty advisor. You can view Marshall University's licensure disclosures at <https://www.marshall.edu/licensure/> or perform an internet search like "counseling licensure and [Your State]."

School Counselor Pathways

School counselors are credentialed by the state where they are employed. Typically, credentials require documented school counseling education and coursework from an accredited college/university, completion of practicum and internship in a K-12 school, and passage of a state or national comprehensive test (e.g., Praxis II). Requirements vary by state, so it is important to consider criteria when you are seeking new employment or moving to a position in a different state.

In general, the certification pathway in most states will include some constellation of the following:

1. Education: You will need to complete your graduate level degree in counseling with a specialization in school counseling with required coursework including a practicum and internship experience. Your degree from Marshall will set you up well for many states, but it is your responsibility to make sure you have all the necessary courses for your specific state's education requirements.

2. Exams: You will more than likely need to complete a recognized exam. Your state will determine the specific exam and the timing for when you need to complete the exam. West Virginia requires students to take and pass the PRAXIS II Exam prior to taking an internship. Some states require the same exam or a complimentary exam that must be taken prior to attaining certification. In other states, for example, Ohio requires the Ohio Assessment for Educators (OAE) School Counselor Test #040. Kentucky does not require a specific exam. In addition, some states have reciprocity with West Virginia which means that if you are certified in West Virginia as a School Counselor you can transfer (normally with a fee) that certification to another state. The American School Counselor Association has the certification requirements for each state listed. However, it is still the responsibility of each student to investigate their state's requirements.

Our curriculum is built to prepare students to complete the requirements for licensure as a professional counselor (e.g., licensed professional counselor) and certification as a school counselor in WV as well as national certification as a National Certified Counselor, Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor, and National Certified School Counselor through the National Board for Certified Counselors (<https://nbcc.org/>).

Although our curriculum is built on the requirements for licensure and certification in WV, we will try our best to provide flexibility and elective offerings to meet the needs of your professional goals, so please consult with your faculty advisor while developing your plan of study. It is best to download your application for licensure or certification and use it as a checklist throughout your matriculation at Marshall in consultation with your faculty advisor. You can view Marshall University's licensure disclosures at <https://www.marshall.edu/licensure/> or perform an internet search like "counseling licensure and [Your State]."

The National Counselor Examination and National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination

Two of the most common tests required for licensure are the National Counselor Exam (NCE) and the National Clinical Mental Health Counselor Exam (NCMHCE), which are administered by NBCC (<https://www.nbcc.org/exams>). You can take these exams while a student at Marshall or after you graduate depending on your state licensure requirements.

Signing Up at Marshall

The NCE and NCMHCE are offered each semester to students enrolled in the MA, Counseling program at Marshall. During the third week of the semester, the program administrator distributes information regarding the examinations, including instructions

for registration. Students are provided with a three-week period to complete the sign-up process. Once the registration deadline has passed, all applications are submitted to the NBCC for processing. Applications remain active for up to two years after submission, allowing students flexibility in scheduling their examination. The review process typically takes approximately eight weeks, after which students become eligible to test. Students will receive an email notification confirming that their application is under review, and upon approval, they are granted a six-month window in which to schedule and complete the examination.

Additional information can be found here: <https://www.marshall.edu/counseling-department/comprehensive-exam/> and <https://www.marshall.edu/counseling-department/licensure-certification/>

After Graduation

You can sign up to take the NCE/NCMHCE after completion of your degree at Marshall. Please contact your state counseling board for specific steps to take the NCE and the NCMHCE.

If in WV, scores from the exam taken at Marshall can be sent to the West Virginia Board of Examiners in Counseling (WVBEC; <https://wvbec.org/>) as part of the professional licensure application process. If in another state, please consult with your state licensure board to ensure the appropriate timing of the exam.

The administration of the NCE/ NCMHCE can coincide with your application to become a Nationally Certified Counselor (NCC; <https://www.nbcc.org/certification/ncc>). If you choose this option, you will be scheduled in Spring and Fall semesters and between NBCC and the student. If you pass the NCE/NCMHCE, then upon graduation and verification of your final transcript by NBCC, you will be awarded the credential of NCC. Passing or failing the exam will have no impact on your graduation; it is only used for program evaluation and your future credentialing pursuits.

