# PASTORAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING (M.A.)

## Requirements

### Course Requirements

There are 60 credits required for graduation. Courses marked with an asterisk (*) must be completed prior to the internship year. Students who have a master's degree in theology may request to substitute another course for the theology requirement (see Appendix I in the Resources section (p. ) for this waiver form).

**Courses are offered in the following semester rotation each year:**

| Course | Title | Credits |
|---|---|---|
| PCGR 6310 | Human Growth and Development (Fall) * | 3 |
| PCGR 6380 | Theology of Pastoral Counseling and Spiritual Care (Fall) | 3 |
| PCGR 6382 | Social and Cultural Foundations of Pastoral Counseling (Spring) * | 3 |
| PCGR 6384 | Professional Ethics in Pastoral Counseling (Fall) | 3 |
| PCGR 6386 | Pastoral Counseling Theory (Fall) * | 3 |
| PCGR 6440 | Pastoral Counseling Skills (Spring (alternate years) & Summer (every year)) * | 3 |
| PCGR 6510 | Advanced Life Span Issues and Career Counseling (Spring) | 3 |
| PCGR 7330 | Assessment and Appraisal of Individuals, Couples, and Families (Fall) | 3 |
| PCGR 7410 | Research Methods in Pastoral Counseling (Spring) | 3 |
| PCGR 6390 | Psychopathology and Diagnosis (Spring) * | 3 |
| PCGR 7422 | Group Process: Theory and Techniques (Fall) | 3 |
| REGR 6120 | Education for Peace and Justice (Spring) | 3 |
| PCGR 7471 | Clinical Instruction and Integration Process I (Fall: Taken in conjunction with Field Placement I) | 3 |
| PCGR 7472 | Clinical Instruction and Integration Process II (Spring: Taken in conjunction with Field Placement II) | 3 |
| PMHC Field Placement [1] | | 9 |
| *One Scripture Course* | | *3* |
| RLGR 6010 | Old Testament | |
| RLGR 6011 | New Testament | |
| *One Theology Course* | | *3* |
| RLGR 6030 | Christology | |
| PMGR 6510 | Theology of Ministry | |
| RLGR 6031 | Theology of the Human Person | |
| *One Spirituality Course* | | *3* |
| SPGR 6830 | Discernment in the Christian Tradition | |
| SPGR 6752 | Christian Contemplation and Action | |
| SPGR 7752 | Christian Contemplation and Action | |
| SPGR 6792 | Contemporary Christian Spirituality | |
| **Total Credits** | | **60** |

[1] 9 credits of field placement, to be completed over either 2 semesters (300 hours each) or 3 semesters (200 hours each).

## Case Integration Paper

In addition to the coursework, students must complete a final Case Integration Paper as a capstone experience. The purpose of the paper is to demonstrate the student's integrative practical and theoretical learning over the course of the program. The paper will be approximately 25-30 pages and will focus on the student's work with a single case during the internship. Students are to remove any identifying information from the case paper so that anonymity of the client can be assured. While the paper uses a real case, the intention of the paper is to demonstrate the student's academic and clinical skills.

The final approved paper is due to the student's academic adviser based on the following graduation dates.

- Graduation Date: January | Final Paper Due Date: November 1
- Graduation Date: May | Final Paper Due Date: March 15
- Graduation Date: September | Final Paper Due Date: July 15

The paper is to be organized in the following format:

1. Identifying Information: First initial only, age, sex, culture/ethnicity, religion, when treatment began, how often seen
2. Clinical Impressions: Description of the client including a Mental Status Exam
3. Relevant Data from the Initial Interview (including the presenting problem/client's main reasons for seeking counseling)
4. Developmental, Social, Family, Mental Health, and Medical History
5. Diagnosis and Psychodynamic Formulation
6. Transference/Countertransference Dynamics
7. Ethical, Cultural, or Social Justice Issues
8. Theory: Way of Understanding the Case
9. The Pastoral Perspective: theological issues, spiritual or religious themes, and theological reflection that includes an understanding of the Ignatian principle of cura personalis
10. Treatment Plan: goals of therapy, types of clinical interventions, and necessary referrals for treatment, including group counseling, medication, and psychological testing or assessment
11. Critique of Counseling Services
12. Two to four page verbatim

The Case Integration Paper will be graded by the academic adviser with a standardized rubric (see Appendix II in the Resources section (p. )). The cutoff for a passing score is a minimum of one point in each of the 11 areas and a minimum of 24 points total. Students who do not receive a passing score will be provided feedback and asked to rewrite the paper.

