



Graduate Programs in Psychology:

M. A. in Mental Health Counseling & Community Psychology

M. A. in Community Psychology

Welcome!

Congratulations on your acceptance, and welcome to the graduate programs in Psychology at Russell Sage School of Health Sciences. You are joining an enthusiastic group of committed and hardworking students and faculty. We hope your studies at Russell Sage will be exciting and rewarding. To facilitate your progress through the program, we have prepared this handbook to acquaint you with the Psychology Department and program-specific policies and procedures, and to assist you in academic planning. This Handbook supplements the Graduate School Catalog of Russell Sage College/School of Health Sciences.

ORGANIZATION OF THE PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

The two degree programs, Master of Arts in Community Psychology (CP), and Master of Arts in Mental Health Counseling and Community Psychology (MHCCP) are free-standing graduate programs within the Department of Psychology. The MHCCP is offered both as a predominately in-person program and as a fully online program. Dr. Alicia Harlow (harloa2@sage.edu) is Chair of the Psychology Department and the Director of Graduate Programs in Psychology (in-person). Dr. Gayle Morse (morseg@sage.edu) is the Internship Coordinator and Interim Program Director (online). The Administrative Coordinator for the Psychology Department is Kim Yetto (yettok@sage.edu).

Students in both the in-person and online MHCCP programs have the option of structuring their elective classes around three concentrations: Couples and Family Counseling, Trauma and Acute Care, and Substance Abuse and Addiction. Students who complete the Substance Abuse and Addiction concentration may also elect to complete additional requirements for the Credential in Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counseling (CASAC-T). Students in the in-person MHCCP program with an interest in forensics also have the option of completing a Certificate in Forensic Mental Health, which can be completed by structuring the electives required for the program and adding one course. Students who do not wish to have a concentration, can take courses from any elective area, as well as advisor-approved courses outside the department.

Several psychology faculty teach only or primarily graduate courses and others teach at both the graduate and undergraduate levels; members of the department are listed on Pg. 27. You will have the opportunity to work with faculty with various specialties in psychology. In addition to full-time faculty, we are fortunate to have adjunct professors who are practicing psychologists providing clinical, policy, and forensic services in the community. The Certificate in Forensic Mental Health is interdisciplinary, so in addition to psychologists you will have the opportunity to work with faculty from Sociology and Criminal Justice, and Law. Dr. Kimberly Brayton (braytk@sage.edu) is the director of the Forensic Mental Health program.

ACCREDITATION

The in-person Mental Health Counseling & Community Psychology program is accredited by the Master's in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council (MPCAC). We are pleased to have been awarded full eight-year accreditation in November 2020 until November 2028, in recognition of our programs' academic rigor and quality of professional education. Russell Sage College is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. The online MHCCP program, which is modeled after the in-person program, will undergo accreditation review next year.

MISSION AND PURPOSES

The graduate programs in psychology in the School of Health Sciences at Russell Sage College prepare students for work as mental health counselors and community-based change agents.

The programs have been designed for students who have made a commitment to advance social justice, to promote the well-being of individuals, families, and groups with varying cultural traditions, and to develop change strategies to address social issues in diverse communities through the application of psychological principles, research and methods.

M.A. in Community Psychology. Since its inception, community psychology has been action-oriented, characterized by innovative approaches to problems and based on an ecological and interactionist view of behavior in the community. The primary goals of this 36-37 credit program are to:

- Reorient the student's thinking from individually-focused to more community-focused and systems-oriented models
- Educate the student in a variety of prevention and intervention strategies to facilitate alteration of behavior in community settings
- Train the student to evaluate the progress of social service, educational, and other helping programs
- Provide the student with evaluation, assessment, and consultation skills

This program comprises a community core, a methods core, required psychology support courses, electives, field placement (externship), and a final project. The program has particular relevance for students already working in community agencies. It will enable them to make immediate contributions to their work as they are introduced to new information, theories and models, and new ways of thinking.

M.A. in Mental Health Counseling and Community Psychology. This 60-credit program addresses expected competencies for mental health counselors working with individuals, groups and/or families. Russell Sage's program, registered with the New York State Education Department, meets the educational requirements for licensure as a mental health counselor in New York State.

