

Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Supplement to the

COURSE CATALOG & STUDENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024
Academic Year





Master of Science Clinical Mental Health Counseling

*Supplement to the Sonoran University
Course Catalog and Student Handbook
for the 2023-2024 academic year*

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Purpose and Publication Notice

This supplement is effective February 26, 2024. It is important to note that, in addition to the content presented here, students and applicants are required to comply with Sonoran University's established procedures and policies as outlined in the 2023-2024 Course Catalog, Catalog Addendum, and Student Handbook. These comprehensive resources collectively serve as guides to ensure a well-rounded understanding of the university's expectations, guidelines, and educational offerings.

Sonoran University of Health Sciences Course Catalog is published to provide applicants and the general public with information about educational programs, policies, and procedures. This catalog does not constitute a contract. Sonoran University reserves the right to make changes in the regulations, rules, and policies set forth in this publication. The University will communicate those changes with reasonable notice to interested parties. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information available at the time the copy is prepared for this catalog, Sonoran University does not guarantee its accuracy. Students are responsible for understanding and complying with all policies and procedures contained in the most recent catalog and in other publications distributed by Sonoran University. A student's course of study is guided by the curricula published annually in this catalog. Information, programs, and requirements are subject to change without notice at the discretion of the administration. The University reserves the right to change the terms and conditions of this catalog at any time. This catalog supersedes all previous editions.

Sonoran University is a tax-exempt, not-for-profit corporation accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and approved to offer degrees by the Arizona Naturopathic Physicians Board of Medical Examiners and Arizona State Board of Private Postsecondary Education. Sonoran University's Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine (ND) program is accredited by the Council on Naturopathic Medical Education (CNME). In addition to the ND program, HLC has approved Sonoran University to offer distance education courses and programs, including the Master of Science in Clinical Nutrition (MSCN), Master of Science in Nutrition Business Leadership (MSNBL), and Master of Science Clinical Mental Health Counseling (MSCMHC).

Sonoran University does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic background, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, age, disability, veteran status, nationality, thinking styles, or life experiences in the administration of educational policies, admission policies, financial aid, employment, or any other program or activity.

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COURSE CATALOG 23-24

Supplement for the MSCMHC Program

University Information

Sonoran University Medical & Research Facilities

Virtual Center For Personalized Health Care

Leveraging high-quality and evidence-based care standards, our Virtual Center for Personalized Health Care, set to launch in 2025, engages clients on a Virtual Care Journey that retains the best practices of in-person mental health care delivered at no cost through our virtual care setting. The Center eliminates traditional barriers to mental health care by increasing access and eliminating costs. Through our telehealth platform, we are connecting our providers to clients in need of mental health care from across the country. Our care team consists of master's level clinical mental health counseling students working under the direct supervision of licensed professional counselors who hold appointments as Clinical Faculty within the School of Mental Health at Sonoran University.

Admissions Information

Admission Policies

Application

Deadline for Application

Sonoran University accepts applications on a rolling basis until all spaces are filled. Application deadlines are listed below. Candidates are encouraged to apply on or before the early decision date.

School of Mental Health

Fall Start (early October)

- Application Deadline – September 6, 2024
- Admission Deadline – September 13, 2024
- Deposit Deadline – September 18, 2024

Admission

Reapplication Process

Applicants who have submitted an application for admission to Sonoran University and do not complete the process may reactivate their application for up to one year after the initial application. The applicant must submit the requirements outlined below directly to Sonoran University. Applicants who were denied admission to Sonoran University may reapply after one (1) year and must submit a new application (see Admission Requirements for prescribed program of study).

Below are the requirements for the reapplication process:

1. Application submitted through the Sonoran University Admissions portal.
2. Non-refundable application fee.
3. Updated curriculum vitae/resume.
4. Official transcripts for highest post-secondary degree completed since original application.
5. An interview is required for MSCMHC candidates (qualified applicants selected for interview will be contacted by the Admissions Office).
6. Any additional admission requirements for prescribed program of study.

Transfer Applicants

Eligible Coursework

Transferring Credit to MSCMHC Program

Only courses completed with a B or better will be considered for transfer credit. No more than 18 of total MS quarter program credits may be transfer credits.

Master's Program Admissions

Requirements

Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Prospective students who wish to enter a master's program must complete and submit the following requirements prior to matriculation.

1. A completed online application and application fee payment, see Tuition and Fees.
2. A current resume.
3. A personal statement.
4. Official transcript from the institution that conferred the student's highest awarded degree. Coursework/degree must be completed at a regionally accredited or candidate college or university. Applicants can verify if their institution qualifies using the U.S. Department of Education's database of accredited postsecondary institutions. Official transcripts should be sent electronically from the institution directly to Sonoran University at transcripts@sonoran.edu.
5. A cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale is preferred. However, Sonoran uses a holistic admissions process for the MSCMHC program, and all applicants with a GPA below 2.75 are encouraged to apply to be considered on a case-by-case basis.
6. International Applicants must submit foreign transcripts from the institution that conferred the student's highest degree earned. This transcript must undergo a course-by-course evaluation by a member organization of either the National Council on the Evaluation of Foreign Education Credentials (NACES) or the Association of International Credential Evaluators (AICE). Fees for this service are the responsibility of the applicant.
7. All military transcripts for former members of the armed services.
8. Video conference interview (qualified applicants selected for an interview will be contacted by the Admissions Office).

Additional Requirements

Students may submit optional letters of recommendation if they wish to strengthen their application.