If, after the second rewrite, a student does not receive a passing score, an Individual Remediation Plan will be put into place for the student.

# Academic Advisement

Once admitted to the program, each student will be assigned an adviser, who will be one of the full-time faculty members. In order to be certain students will meet their academic and professional goals, advisement is essential. Evaluation of student performance is a necessary component of advisement. This includes evaluation of academic, clinical, and professional skills.

While the adviser will be tasked with communicating evaluation feedback to the student, all of the faculty and clinical supervisors will be weighing in on the student's progress toward the degree.

At minimum, students must meet with their adviser once per semester prior to registering for classes. It is through the academic advisement process that a student and faculty member will together

- formulate a map to complete course work in a designated time frame;
- review a student's Degree Works account;
- ascertain if a student is meeting the mandatory academic 3.0 GPA requirement;
- receive formal feedback on student progress;
- explore clinical interests;
- discuss the final case integration paper;
- form a professional mentoring relationship in the field of pastoral counseling.

During advisement, students complete the academic advisement sheet (see Appendix III in the Resources section (p. )) that remains in the student's file. The student and the adviser update this sheet each semester, as well as review the student's Degree Works account.

To be a licensed professional counselor (LPC) or a licensed mental health counselor (LMHC) requires that one have both academic and professional skills. It is the goal of the program faculty to help students work toward meeting a master's level of competency of both academic and clinical/professional skills.

## Satisfactory Academic Progress

Satisfactory academic progress requires that students

- complete 12 credits per year;
- complete one requirement per term when not enrolled in coursework (e.g. draft of final paper; final submission of paper);
- maintain a 3.0 GPA;
- receive a grade of no less than a B in any class.

If a student does not maintain satisfactory academic progress, a letter will be mailed to the student from the program faculty. This letter will remain in the student's file. A student may be placed on academic probation or dismissed from the program in accordance with the GRE policy. If placed on academic probation, an Individual Remediation Plan (IRP) will be put into place (see IRP policy in the Program Policies section (p. )).

## Satisfactory Clinical/Professional Progress

Satisfactory clinical/professional progress requires students to

- demonstrate professional responsibility;
- demonstrate personal maturity and emotional integration and integrity;
- demonstrate ethical knowledge and behavior as indicated in the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics;
- develop master's-level clinical assessment skills;
- demonstrate theoretical knowledge
- demonstrate openness to supervision.

Professional progress is evaluated through a number of ways including input from faculty instructors, academic advisers, and clinical site supervisors. Prior to beginning an internship, basic clinical and professional skills must be demonstrated through the Yearly Student Evaluation Form in May (see Appendix IV in the Resources section (p. )), Basic Clinical Skills course, and the Fitness Review Form. The Basic Skills course is a hands-on skills class designed as a beginning foundation to counseling. Students will learn the fundamentals of the counseling relationship and will practice counseling skills in triad groups with other students. At the end of the course, the instructor will complete the Fitness Review Form (See Appendix V in the Resources section (p. )). Students will review the evaluation form with the instructor at the end of the class. The form will remain in the student's file and will serve as one of the means for evaluating readiness for clinical internship placement.

During the internship experience, evaluation is assessed through the Professional Counselor Performance Evaluation (PCPE). This form is a validated and widely used measure used in assessing student skills and readiness.

If there is concern for a student's ability to be successful during clinical internship, a remediation plan will be put into place (see IRP policy in the Program Policies section (p. )).