The MHCCP program is comprised of two core content areas (counseling and community), a methods core, electives, internships, and a final project. The Counseling Core includes individual, group and family counseling theory, and counseling skills, including an orientation to the ethical practice of the profession of mental health counseling, and information essential to the practice of career counseling. Psychological development across the lifespan, and psychopathology and clinical diagnosis provide important foundations for counseling practice. In the Community Core, students explore systems theories and applications, such as prevention, social justice, empowerment, and social supports, all of which can extend their effectiveness in working with individuals and groups. A practicum and two semesters of internship provide students with supervised counseling experiences. The methods core provides basic knowledge and skills in applied psychological research and program evaluation, and a basic understanding of assessment and tests and measurement as applied to counseling settings. Additionally, students may elect three courses in specific areas of counseling interest and practice that will serve to enhance their skills as effective mental health counselors (e.g., psychopharmacology, play therapy, substance use disorders). Students can select a mix of approved electives or may opt to complete a concentration in couples and family counseling, trauma and acute care, substance abuse and addiction or forensic mental health (in-person program only). Students completing a concentration in substance abuse and addiction or forensic mental health will also receive a certificate.

Concentrations and Certificates in the Counseling and Community Psychology Program:

Concentration in Couples and Family Counseling: This concentration prepares students to work with families, couples and children. Classes include Family Counseling, Couples Counseling and Child Psychopathology or Play Therapy (in-person only).

Concentration in Trauma and Acute Care: This concentration provides up-to-date research information and strategies for treating clients with a trauma history or acute stress. Classes include Trauma-Informed Counseling, Neuropsychology and Risk and Resilience or Psychopharmacology.

Concentration in Addiction and Substance Abuse with Credential in Substance Abuse Counseling (CASAC-T): This concentration includes coursework in Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Chemical Dependence Education and Prevention and Neuropsychology. The New York State Office of Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) credentials appropriately trained individuals to provide substance abuse counseling in OASAS-approved agencies. Students in the MHCCP program are eligible to apply for the CASAC-T credential upon completion of required courses in the program plus two of the courses in this concentration. Students who complete their practicum and internship in substance abuse treatment settings will have their practice hours count toward the CASAC credential, and the master's degree substitutes for considerable work experience required by OASAS. The CASAC is a valuable addition to the training offered by the MHCCP program for those wishing to work in the field of substance abuse services.

Certificate in Forensic Mental Health: Interested students may elect this four-course sequence (plus two courses required in the MHCCP program) that provides specific knowledge and expertise in the intersection of mental health and the justice system. This sequence is designed to educate mental health practitioners to work with and inform decision-makers in forensic settings, and to provide counseling services to individuals with both mental health needs and criminal justice involvement. This multidisciplinary area of study is closely allied with the fields of criminal justice, sociology, and law. This Certificate will provide appropriate knowledge for those who want to increase their understanding of forensic mental health issues as preparation for working in forensic settings. The target population for the certificate includes those working or preparing to work as mental health counselors or policymakers in forensic or correctional settings. NOTE: Students electing to pursue the Certificate in Forensic Mental Health along with the Master's in Mental Health Counseling & Community Psychology will need to complete 63 credits.

LICENSURE AS A MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR

Although the statutes for licensure and independent practice as a psychologist in New York State require an earned doctoral degree in psychology from an accredited institution, New York State laws also permit the licensing of mental health counselors for those with master's degrees. New York State Education Department has developed the academic and practice standards leading to licensure, and graduates of Russell Sage's M.A. in Mental Health Counseling and Community Psychology program are eligible to apply for licensure as a Mental Health Counselor in New York State following completion of their degree, completion of 3,000 postmaster's hours of supervised practice, and passage of a statewide examination.

Other states allow independent practice by persons with master's degrees in psychology as psychologists (e.g., Vermont), licensed mental health counselors, or related titles. It is important that you consult the laws of the state in which you wish to practice.

Graduates of the M.A. in Community Psychology are not eligible for licensure in New York State.

Orientation to Russell Sage College (RSC)

As many of you are new to the Capital District and RSC, the Handbook will provide a brief orientation to the RSC Campuses before addressing program policies and procedures. For further information, consult the RSC website (www.sage.edu), RSC Catalog, and the RSC School of Health Sciences Student Handbook, available online or from the Provost's Office, Troy Campus.

Classrooms. RSC has campuses in both Albany and Troy. With a student ID, you are entitled to use the services of both campuses. Most in-person classes in the Psychology programs are held on the Albany campus on New Scotland Avenue which houses a library, computer center, cafeteria, classrooms, and conference rooms. These services are also available on the Troy campus. There is a seminar/graduate student research room in Froman Hall 305. Online students can access the Sage Library and other services remotely.

Student Housing. Off-campus housing is available for Graduate School students on the UHA campus in the University Heights College Suites. The Residence Life office (292-1753) has more information. Limited graduate housing may also be available on the Troy campus.