Post-admit MSCMHC Enrollment Requirements

1. Criminal background check - Sonoran University requires applicants who are offered admission to undergo a criminal background check. Sonoran University has contracted with Certiphi Screening, Inc., to facilitate the criminal background check. There is a fee for the service, payable directly to Certiphi. The applicant's offer of admission will not be considered final, nor will the applicant be permitted to enroll, until the completion of a background check with results deemed acceptable by Sonoran University. Convictions of a criminal offense, other than a minor traffic offense, are required to be disclosed, including the nature of the offense, and what disposition occurred as a result of that offense. This disclosure must be made whether or not a sentence was served and/or civil rights have been restored, or whether the conviction(s) were expunged from the record. A prior felony conviction does not necessarily preclude an applicant from being admitted to Sonoran University, but professional licensing boards in the state of Arizona and elsewhere may refuse to issue a clinical license if an individual has a felony or other conviction on their record.
2. Successful completion of Sonoran University's safety and training courses.
3. Transfer Credit Evaluation* (if applicable) - Students admitted to an MS program who have completed graduate-level coursework or have graduated from a domestic or foreign accredited graduate school or program may apply for transfer credit. To comply with VA requirements, all U.S. Veterans with any graduate-level coursework must be evaluated for potential transfer credit, see VA Benefits for more information. Transfer credit will be determined during the admissions process and will not be considered after matriculation, see Transfer Credit Policy.
4. Technology Requirements - Laptop and reliable high-speed internet for use in completing college coursework. For a complete listing of Sonoran University's technical requirements, please visit our [Technology Check site \(https://techcheck.sonoran.edu/techreqs.html\)](https://techcheck.sonoran.edu/techreqs.html).

*At this time the MSCMHC program of study is not approved for VA Benefits.

University Policies

Graduation

University Requirements

Additional MSCMHC Graduation Requirements

Students in the MSCMHC program must fulfill the following programmatic graduation requirements:

1. Pass all required coursework in the program of study with a 3.0 or better.
2. As part of the coursework – students will have completed the following hours associated with their clinical field experiences (Practicum, Internship I (A and B) and Internship II (A and B)).
 - a. Practicum – 100 total hours (40 of which are direct clinical contact hours)
 - b. Internship I (A and B) – 300 total hours (120 of which are direct clinical contact hours)
 - c. Internship II (A and B) – 300 total hours (120 of which are direct clinical contact hours)
3. Students must complete a graduation form in accordance with institutional and programmatic policies.

Financial Information

Tuition and Fees

The following tuition and fees apply to the 2023-2024 academic year. Sonoran University of Health Sciences reserves the right to change tuition and fees at any time. A new tuition and fee schedule will be published when there are changes. Fees that are specific to the Master of Science (MS) programs are indicated next to the fee.

Application & Enrollment Fees

(Non-refundable)

Fee	Cost
Admission Deposit ¹	\$300
Deferral (MS)	\$100
New Student Application (MS)	\$50
Reapplication (MS)	\$50
Transfer Evaluation	\$300

Tuition (Per Credit)

Fee	Cost
Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling	\$497

Non-course-specific Fees

(Non-refundable)

Fee	Cost
Graduation Audit Fee	\$250
Additional Course Enrollment Fee	\$5
Audit (per course)	\$150
Competency Assessment (per exam)	\$150
Credit Card Processing	4.5%
Diploma Replacement	\$50
Late Registration	\$100
Returned Check	\$45
Special Examination (per exam)	\$150
Student Replacement ID Card	\$25
Transcript Fee (via Parchment)	\$12

Quarterly Fees

Fee	Cost
Student Government	\$20
Technology (MS)	\$250

MSCMHC Course-Specific Fees

Fee	Cost
CMHC 5630 Atypical Human Behavior 2 (Immersive Practicum)	\$150
CMHC 5710 Pre-Practicum in Counseling 1 (Immersive Practicum)	\$200
CMHC 5810 Counseling Practicum 1	\$45
CMHC 5830 Counseling Practicum 2	\$45
CMHC 5910 Counseling Internship I (A)	\$45
CMHC 5930 Counseling Internship I (B)	\$45
CMHC 6010 Counseling Internship II (A)	\$45
CMHC 6030 Counseling Internship II (B)	\$45

Student Material and Equipment Purchases

(Non-refundable)

In addition to the tuition and fees, students are required to purchase books, materials, supplies, and equipment to supplement their course instruction and clinical training. For MSCMHC, students should allow on average a textbook, materials, and supplies cost of approximately \$300 - \$600 per quarter.

Ancillary Program Expenses

There are additional expenses related to programs that include but are not limited to, the fees paid for certifications, vaccinations, certification and licensing exams, clinical requirements, and licensure applications, etc.

Ancillary program expenses are paid directly to outside agencies and organizations. Certifications are administered by third-party organizations. Should students opt to pursue certification, all application and examination fees associated with these certifications are paid directly to outside agencies and organizations.

Financial Policies

Financial Aid

Sonoran University of Health Sciences is pending approval from the Department of Education (ED) to offer Title IV aid for the Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling.

Veterans Benefits

Please be advised that the Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (MSCMHC) Program does not currently qualify for VA Benefits. We encourage prospective students who are veterans or active military personnel to consult with our admissions team for guidance on available resources and alternative programs that are approved for VA Benefits.

Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health (MSCMHC) Program

MSCMHC Program Introduction

Overview

The Sonoran University Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (MSCMHC) program helps students transform their passion for helping others into a profession as Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors. Students gain the professional knowledge, dispositions, and skills along with the practical experience necessary to develop and deliver effective, compassionate, multiculturally competent, and evidence-based clinical mental health counseling. Graduates will be prepared to work in private practice, as part of integrative healthcare teams, in hospitals, or even with law enforcement or other government services.

Sonoran University's program does not require a GRE and its online design and clinical experience placement assistance makes it accessible to students across the country. Students will engage in meaningful discussions on human behavior, learn current strategies to support the development of clients from diverse backgrounds and communities, and merge best practices from the field of professional counseling and integrative healthcare to enhance clinical care and outcomes.

The curriculum incorporates the innovation and best practices in online education that Sonoran University is known for and is being designed in accordance with standards and requirements for state licensing and certification exams. Building on Sonoran University's reputation as a leader in integrative healthcare education, this MSCMHC program is the first and only program to incorporate training on evidence based integrative mental health care including nutrition, mindfulness, self-care, and more. The program also uniquely offers an enhanced approach to crisis counseling by including training on field-based mental health crisis care. Further, with our commitment to authentic and practical coursework and assessments, students engage in clinical applications as early as the first quarter of the program. Through our novel Virtual Health Center simulation, students practice applying new clinical skills and knowledge safely in a virtual training environment. Sonoran University is also proud to eliminate a barrier many students face in finding a clinical placement for their internship. Our clinical experience placement assistance provides students the opportunity to complete their practicum and internship 100% online through remote telehealth-based care and supervision at our Virtual Center for Personalized Health Care.

Program Mission

To educate and empower the next generation of practitioners in the field of clinical mental health counseling to deliver ethical, compassionate, effective, evidence-based, and multiculturally competent care that enhances the health and well-being of the diverse individuals and communities they serve.

Program Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of the MSCMHC program, graduates will be able to:

1. Practice ethically and professionally in the field of mental health counseling.
2. Apply evidence-based theories and techniques in individual, group, couples, and family counseling.
3. Utilize best practices in counseling to successfully support and promote optimal growth and development across the lifespan of clients.
4. Describe health disparities, demonstrate competence in counseling individuals from diverse backgrounds, and advocate for marginalized populations to receive healthcare services.
5. Effectively incorporate current scientific evidence from the field of mental health and disordered behavior in clinical work to support assessment, prevention, intervention, and advocacy.
6. Integrate the responsible use of technology in the counseling process.
7. Apply appropriate theoretical perspectives in the therapeutic process.
8. Successfully respond to high-risk clinical scenarios including working with clients with trauma and in crisis.
9. Participate effectively as part of a client-centered interprofessional team.
10. Incorporate evidence-based integrative clinical mental health care to support the well-being of clients.
11. Establish a safe, judgment-free, and empowering therapeutic environment.

Key Performance indicators

Students will be assessed across the ten (10) key performance indicators (KPIs) identified below. Each KPI will have a scoring rubric tied to a course assignment. Data will be used at both the individual student level as well as programmatic level.

The ten 10 KPIs students will be assessed on are as follows – students will:

1. Utilize current, evidence-based ethical decision-making models.
2. Incorporate multiple counseling theories in the counseling process.
3. Select and effectively use appropriate strategies for counseling diverse clients.
4. Examine both the history and current trends in the field of professional counseling at the local, state, and national levels.
5. Integrate human development stage theories into the counseling process.
6. Assess, recognize, diagnose when appropriate, and effectively work with clients experiencing mental health conditions.
7. Demonstrate knowledge and skills in facilitating and functioning in groups.
8. Utilize current theories and models in substance use disorder and addiction counseling.
9. Demonstrate the effective use of career counseling approaches and models.
10. Apply evidence-based techniques in counseling clients in crisis.

Professional Dispositions

In addition to the ten KPI's, each student will also be assessed for evidence of Professional Dispositions. Students will be assessed across four major constructs required to successfully complete the program and serve as a professional counselor.

Throughout the program, each student will be formally assessed regarding:

1. Taking responsibility for learning, including critical thinking and demonstrating a growth mindset
2. Demonstrating maturity, professionalism, and maintaining appropriate boundaries
3. Showing integrity in work and interactions with others, self-awareness, and an openness to feedback
4. Effectively utilizing concepts and constructs related to diversity, equity, and inclusion

Once a student begins the MSCMHC program, they are required to adhere to the [American Counseling Association Code of Ethics](#)

Scope of Practice and Licensure

Professional counselor licensure is granted at the state level. Each state that offers licensure has an associated licensure law describing the clinical hours needed while in the master's program, as well as required coursework. Our program will prepare graduates to meet state requirements including the number of quarter hours, and required offerings (e.g., Counseling Theories). Further, the program provides graduates with the requisite number of Practicum and Internship hours required for licensure (100 and 600, respectively).

After graduating from our program, students seeking licensure in their home state will be required to take and pass the National Counselor Exam (NCE) a 160-item multiple choice exam. Throughout the curriculum, students will be exposed to and tested on theories, concepts, and ideas covered on the exam. Therefore, all graduates will have the required knowledge to successfully pass the NCE.