# The Internship Experience

The internship is an exciting opportunity for students to gain necessary practice in professional counseling prior to graduating from a graduate training program, and it is a fundamental requirement of such training. Students will complete an internship at a designated mental health services agency, and receive supervision from the site supervisor determined by the agency, the Fordham faculty clinical instructor, and the Fordham clinical director during this process. The Fordham clinical director will maintain regular contact with the agency site supervisor throughout a student's placement. The Fordham clinical director may make site visits to students' agency placement sites near the beginning of placement, and at other times as appropriate.

Please take note that the internship

- may only start in the fall semester. No exceptions will be granted to this policy;

- is two semesters long and must be completed in two consecutive terms;
- must total 600 hours, of which 240 hours must be direct client contact hours;
- cannot be your place of employment.

## Expectations of Students

The STUDENT will be expected to

1. be involved clinically about 15 to 20 hours each week (seeing approximately six to eight clients);
2. audio or video tape counseling sessions if applicable to site;
3. be punctual, responsible, and professional at all times;
4. know and follow at all times the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics;
5. meet with agency supervisor for an hour each week for at least 15 weeks each semester. Each of these supervision sessions is to be scheduled in advance on an agreed-upon time and date;
6. write case notes in a timely manner;
7. commit to the agency for the fall and spring semesters (September 1 to May 15);
8. evaluate the agency and supervision at the end of the spring semester;
9. inform the Fordham clinical director whenever there is a change of site supervisors at the agency;
10. see clients only on the premises of the agency (as designated by the agency) and only during regularly established client hours;
11. handle the resolution of any difficulties or conflicts which arise at the agency in a professional manner.

The Fordham clinical director is available to assist in helping students meet their expectations. In the case of conflicts or difficulties, the Fordham clinical director should be notified as soon as possible.

## Expectations of Agency Supervisors

The AGENCY SUPERVISOR will be expected to provide a complete orientation of the staff, facility, rules, regulations, and procedures of the agency as well as

1. see that the student builds a client load of up to six to eight clients. It is hoped that some clients will provide a long-term counseling experience. If either of these situations does not appear likely, please notify the student and the Fordham clinical director as soon as possible;
2. allow, arrange, and review regular audio or video taping of the student's counseling training/service delivery (if applicable to site);
3. provide an hour of individual clinical supervision weekly at a set time and on a set day. Fifteen hours of individual supervision are expected each semester at the agency setting;
4. complete three evaluations of the student counselor over the year. The evaluation is to provide feedback both in regards to strengths and growing edges. Please note any major difficulties the student may be having (with clients, agency personnel, other interns, etc.) and bring to the student's immediate attention and, if necessary, to the attention of the Fordham clinical director;
5. discuss the evaluation with the student during supervision prior to sending the evaluation to the clinical director;
6. return the evaluation by October 15, December 1, and May 1;
7. attend the fall supervisor/faculty luncheon; this will provide an opportunity to meet with the student's small-group supervisor;
8. negotiate school vacation periods with the student so that a responsible counselor-client relationship is maintained. (Two weeks at Christmas and an additional week at Spring Break OR Holy Week).

### Steps to Completing the Internship

In order to complete the internship, the following steps must be followed:

**Step 1: Satisfactory academic progress**
Satisfactory academic progress (SAP) is a prerequisite to the internship and must be maintained throughout the internship. Students must be in good academic standing in the graduate school as indicated by meeting the 3.0 GPA requirement, have no less than a B in any program requirement, and if an IRP is in place, satisfactorily meet the requirements of the plan.

**Step 2: Satisfactory clinical and professional progress**
Satisfactory clinical and professional progress (SCPP) is a prerequisite to the internship and must be maintained throughout the internship. Prior to internship, students must demonstrate clinical readiness with the Basic Skill Form. During the internship, students must demonstrate progress through the Professional Counseling Progress Evaluation (PCPE) form.

**Step 3: Application for Internship (see Appendix VII in the** Resources **section (p. ) )**
Students must inform the clinical director of their intent to complete an internship. This is done via an application. The application for the internship is due to the Clinical Director by November 1 the year before the internship begins.