There are several study guides and preparation organizations that you might find helpful, many of which provide a discount to students and members of professional associations.

References

Skovholt, T. H., & Ronnestad, M. H. (1992). Themes in therapist and counselor development. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 70, 505-515.

Appendix A		
<i>Student Support, Retention, and Remediation Process</i>		
Level of Intervention	Possible Concerns	Possible Interventions
Informal	Initial concerns about KSDs that are developmentally appropriate. Examples: struggles adjusting to graduate-level work, minor skill gaps, difficulty meeting deadlines, technology concerns, misses an assignment, etc.	All instructors, supervisors, and advisors engage with students regularly to identify points of celebration and concern. The direct contact (instructor, supervisor, or advisor) provides informal coaching. Depending on the severity of the concern, a typical sequence of informal coaching could look like this: • 1st concern: Email student. • 2nd concern: Request a Teams meeting or phone call. • 3rd concern: Complete the Student Encouragement & Support Referral Form: https://forms.office.com/r/0gMmppMquw If a concern is related to the course, severe or related to academic integrity, or you need help with decision making, immediately consult with the Course Lead and complete the referral form. Depending on the concern, can also post an alert in Navigate (e.g., some concerns will automatically alert the faculty advisor and other university supports)
The R&R Committee becomes aware of a concern, either through the Student Encouragement and Support Referral Form or during the semesterly individual student assessment day. The R&R Committee reviews the information, collects additional information if needed, and determines the next appropriate level of response:		

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Level 1 (early indications and not severe)	Unresponsive to informal interventions, additional supports needed. Typically, appropriate for students in their first term. Examples: early KSD thresholds are missed, minor ethical concerns, or inconsistent performance with some indication of aptitude (e.g., mix of grades like an F and an A).	Coaching by advisor and/or program email. Notify the person filling out the form (if applicable) in the communication thread. Add a general note or alert in Navigate.
Level 2 (patterns and low severity)	Concerns about KSDs becoming more serious or showing patterns. Typically, appropriate after the first term. Examples: multiple missed KSD thresholds, signs of a recurring issue, low academic performance with little signs of aptitude (e.g., multiple Fs, no As; one term of withdrawals and one term of Fs).	Faculty advisor: 1. Outreach to support. 2. Could initiate a full R&R Plan within 2 weeks. 3. Record alert in Navigate. 4. Send R&R Plan R&R Committee Chair who places in the R&R Teams folder. 5. Notify relevant university offices and other relevant parties.
Level 3 (recurrent, unresponsive, and/or increased severity)	Unresponsive to Level 1 & 2 interventions; concerns show serious patterns or severity. Examples: dismissal from a practicum/internship site, continual missed thresholds, no evidence of improvement.	R&R Committee: 1. Initiate a full R&R Plan within 2 weeks. 2. Record alert in Navigate. 3. Place R&R Plan in the R&R Team folder. 4. Notify relevant university offices and other relevant parties.

		<i>*If severe enough, student could be suspended from clinical training experiences.</i>
Level 4 (pervasive, unresponsive, and/or most severe)	Extremely serious concerns about KSDs or pervasive issues. Examples: significant threats to health/safety, egregious ethical violations, unfit for the profession.	R&R Committee: 1. Consider recommendation for dismissal or initiate a plan immediately. 2. Record alert in Navigate. 3. Add R&R Plan to the R&R Team folder. 4. Notify Dean and other university offices.
Dismissal	Potential Reasons for Dismissal	1. Threats to the health and safety of self/others. 2. Dismissal from a practicum/internship site. 3. Failed Level 4 intervention. 4. Any two Ds or Fs. 5. C or lower in the same class two times. 6. Two "No Credits" (NCs). 7. Failure to respond to efforts for retention and remediation planning. 8. More than one violation of ethical codes, standards of conduct, or academic integrity.