Students should contact the professional counselor licensure board for the state in which they plan to practice or the American Counseling Association using the following link to identify the specific standards they will need to meet for licensure - <https://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/licensure-requirements>

Inherent in each state law guiding licensure are the following guidelines:

- Courses required to be licensed (these include specific course titles e.g., Theories in Counseling)
- Number of hours required for all coursework (e.g., 90 quarter hours)
- Number of practicum/internship hours students need to complete during their counseling program (completed in Counseling Practicum, Internship I (A and B) and II (A and B))
- Exam(s) necessary to attain licensure (e.g., National Counselor Exam, Jurisprudence exam)
- Number of hours to be completed post-graduation (e.g., 3,000)
- And any and all other requirements unique to the particular state law

Students in the MSCMHC program from the state of Arizona will fall under the state law when seeking licensure. Students must document specific curricular and clinical experiences in order to receive licensure. Further, the law requires students to successfully pass a national counselor exam and complete 3,200 post graduate hours.

The state of Arizona, as do many other states throughout the country, outlines three primary required elements for an applicant to be considered for licensure. The first piece is the master's degree program

they complete. The law describes specific topics to be covered in the curriculum. The proposed program meets all of the curricular requirements, including the specific requirements for the clinical experience (Practicums and Internships).

Following a student's completion of the program, in order to be considered for licensure, the graduate will need to take and pass a national counseling exam. While the program courses will prepare the graduate for success on the exam the onus of passing is completely on the graduate. Students will be advised on best practices for passing the exam throughout the program.

Finally, once a graduate passes the exam, they will be required to complete 3,200 hours of post-graduate counseling work. Graduates will be required to contract with an agency/counseling setting or private practitioner for supervision over the course of this work. Again, the onus is on the graduate, however, the program will provide key information on options students have as well as best practices in forming an agreement to receive post-graduate supervision.

Complete details on requirements for graduates to practice in the state of Arizona can be found on the website of the [Arizona State Board of Behavioral Health Examiners](#).

MSCMHC Program Policies

Satisfactory Academic Progress - Completion

The MSCMHC program is designed to be completed in ten academic quarters. Students who deviate from the standard academic program will extend the length of the program. Satisfactory academic progress in the MSCMHC program is defined as passing all program requirements within two (2.0) times the length of the longest published program in which they are enrolled, from initial date of matriculation including any and all leaves of absence and periods of withdrawal followed by re-activation. The maximum time to completion must not exceed five years for the MSCMHC program.

Credits transferred from an approved institution count toward the minimum academic requirements to be completed at the end of each academic year (see Minimum Academic Requirements) and count toward the maximum completion time for financial aid. Students must make satisfactory progress toward the completion of their degree at Sonoran University to be eligible for most financial aid programs.

The Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for the MSCMHC program includes a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher, minimum academic credits earned per term, and total completion time.

Students who fail to make satisfactory academic progress for their prescribed program of study in any term will be advanced an academic warning level.

Cumulative GPA Requirement

Students in the MSCMHC program must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0.

Minimum Academic Requirements

The following table illustrates the minimum number of cumulative credit hours required to be completed (total credits earned) at the end of each academic year of the MSCMHC program.

Academic Year	Total Credits Earned
1	18
2	36
3	54
4	72
5	90

MSCMHC Academic Information

MSCMHC Academic Coursework

The MSCMHC program at Sonoran University is a cohort-based, online distance education program that follows a prescribed track. All academic credit is computed in quarter hours (see Credit Equivalence). All students are guided by the curriculum as outlined in their prescribed program of study. Students are pre-registered for all courses. Students may not deviate from their prescribed program of study. Sonoran University reserves the right to make curriculum changes that are applicable to all students, if necessary.

Course Format and Credit Requirements

The MSCMHC program is 90-quarter hours consisting of 56 didactic credits (672 didactic contact hours), 15.5 didactic lab credits (186 didactic lab contact hours), and 18.5 clinical credits (222 clinical contact hours). The format of the program is 100% online.

Full-time enrollment is defined as being enrolled for a minimum of 4 credits. Part-time enrollment is defined as being enrolled for a minimum of 2 credits but less than 4 credits.

Credit Equivalence

Courses are reported in quarter credit hours according to the following values:

Didactic	1 credit = 12 contact hours per quarter
Laboratory	1 credit = 12 contact hours per quarter
Clinical	1 credit = 12 contact hours per quarter

Program Length and Completion Timeframe

The MSCMHC program is designed to be completed in two and a half academic years, or ten academic quarters. Students are expected to complete the MSCMHC program within 20 academic quarters, not to exceed five years from initial date of matriculation, including any and all leaves of absence and periods of withdrawal.

If a student stays on track with the program, taking all courses as they are offered in sequence, students can expect to graduate within 10 consecutive quarters, or two and a half calendar years.

Course Sequence and Prerequisites

It is expected that all students will remain in good standing throughout the program and that students will take courses in the sequence provided by the program. Students must successfully complete all courses in the first four quarters (foundational courses) of the program before enrolling in courses identified in the fifth through tenth quarter. If a student is in their final two courses of the foundational courses, they may only register for two courses offered in the fifth quarter.

Once a student has successfully completed all foundational courses, they must complete the courses listed in the course sequence for quarter five and six of the program prior to enrolling in Pre-Practicum in Counseling I. Students must complete Pre-Practicum in Counseling I & II and all Q7 courses prior to registering for Counseling Practicum I.