**Step 4: Meeting with the Clinical Director**
Once the application has been reviewed, the clinical director will schedule a meeting with the student. This meeting will take place in November. In the December faculty meeting, the program faculty will discuss each application for internship. If a student is not approved by the faculty for a clinical internship, a student remediation plan will be put into place (see IRP policy in the Program Policies section (p. )).

**Step 5: Internship Search**
After the clinical director has approved a student for an internship, the student may begin to look for a placement site. Students are responsible for arranging their own internship placement, in consultation with the clinical director. The clinical director maintains a list of possible internship sites, including student evaluations of internship sites. Students are free to research additional sites on their own. All placement sites and site supervisors must meet the requirements outlined above under the requirements and expectations of student and supervisor. When looking for an internship, a student may find it useful to use the description of the 60-credit pastoral mental health counseling program

for potential supervisors (see Appendix VI in the Resources section (p. )).

### Timeline for Securing an Internship

Beginning the year PRIOR to Internship:

**September-November**
Meet with your academic adviser to review coursework and to sign application for internship. Include your resume.

**Mid October**
Attend the yearly Pastoral Mental Health Counseling Student Orientation Meeting

**November 1**
Application and resume due to clinical director

**November-December**
Arrange a meeting with clinical director for Pre-Internship Interview

**January**
Arrange interviews with internship sites

**February- April**
Interview with at least two sites. Students notify of sites not accepted.

**May 15**
Completed and sign the Agency Opening Form, Educational Agreement Form, and Supervisor Dossier due to clinical director

**July 1**
Student arranges with site supervisor initial start date, days, and hours to be on-site. The first date of internship cannot be prior to the start of the fall semester.

### Required Forms for Internship

Once an internship has been secured, it is up to the student to be certain the following forms are completed, and on file, with the clinical director before May 15 the year prior to internship:

- **Agency Opening Form** (Appendix VIII in the Resources section (p. ))
  This form provides information about the agency including name, location, telephone number, contact person, client focus of the agency, supervisor of the intern, days/times student will be on site, and if the site allows taping of clinical work for educational purposes.
- **Educational Agreement** (Appendix IX in the Resources section (p. ))
  This form outlines the duties and responsibilities of the Fordham intern and the agency where the internship takes place.
- **Supervisor Dossier** (Appendix X in the Resources section (p. ))
  This form provides evidence of the supervisor's credentials and evidence of ability to serve in the capacity of a clinical supervisor of interns.
- **Contract** (if required by internship site)

After the internship is under way, the following forms must be completed:

- **The Monthly Hours Worksheet** (Appendix XII in the Resources section (p. ))
  Must be filled out, signed by the supervisor, and submitted to the clinical director at the end of each month. It is recommended that students maintain a copy of all hours as well.
- **Self-Evaluations October 15, Dec 1, and May 1.** (Appendix XIII in the Resources section (p. ))
  Once the internship is completed, students must complete an evaluation of the site. This form is due by MAY 1.

### Malpractice Insurance

Students who are enrolled in the internship classes (Clinical I and II; Field placement) are covered by Fordham's malpractice insurance. However, students may wish to maintain their own policy. Student policies are available through the American Counseling Association for students and graduates.

## Clinical and Professional Evaluation

Systematic assessment of the internship experience is essential to be certain students are meeting their educational goals. Formal evaluations (see Appendix XIII in the Resources section) (p. ) are completed and turned in to the clinical director in the following timeline.

FALL SEMESTER: October 15 and December 1

SPRING SEMESTER: May 1

All students, clinical supervisors, and clinical instructors will complete the form at the three noted times above. All completed forms will remain in the student's file. A meeting with the clinical instructor and the student will take place at the end of the semester to review the forms and discuss clinical and professional strengths and areas of growth. Should there be concerns about a student's ability to successfully complete the internship, a remediation plan will be set in place (see IRP policy in the Program Policies section (p. )).