Faculty Offices. All full-time faculty have offices on the Albany campus in Froman Hall (3rd floor) and on the Troy campus in Gurley Hall (3rd or 4th floor). The main office of the Psychology Department Office is located in Gurley Hall (3rd floor) on the Troy campus. A list of faculty offices and phone numbers is located on the last page of this handbook.

Public Safety (Campus Security): **Emergency #518-244-3177.** Office locations: Troy Campus, 1st Floor of John Paine Building; 244-3167. Albany Campus, The Armory; 292-1767.

Student ID. To create your Sage ID card, you'll need to submit an electronic photograph of yourself. By providing this photo, Sage will be able to have your Sage ID card ready for you when you get to campus. If your Sage ID card is lost or stolen, there will be a \$15 charge. Please go to: <https://www.sage.edu/about/public-safety/id-cards/> to create your Sage ID card.

IDs may be obtained from College Services: Troy Campus: John Paine Building, Basement, Mon-Fri. 8:30am-5pm or by appointment; 244- 2222. Albany Campus: Administration Building, Basement. Mon.-Fri. 8:30am-1pm and 2pm-5pm or by appointment; 292-1779.

Parking. Parking passes (decal) cost \$50 for one year and are required to park on both campuses. These are also picked-up at College Services. You'll need to have your Student ID, vehicle registration, license plate number, make, model, year and color of your vehicle. Register your vehicle online by going to https://sage.campusinnovation.com/sage_myparking_prod/ Starting in September, Public Safety will begin ticketing any vehicles without parking passes. Replacement tags cost \$25.

Shuttle Service. The shuttle service runs between campuses each weekday from 7:15 am to 9:30 pm and weekends between 10:30 am until 5:30 pm. The shuttle allows students to take courses and participate in activities on both campuses. The shuttle stop in Troy is located in front of Wool House and the stop in Albany is in front of the Administration Building.

Bookstore. The bookstore for classes offered on the Albany campus is located in the student center at the University Heights Campus (a joint venture of Albany Medical School, Albany College of Pharmacy, Albany Law School, and RSC), adjacent to RSC Albany. Books for classes offered on the Troy campus are available in the M.O.S.S. Bookstore in Gurley Hall (1st Fl.).

Student Services and Course Registration. The office of Student Services (registration and business offices) maintains offices on both the Albany and Troy campuses. Registration is done through Student Planning (Sage Passport/Self-Service). While registration for graduate courses is open until the semester begins, many courses close out. We maintain a first-come, first-serve policy with regard to registration for courses, so you are encouraged to register early. Check the College Calendar for academic deadlines on the RSC website (www.sage.edu).

ACCEPTANCE INTO THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

Acceptance into the M.A. Programs in Psychology is based upon undergraduate GPA, a satisfactory personal statement, an appropriate resume, and letters of recommendation from faculty, employers, and/or supervisors. Academic references are required. We seek students who demonstrate an aptitude for the profession of community psychology and/or counseling.

Matriculation. To be matriculated into a graduate program, students must meet all undergraduate prerequisite courses. Students may be provisionally accepted into the program pending satisfactory completion of all prerequisites. Under special circumstances, a small number of students with low undergraduate GPAs may be accepted on a provisional basis. Enrollment in some courses may be limited to fully matriculated students, and in other courses, preference may be given to fully matriculated students.

Prerequisites. The following courses (or their equivalents) are required prior to full matriculation into the graduate program: a social science statistics course, and (for non-psychology majors) History and Systems of Psychology or the equivalent. Additionally, those who are not undergraduate psychology majors must have three undergraduate courses in the behavioral sciences. The statistics course is a prerequisite for PSY 563 Behavior Research Methods. All other undergraduate prerequisites must be completed within the first 18 credits of graduate study. Students will not be allowed to proceed in the program beyond 18 credits unless all prerequisites are completed. A grade of C or better is required for all prerequisites.

Transfer between Psychology Programs. Our goal is to ensure that students meet their educational and professional goals. Sometimes this is best accomplished through a transfer to another program. Overlap among courses in the Community Psychology program and the Mental Health Counseling and Community Psychology program may facilitate such transfers between the psychology programs. Occasionally students transfer to a program in another department. Transfer is accomplished through the completion of a form available from the Graduate Program Director, review of application, and acceptance into the program.

Assistantships/Fellowships

Graduate Assistantships: A limited number of graduate assistantships are available. These comprise one course waiver per semester and a \$1000 stipend for 150 hours of work in a semester. Assistantships are for the academic year. A summer assistantship is also available if funding is approved by the Provost's office.