MSCMHC Program of Study

<i>Program of Study - Year One</i>			Credits
QUARTER 1			
CMHC 5110	Orientation to the Profession of Counseling I		2.5
CMHC 5120	Ethical and Legal Issues in Counseling I		2.5
CMHC 5130	Orientation to the Profession of Counseling II		2
CMHC 5140	Ethical and Legal Issues in Counseling II		2
Credits			9
QUARTER 2			Credits
CMHC 5210	Interprofessional Collaboration		2.5
CMHC 5220	Counseling Research I		2.5
CMHC 5230	Evidence-Based Integrative Healthcare		2
CMHC 5240	Counseling Research II		2
Credits			9
QUARTER 3			Credits
CMHC 5310	Theories of Counseling I		2.5
CMHC 5320	Human Growth and Development I		2.5
CMHC 5330	Theories of Counseling II		2
CMHC 5340	Human Growth and Development II		2
Credits			9
QUARTER 4			Credits
CMHC 5410	Counseling Diverse Clients I		2.5
CMHC 5420	Group Counseling Theories and Techniques I		2
CMHC 5430	Counseling Diverse Clients II		2
CMHC 5440	Group Counseling Theories and Techniques II		2.5
Credits			9
Total Credits - Year 1			36

<i>Program of Study - Year Two</i>			Credits
QUARTER 5			
CMHC 5510	Career Counseling I		2.5
CMHC 5520	Assessments and Appraisal Techniques in Counseling I		2.5
CMHC 5530	Career Counseling II		2
CMHC 5540	Assessments and Appraisal Techniques in Counseling II		2
Credits			9

QUARTER 6			Credits
CMHC	5610	Atypical Human Behavior I	2.5
CMHC	5620	Substance Use Disorders and Addictions Counseling I	2.5
CMHC	5630	Atypical Human Behavior II	2
CMHC	5640	Substance Use Disorders and Addictions Counseling II	2
Credits			9

QUARTER 7			Credits
CMHC	5710	Pre-Practicum in Counseling I	2.5
CMHC	5720	DSM and Psychopharmacology I	2.5
CMHC	5730	Pre-Practicum in Counseling II	2.5
CMHC	5740	DSM and Psychopharmacology II	2
Credits			9.5

QUARTER 8			Credits
CMHC	5810	Counseling Practicum I	2.5
CMHC	5820	Couples, Families and Systems Counseling I	2.5
CMHC	5830	Counseling Practicum II	2
CMHC	5840	Couples, Families and Systems Counseling II	2
Credits			9
Total Credits - Year 2			36.5

Program of Study - Year Three			Credits
QUARTER 9			
CMHC	5910	Counseling Internship I (A)	2.5
CMHC	5920	Crisis, Trauma and Grief in Counseling I	2.5
CMHC	5930	Counseling Internship I (B)	2
CMHC	5940	Crisis, Trauma and Grief in Counseling II	2
Year 3 Quarter 9 Totals			9

QUARTER 10			Credits
CMHC	6010	Counseling Internship II (A)	2.5
CMHC	6020	Technology in Counseling	2
CMHC	6030	Counseling Internship II (B)	2
CMHC	6040	Success Academy	2
Credits			8.5
Total Credits - Year 3			17.5

Grand Totals	Clinic	Lab	Didactic	Total
Credit Hours	18.5	15.5	56	90
Contact Hours	222	186	672	1080

MSCMHC Course Descriptions

CMHC 5110 Orientation to the Profession of Counseling I

2.5 Credits

This course provides an overview of the field of professional counseling. Students develop knowledge of the field as well as the program. Topics include the eight (8) core CACREP areas (e.g., counseling theories), legal and ethical issues, and the history of the profession.

Prerequisites: Admission into program.

CMHC 5120 Ethical and Legal Issues in Counseling I

2.5 Credits

This course provides current information related to ethical standards and legal mandates associated with professional counseling. The course covers ethical decision-making models in counseling and laws associated with professional practices at the national and state levels.

Prerequisites: Admission into program.

CMHC 5130 Orientation to the Profession of Counseling II

2 Credits

This course expands the overview of the field of professional counseling. Students continue to develop knowledge of the field as well as the program through both didactic as well as experiential learning. Specific topics covered in this course include interview skills, assessment techniques and approaches, as well as crisis and trauma-informed counseling procedures.

Prerequisites: Orientation to the Profession of Counseling 1.

CMHC 5140 Ethical and Legal Issues in Counseling II

2 Credits

This course provides current information and best practices in both legal and ethical constructs in the field of professional counseling. Students will engage in self-directed, and instructor guided learnings focusing on topics including tests and assessments, diversity, career counseling, and program evaluation. Students will also acquire knowledge and skills in advocating for never and underserved populations.

Prerequisites: Ethical and Legal Issues in Counseling I.

CMHC 5210 Interprofessional Collaboration

2.5 Credits

This course prepares students to participate effectively as part of an interprofessional team in order to promote collaborative and non-hierarchical, patient centered, outcome focused care. Students will learn about the current healthcare landscape, the scope of practice of different conventional and integrative health care professions, how to function effectively as part of a health care team, and the positive impact of interprofessional collaboration on the quadruple aim of health care.

Prerequisites: Admission into program.

CMHC 5220 Counseling Research I

2.5 Credits

This course offers students the opportunity to examine the ways that research can inform counseling practices. Using evidenced-based counseling is critical for client welfare and the application of ethical practices in counseling. Students will learn differential research methods across both quantitative and qualitative research. Mixed-methods research will also be discussed as an emerging approach to research in counseling.

Prerequisites: Admission into program.

