

Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) FAQ Sheet

1. What is the Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) Program?

Answer: The CMHC program is a rigorous three-year professional master's program, accredited by The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) that will prepare you for the field of mental health counseling. By successfully completing this program you will have the course work to sit for the National Counseling Exam. The following Questions and Answers will help you in applying for the program and understanding what is expected of a student.

2. What do I need to do in order to apply to the program?

Answer: Please use the following web link to submit your graduate application for Clinical Mental Health Counseling program and any supplemental items required https://www.wilmu.edu/admission/mscc_admission.aspx by no later than the admission deadline of February 1st.

3. What is the process once I have submitted my application?

Answer: Once a formal application, including all supplemental items, have been submitted, the application will be reviewed. Typically, the applications are reviewed by the CMHC Faculty in late February and a formal interview is held in March for qualified applicants. Upon completion of the formal interview process – applicants who are accepted into the program will begin class in May. The overall selection process is utilized to evaluate a person's readiness for graduate study and his/her suitability for the field of counseling.

4. If I am accepted into the CMHC program, when can I start? The Wilmington University website states "there is a rolling admission" but this program only has admittance once per year.

Answer: Although Wilmington University does accept students on a rolling basis the CMHC program has a prescribed program of study (courses with prerequisites which have to follow sequentially) which is why applicants are accepted for admittance to begin classes in the summer semester of each academic year. Students enter the program in a cohort and move through the program as a cohort, taking classroom courses for the first two years and culminating in the third year with Practicum and Internship which is in the field at an agency or other site where counseling is part of the services.

5. What are some of the expectations of the CMHC program?

Answer: The University requires a 3.0 GPA for academic standing in graduate programs and to qualify for Masters Degrees. For the CMHC program, there is a minimum grade requirement of "B" in all respective courses; therefore, cumulative GPA may exceed the University standard. The grade of B- and below is considered failing.

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Students must be able to show personal/professional growth while also upholding the ethical standards of the current ACA code of ethics. For further information, review the code of ethics at the following web link <https://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/ethics>

6. Does the CMHC program require personal counseling during or before entering the program?

Answer: It is not required; however, it is highly recommended and encouraged for each student to undergo his or her own personal counseling as it can enhance a student's ability to be successful in the CMHC program.

7. Does my undergraduate degree have to be within the field of psychology or sociology in order to be considered for the program?

Answer: While it is an advantage to have had courses in psychology, sociology, and/or behavioral sciences it is not a requirement. We have had previous applicants with undergraduate degrees in various fields including but not limited to business, education, criminal justice, science and music. It is helpful to have worked in the social service field or have gotten a Certificate in an area of counseling or human services.

8. How does a master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling differ from the master's degree in Social work?

Answer: The focus of the CMHC program is to provide in-depth training in counseling skills and theory. Our students are prepared in the areas of individual, family, marital and group counseling to work as practicing counselors and therapists. The emphasis of the MSW degree is to work with individuals from a sociological and case management perspective.

9. Will this counseling degree help me to get a job with an agency and/or go into private practice work?

Answer: The CMHC degree prepares individuals to work in various agencies and in private practice settings. The program of study provides coursework, practicum, and internship necessary to attain National Counselor Certification (NCC), as well as the Delaware Counselor Licensure (LPCMH). Typically, the licensed Professional Counselor is accepted as a provider by all or most managed care companies. Please review the guidelines for your state around licensing and agency work requirements.

Delaware: <https://dpr.delaware.gov/boards/profcounselors/newlicense/>

Maryland: <http://dhmh.maryland.gov/bopc>

New Jersey: <http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/pc/Pages/default.aspx>

Pennsylvania: <http://www.dos.pa.gov/social>

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10. How long will it take me to complete the 60 credit hour program? It appears to be a great deal of time and coursework.

Answer: The CMHC program has been designed for completion in three (3) years. Some of the courses are scheduled on a semester long basis and other courses are scheduled in a weekend (Friday evening and Saturday) modular format to be completed over the course of 1-3 weekends. Semester length classes are usually one evening per week (in some cases a second day of the week may apply) and generally begin at 5:30pm. The length of the program (60 credit hours) is mandated by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

The CMHC program can be completed in 5 years if a student has a reason to take time off for personal, medical, or other reasons. If a student takes a semester or two off, the student has to be able to complete the program of study within 5 years from the time of acceptance into the program. As stated above, the course work takes three years to complete and the course work is sequential so any time off would effect a student's ability to complete the program of study sequentially within the 5 years.

11. Is the CMHC program accredited by an agency?

Answer: Yes, it is an accredited program by CACREP. For further information on CACREP please see <https://www.cacrep.org/for-students/students-faqs-2/>

12. Is there financial aid available?

Answer: Yes, a significant number of our students utilize financial aid to assist with paying for their schooling. Every student has the option to apply for financial aid and scholarship opportunities that are offered by Wilmington University as well as outside resources. Please see www.wilmu.edu/financialaid/ for further information.

13. Does the CMHC Program accept transfer credits?

Answer: Per CACREP, the program is not allowed to transfer in any clinical hours. Any other courses will be reviewed upon admission with the understanding that all clinical hours must be completed within the program. A maximum of six credits may be transferred into the program that are deemed equivalent to the courses in the CMHC program.

14. If for any reason, I need to withdraw from the program (financial, illness etc.), would it be possible to re-enter the program without re-applying?

Answer: Students have a five-year window to complete the program. Occasionally, a student may need to take a leave from the program and go to an inactive status for a short time period. Students must contact their faculty academic advisor if there is a deviation

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from their program of study including becoming inactive. Typically, returning to active status involves only notification of the faculty academic advisor. All students needing more than five years to complete their program of study must reapply for admission to the CMHC program.

15. How much time do I have to spend in an agency setting to complete the program?

Answer: The CMHC program requires students to complete a 100-hour practicum at an agency in the summer term at the beginning of their third year. Beginning in the fall term and running through the spring term of the third year, they complete a 600-hour internship at an agency. The average time in their field during practicum is 8 hours per week and 20 hours per week during internship at an agency. Although many agencies have flexible hours, which enable students to work around their regular jobs, students often find that they must make arrangements with their employer to insure availability to complete the 600 hours of internship in the prescribed time period of two semesters.

16. Is it possible for the practicum and/or internship experiences be done where a student is employed?

Answer: Yes, some students do work in agencies where practicum and/or internship can be completed. The site must meet all of the regular practicum and internship requirements and the practicum and internship duties must offer the opportunity for new learning and professional growth. In addition, supervision must be provided by someone who meets the CMHC program's site supervisor requirements for education and experience and who is not the student's regular supervisor. Many students have worked out a creative experience with their agency supervisor and administrator that will enable them to perform in a different area, or to pilot an idea that will enhance their agency's services.

17. If I obtained my Master's in School Counseling degree, can I take some courses within CMHC to sit for licensing within my state?

Answer: No, you would have to contact your education advisor to see what options are available to you. If looking to get licensed within Clinical Mental Health Counseling you would have to complete our entire program.

18. Are the courses for the CMHC program available online?

Answer: Traditionally, the courses are only administered in a face-to-face setting. Currently, due to COVID-19, the Wilmington University direction has been to administer all courses online across the board for all programs. If there is a change in this direction, there will be announcement made to all students. Once the University allows students to return to the classroom the CMHC program will no longer be on line.