Broughton Fellowships: Established in 1982 by the late William Broughton in honor of his parents, Henry and Jane Tinkham Broughton, the Broughton Graduate Fellowship in Creative Applied Science is given each year to recognize and support students who demonstrate particular excellence. Fellowships can be used to fund master's level research. For more information, contact the Office of the Provost at broughton@sage.edu.

The Paul Search Research Award in Community Psychology: This award, in honor of the late Paul Search, funds student research projects in community psychology. Applications are due to the psychology department the spring before the research is to be conducted. Consult your advisor.

Academic Honors

Outstanding academic achievement at the graduate and undergraduate level is recognized by invitation to membership in the national honor society of Phi Kappa Phi. The Psychology Department each year recognizes the Outstanding Student in Community Psychology and Outstanding Student in Mental Health Counseling & Community Psychology.

Academic Policies

Students are responsible for being familiar with the academic policies of Sage Graduate School of Health Sciences as promulgated in the RSC Catalog, available online. Students are responsible for ensuring that the Student Services office (student_services@sage.edu) has the student's current address on record. Note that your college email address (username@sage.edu) is the official communication vehicle of RSC. Your professors may communicate with you via email to your sage.edu account; it is your responsibility to check your email regularly.

Academic Standards

Students are responsible for being familiar with the academic standards of Sage Graduate School of Health Sciences as promulgated in RSC catalog. In general, a B (3.0) average is required for continuance in the graduate program beyond 23 credits, and a B (3.0) average is required for graduation. Additionally, MHCCP students must achieve a B or better in each of the core counseling courses. Failure to do so is addressed on an individual basis with each student. MHCCP and CP students are expected to take no more than three classes per semester. Taking more than 3 classes requires the permission of the Program Director.

Graduate school is an exciting time. It is the beginning of your professional career. In fact, for the next few years, we expect that you will treat your graduate education as your profession. Your academic work is considered your professional product and will be evaluated accordingly. Written work should reflect mastery of the elements of grammar and style. You are expected to be familiar with and utilize APA style in your major papers, unless otherwise indicated by your professor. Many writing resources are available to you. Graduate students may use the peer and professional tutoring services (<https://www.sage.edu/academics/academic-support/>). Please purchase The APA Publication Manual, 7th ed., available in the bookstore or through the American Psychological Association at www.apa.org. Links to online writing resources and tools are available through the library, and in the research section on the Moodle page of the Graduate Psychology program.

Professional Orientation

As you embark on your new profession, we urge you to join a professional organization (e.g., Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA at www.scra27.org), New York Mental Health Counselors Association (NYMHCA at www.nymhca.org), American Psychological Association (APA at www.apa.org)); such membership will be required for MHCCP students when you enroll in the practicum and internship.

To build your understanding of psychological research and counseling practice, and to give you a perspective on continuing education in the profession, as a first step, you are required to attend at least two professional conferences while you are enrolled as a graduate student. These can be local, regional or national conferences and workshops. You will need to present documentation of your attendance. This will be collected in your Counseling Skills class prior to practicum and internship. As you progress in your studies, you may plan to present research you have conducted in your classes (e.g., 563 Research Methods, 630 Externship, 625 Program Evaluation, or 610 Internship) and/or collaboratively with faculty at a conference.

Academic Honesty

Students are responsible for being familiar with the Russell Sage Graduate School of Health Sciences (SHS) policy on academic honesty, reprinted herein. Academic dishonesty in any of its forms will not be tolerated by the Russell Sage Graduate SHS, and can be grounds for failure in the course or dismissal from the program.

Academic dishonesty is not limited to plagiarism or cheating. Failure to comply with guidelines for the conduct of human research is considered a form of dishonesty, as well as unethical practice. The reproduction of one's own work to satisfy requirements for multiple courses, without prior approval of the instructor, or without substantial modification of that work, is a form of cheating yourself and your fellow students, and is subject to sanction. Students may be expected to submit copies of all major papers produced for coursework for inclusion in a student portfolio.

Ethical and Professional Behavior

All students are expected to maintain high standards of ethical and professional behavior, with respect for the dignity and autonomy of all persons with whom they interact, e.g., faculty and staff, fellow students, clients, advisors, research participants. The professional behavioral expectations of students are divided into three areas:

- Knowledge of and conformity to relevant professional standards
- Acquisition of appropriate professional skills
- Appropriate management of personal concerns and issues as they relate to professional functioning.