CMHC 5230 Evidence-Based Integrative Mental Health Care

2 Credits

Through a combination of didactic and experiential learning, this course introduces students to select evidence based integrative health modalities and systems of care that can enhance and support the mental health and well-being of their future clients while also promoting the student's own self-care. Students will review the evidence for lifestyle medicine and integrative health care to support mental health in general and mood disorders specifically with a special emphasis on nutrition, dietary and herbal supplements, Mindfulness, meditation, physical activity, and the expressive arts.

Prerequisites: Admission into program.

CMHC 5240 Counseling Research II

2 Credits

This course provides students' knowledge and information on the processes involved in developing a research project. Specifically, students will learn how to develop a successful literature review on a counseling-related topic and then develop a professional conference-level poster.

Prerequisites: Research in Counseling I.

CMHC 5310 Theories of Counseling I

2.5 Credits

This course provides the range of theories and philosophies used in professional counseling. Topics covered include specific theoretical orientations and the associated skills and techniques. Included in this course are issues of social justice, crisis management and evidence-based approaches to therapy.

Prerequisites: Admission into program.

CMHC 5320 Human Growth and Development I

2.5 Credits

This course is a survey of developmentally based processes identified in the field of counseling. Topics include typical human behavior, including moral and cognitive development across the lifespan according to Erikson, Piaget, Marcia, and Kohlberg. 2

Prerequisites: Admission into program.

CMHC 5330 Theories of Counseling II

2 Credits

This course requires students to apply evidenced-based counseling approaches to clinical cases. Students engage in theory-based treatment planning and formation of client goals for treatment. 2 quarter hours.

Prerequisites: Theories of Counseling I.

CMHC 5340 Human Growth and Development II

2 Credits

This course focuses on clinically oriented practices to address developmental issues observed in counseling. Students will analyze and then develop plans to work successfully with clients (case conceptualizations) with developmental stuckness and/or who have regressed to a previous developmental crisis.

Prerequisites: Human Growth and Development I.

CMHC 5410 Counseling Diverse Clients I

2.5 Credits

This course provides students with the opportunity to explore prejudices, oppression, values, and discrimination across the landscape of groups of people. Further, similarities across all populations will be explored. Exploration into their own beliefs, values and prejudices will be used to help students become more aware of what they bring to the counseling relationship.

Prerequisites: Admission into program.

CMHC 5420 Group Counseling Theories and Techniques I

2 Credits

This course covers the variety of different theories and techniques associated with group counseling. Additionally, students will explore the different types of groups used in counseling including process, psychoeducational, support.

Prerequisites: Admission into program.

CMHC 5430 Counseling Diverse Clients II

2 Credits

This course is highly experiential and includes immersion of students into different groups. Students will select two to three different groups (e.g., religious, LGBTQ+, minority culture events) and assess and reflect on their experience being in a different group. Students will present their findings to their peers and discuss ways they have grown from their immersions.

Prerequisites: Counseling Diverse Clients I.

CMHC 5440 Group Counseling Theories and Techniques II

2.5 Credits

This course will be experiential. Students will participate in a group process and share the responsibility of co-facilitating a session. Upon completion of the group experience, students will reflect on their experience and both the utility and limitations of groups in counseling.

Prerequisites: Group Counseling Theories and Techniques I.

CMHC 5510 Career Counseling I

2.5 Credits

This course offers students the opportunity to engage in meaningful study of career counseling approaches and techniques. Students will learn the use of technology in the process (e.g., ONET), and how to interpret and make meaning of assessment results with clients. Multi-measurements will be reinforced as part of the career counseling process including family genograms, personality traits, and values of the client in the world of work.

Prerequisites: Completed year 1, Q1-Q4 foundational courses.

CMHC 5520 Assessment and Appraisal Techniques in Counseling I

2.5 Credits

This course provides students with a variety of mental health related, career-related, and personality-based tests and assessments used in counseling. Students will successfully proctor and score several assessments. Further, students will understand the limitations of tests and assessments in counseling along with the need to understand psychometric properties associated with each instrument the use with clients.

Prerequisites: Completed year 1, Q1-Q4 foundational courses.

CMHC 5530 Career Counseling II

2 Credits

This course provides students with information about their career development and planning. Information covered includes cover letters, resumes, interview and job search skills. These skills and new knowledge serve to support the career process for students and help them become more effective with clients who need such information. Additionally, this course provides an overview for students on their steps toward licensure for their home state.

Prerequisites: Career Counseling I.

CMHC 5540 Assessment and Appraisal Techniques in Counseling II

2 Credits

This course requires students to apply assessment and appraisal techniques to case studies. Students will use data from multiple measures to improve the counseling process. Specifically, students will combine outcome data from projective techniques (thematic apperception test, early recollections, dreams), with formal assessments and tests (e.g., Beck Depression Inventory-II), and personality instruments (e.g., Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator), to influence and guide their clinical direction with clients. .

Prerequisites: Assessment and Appraisal Techniques in Counseling I.

CMHC 5610 Atypical Human Behavior I

2.5 Credits

This course covers topics of counseling related to thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that negatively impact optimal human development. Areas of study include mood related issues (e.g., anxiety, depression, bi-polar), severe mental health issues (e.g., suicidal ideation, PTSD, schizophrenia), and neurobiological underpinnings of mental health concerns.

Prerequisites: Completed year 1, Q1-Q4 foundational courses.

CMHC 5620 Substance Use Disorders and Addictions Counseling I

2.5 Credits

This course serves as an introduction to the concepts, theories, and processes used in counseling clients who have substance use issues or addictions. Topics covered include relapse prevention planning, motivational interviewing, grief, assessment techniques, and both individual and group counseling with this population.

Prerequisites: Completed year 1, Q1-Q4 foundational courses.

CMHC 5630 Atypical Human Behavior II

2 Credits

This course builds on topics covered in Atypical Human Behavior I. Students practice applying their knowledge and skills by engaging in case studies in the Virtual Health Center Experience. Students will also continue to develop their skills in working across disciplines.

Prerequisites: Atypical Human Behavior I

CMHC 5640 Substance Use Disorders and Addictions Counseling II

2 Credits

This course is application based and requires students to develop a program for serving clients with substance use issues and/or addictions. Each student will select a unique population (e.g., military veterans, persons with disabilities), and develop an evidence-based program incorporating individual, group, and family counseling. Students will present a summary of their findings to the class.

Prerequisites: Substance Use Disorders and Addictions Counseling I.

CMHC 5710 Pre-Practicum in Counseling I

2.5 Credits

This course is both experiential and practical. Students are required to learn and then demonstrate the basic techniques used in professional counseling (e.g., paraphrase, open questions, summary, empathy). Students will complete weekly mock counseling sessions with their partner and reflect on their recorded session. Successful completion of this course is required prior to taking Practicum I. Failure to complete this course successfully after two attempts may result in dismissal from the program.

Prerequisites: Once a student has successfully completed all foundational courses, they must complete the courses listed in the course sequence for quarter five and six of the program prior to enrolling in Pre-Practicum in Counseling I.

CMHC 5720 DSM and Psychopharmacology I

2.5 Credits

This course covers the major components used in the latest DSM. Students will learn how to accurately diagnose a mental health condition as well as understand differential diagnosis and co-occurring disorders. Students will also explore the use of psychotropic medications as a part of the counseling and healing process.

Prerequisites: Completed year 1, Q1-Q4 foundational courses.

CMHC 5730 Pre-Practicum in Counseling II

2.5 Credits

This course is both experiential and practical. Students are required to learn and then demonstrate the basic techniques used in professional counseling (e.g., paraphrase, open questions, summary, empathy). Students will complete weekly mock counseling sessions with their partner and reflect on their recorded session. Successful completion of this course is required prior to taking Practicum I. Failure to complete this course successfully after two attempts may result in dismissal from the program.

Prerequisites: Pre-Practicum in Counseling I.

CMHC 5740 DSM and Psychopharmacology II

2 Credits

This course requires students to build upon learning in DSM and Psychopharmacology I by having students apply bio-psychosocial analysis to cases. Students will provide holistic views of different client cases. Specific attention will be made to using a cross/multi-disciplinary approach by consulting other helping professionals (e.g., nutritionists, medical doctors, social workers).

Prerequisites: DSM and Psychopathology I.

CMHC 5810 Counseling Practicum I

2.5 Credits

This course is a combination of students engaging in counseling and counseling activities at their chosen site while meeting weekly with their instructor and class. Students will complete a minimum of 15 direct counseling hours and 40 total hours (includes both direct and indirect counseling). Additionally, students will meet weekly for one and a half (1 ½) hours of group supervision each week with their instructor, and one (1) hour of individual/triadic supervision each week with their approved site supervisor.

Prerequisites: Pre-Practicum in Counseling II.

CMHC 5820 Couples, Families and Systems Counseling I

2.5 Credits

This course introduces students to systemic thinking in the counseling process. Areas covered include structural, Milan, strategic, and Bowenian family counseling. Students will engage in the multitude of different theories and techniques used in marriage, couples, and family counseling.

Prerequisites: Completed year 1, Q1-Q4 foundational courses.

CMHC 5830 Counseling Practicum II

2 Credits

This course is a combination of students engaging in counseling and counseling activities at their chosen site while meeting weekly with their instructor and class. Students will complete a minimum of 25 direct counseling hours and 60 total hours (includes both direct and indirect counseling). Additionally, students will meet weekly for one and a half (1 ½) hours of group supervision each week with their instructor, and one (1) hour of individual/triadic supervision each week with their approved site supervisor. Note that for a student to take Internship I (A), they must have completed a total of 40 direct hours, 60 indirect hours (100 total hours) across Counseling Practicum I and II.

Prerequisites: Counseling Practicum I.

CMHC 5840 Couples, Families and Systems Counseling II

2 Credits

This course will expand on Couples, Families, and Systems Counseling by having students engage in case study discussions related to systems approaches. The course will also enhance students' self-awareness of their family history and how considerations such as countertransference, transference, and unresolved family issues may impact the students' work with couples and families. Each week, students will participate in both synchronous and asynchronous discussions of cases aligned with the major theories in marriage, couples, and family counseling.

Prerequisites: Couples, Families and Systems in Counseling I.

CMHC 5910 Counseling Internship I (A)

2.5 Credits

This course is a combination of students engaging in counseling and counseling activities at their chosen site while meeting weekly with their instructor and class. Students will complete a minimum of 30 direct counseling hours and 75 total hours (includes both direct and indirect counseling). Additionally, students will meet weekly for one and a half (1 ½) hours of group supervision each week with their instructor, and one (1) hour of individual/triadic supervision each week with their approved site supervisor.

Prerequisites: Counseling Practicum II.

CMHC 5920 Crisis, Trauma and Grief in Counseling I

2.5 Credits

This course provides students with information, processes and techniques used in counseling clients in crisis, who have experienced significant trauma and/or grief from their loss. The mind-body connection related to trauma will be studied. Models of grief and loss counseling including Worden's Complicated Grief Model will be addressed. Additionally, crisis management skills for working with clients with psychotic episodes, suicidal and/or homicidal ideation will be covered.

Prerequisites: Completed year 1, Q1-Q4 foundational courses

CMHC 5930 Counseling Internship I (B)

2 Credits

This course is a combination of students engaging in counseling and counseling activities at their chosen site while meeting weekly with their instructor and class. Students will complete a minimum of 30 direct counseling hours and 75 total hours (includes both direct and indirect counseling). Additionally, students will meet weekly for one and a half (1 ½) hours of group supervision each week with their instructor, and one (1) hour of individual/triadic supervision each week with their approved site supervisor.

Prerequisites: Counseling Internship I (A).

CMHC 5940 Crisis, Trauma and Grief in Counseling II

2 Credits

This course utilizes the Virtual Health Center to allow students to apply the theories and techniques learned in Crisis, Trauma, and Grief in Counseling I. Students will engage in cases that allow them to demonstrate the ability to meaningfully support clients under such duress.

Prerequisites: Crisis, Trauma and Grief in Counseling I.

CMHC 6010 Counseling Internship II (A)

2.5 Credits

This course is a combination of students engaging in counseling and counseling activities at their chosen site while meeting weekly with their instructor and class. Students will complete a minimum of 30 direct counseling hours and 75 total hours (includes both direct and indirect counseling). Additionally, students will meet weekly for one and a half (1 ½) hours of group supervision each week with their instructor, and one (1) hour of individual/triadic supervision each week with their approved site supervisor.

Prerequisites: Counseling Internship I (B).

CMHC 6020 Technology in Counseling

2 Credits

This course covers technologies associated with the documentation, facilitation and communication used in professional counseling. Specific technologies including Zoom, Therapynotes, and VSee will be explored, and legal and ethical issues related to the use of technology will be addressed.

Prerequisites: Counseling Practicum I.

CMHC 6030 Counseling Internship II (B)

2 Credits

This course is a combination of students engaging in counseling and counseling activities at their chosen site while meeting weekly with their instructor and class. Students will complete a minimum of 30 direct counseling hours and 75 total hours (includes both direct and indirect counseling). Additionally, students will meet weekly for one and a half (1 ½) hours of group supervision each week with their instructor, and one (1) hour of individual/triadic supervision each week with their approved site supervisor.

Prerequisites: Counseling Internship II (A).

CMHC 6040 Success Academy

2 Credits

This course prepares students for success in the business of clinical mental health counseling from establishing, marketing, and managing a successful clinical practice to monetizing their knowledge in innovative ways. Diverse practice models will be explored.

Prerequisites: Completed year 1, Q1-Q4 foundational courses

STUDENT HANDBOOK 23-24

Supplement for the MSCMHC Program

Student Policies

Student Learning

Designation of Status While Attending School

To protect our students and the public, and to avoid confusion about health provider status, students enrolled in degree programs may only represent and identify themselves (on business cards, introductions, email signatures, letters, websites, and any other public-facing media formats, etc.), as a Student of Sonoran University. Students may add their current year of study or anticipated graduation date if desired.

Examples are as follows:

- Student, Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program, Sonoran University, Class of 2027

MSCMHC Students

Failing to comply with the Designation of Status policy may lead to sanctions by the National Board for Certified Counsellors (NBCC) for violation of their Code of Ethics. Violations can result in suspension, revoking, or denying certification. For more information about the code of conduct and certification requirements, please refer to [NBCC's website](#).

Student Code of Professional Conduct and Academic Honor

Student Professionalism & Behavior Expectations

Prohibited Behaviors

Unauthorized Practice of Healing Arts

Unauthorized Practice by Clinical Mental Health Counseling Students

To maintain high standards for quality and to avoid potential issues with licensure, the following policies apply to all clinical mental health counseling students enrolled at Sonoran University:

- Sonoran University defines counseling practice and advising as any conduct involving the unauthorized, intended, or perceived advisement of any persons regarding mental health and suggestions, regardless of if their current location requires official certification and/or licensure for practice of their degree.
- No Sonoran University student shall practice, advertise to practice, or accept compensation of any type for services until they have completed all coursework of the program and have received conferral of their degree, regardless of if a license is required in their location.
- Students shall not offer their status as a Sonoran University clinical mental health counseling student as a qualification to perform or suggest any mental health practices, except within the

scope of University-approved programs under the direct supervision of professionals recognized and appointed as supervisors by Sonoran University.

Professional Oaths & Ethical Statements

School of Mental Health

American Counseling Association Code of Ethics*

“The American Counseling Association (ACA) is an educational, scientific, and professional organization whose members work in a variety of settings and serve in multiple capacities. Counseling is a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals. Professional values are an important way of living out an ethical commitment. The following are core professional values of the counseling profession:

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

These professional values provide a conceptual basis for the ethical principles enumerated below. These principles are the foundation for ethical behavior and decision making. The fundamental principles of professional ethical behavior are:

- autonomy, or fostering the right to control the direction of one’s life;
- nonmaleficence, or avoiding actions that cause harm;
- beneficence, or working for the good of the individual and society by promoting mental health and well-being;
- justice, or treating individuals equitably and fostering fairness and equality;
- fidelity, or honoring commitments and keeping promises, including fulfilling one’s responsibilities of trust in professional relationships; and
- veracity or dealing truthfully with individuals with whom counselors come into professional contact.”

*[American Counseling Association Code of Ethics](#)