Students are expected to know and abide by relevant professional standards, including the ethical standards of appropriate professional organizations, e.g., APA and any specialty guidelines, as well as the laws and regulations governing the practice of psychology and counseling. Students must be able to integrate relevant standards into their own repertoire of professional and personal behavior.

Students should progress in the acquisition of appropriate professional skills, including the abilities to exercise prudent judgment and to work in a respectful manner, for example, with clients, advisors, and/or research participants from diverse backgrounds; to be open to new ideas and be willing to accept and use feedback; to be aware of their own impact on others and to be able to deal with conflict and express feelings effectively and appropriately. Students should recognize and respect the boundaries between personal and professional roles.

Students are expected to manage their personal concerns so that they do not interfere with their professional responsibilities. Student problems may include but are not limited to: 1) educational or academic deficiencies; 2) psychological adjustment difficulties and/or inappropriate emotional responses; 3) inappropriate management of personal stress; 4) inadequate level of directed professional development; 5) inappropriate use of and/or response to supervision; 6) violation of the rights of others or violation of state, federal, or Sage policies for student conduct; 7) violation of any criminal laws.

Faculty and students will regularly review students' professional growth and development through an annual assessment of students by their advisors and the graduate program director. Under some circumstances a student's behavior, attitudes, or characteristics may raise faculty concerns, requiring intervention and/or remediation. The instructors, faculty advisor and/or Program Director will work with the student to remediate any identified deficiencies or formulate strategies for ameliorating student problems. Efforts toward remediation may include but not be limited to:

- Unsatisfactory grade in an internship or externship and a requirement that the course be repeated
- Encouragement to obtain appropriate therapy
- Required additional externship or internship experience
- Increased supervision
- Warning in the student's file
- Counseling or discussion with the student regarding career alternatives.

If a student's efforts do not result in an acceptable level of professional functioning within a reasonable amount of time, or if in the judgment of the faculty remediation is not possible or appropriate, the student may be dismissed from the program.

Academic Grievances

Students having concerns about a course, or their performance in a course, should first discuss these concerns with the instructor. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached, students may discuss their concerns with the Graduate Program Director, and then the Department Chair. If necessary, students may appeal to the Provost, in accordance with procedures established in the RSC Catalog.

As stated above, it is the student's responsibility to make sure the appropriate campus offices have the student's current address on record. Mail sent to the wrong address will not be recognized as an excuse for ignorance of a student's status in a course or program, program requirements, etc.

Need for Remediation or Additional Supports

Students are identified as in need of remediation or additional supports in one of three, somewhat overlapping, ways. When deemed necessary, the Program Director requests a meeting with the student as described below in Student Remediation Process.

1. Graduate faculty meetings are regularly scheduled for one hour two times each month and a recurring item on the agenda is Student Concerns. All full-time faculty who teach in the graduate program participate in these meetings and are encouraged to identify any student, using initials only, who might be having difficulties. The reporting faculty member describes the nature of the concern and all participate in a discussion about the concern and strategies to address it.
2. Students in their Practicum or Internship sites may have difficulties identified by their site supervisor and reported to the faculty internship supervisor, the Internship Coordinator, or the Program Director. Such reports may require an immediate response rather than waiting for the next graduate faculty meeting. In those cases, the person receiving the report would notify the Program Director who would convene a meeting of available graduate faculty.
3. Adjunct faculty teaching graduate courses are encouraged to report any difficulties with students to the Program Director who would bring any such concerns to the graduate faculty meeting for discussion.

Student remediation process or process to provide additional supports

1. **The context:** Remediation plans are very personalized and generally developed to help students overcome any deficits and or take the time to refine and perfect any areas that need work. Students who require remediation to pass a program requirement will work the following semester with a faculty member who is the best suited to mentor the student. Clinical faculty will monitor clinical issues such as counseling skills, ethics, or professionalism. Community faculty will monitor community interaction interests. Research faculty will monitor research concerns. Typically, semester long remediation plans may be built on the Biggs model of Constructive Alignment Principles (Biggs, 2003). The Biggs model involves utilizing real-world and relevant class material and interaction which build to progressively higher order cognition. This model builds upon students' knowledge in ways that are meant to be challenging as well as also providing motivation to learn, allowing creativity to bloom, and leadership to emerge. So, thought-provoking projects and papers with specific goals are generally developed for students. Thus, remediation methods and specific goals are geared towards each student and adjusted to meet their individual needs at the level of the course requirements.

2. **The steps:**
 - a. The Program Director, with appropriate faculty input, develops a specific remediation plan, including the identification of a faculty mentor.
 - b. The Program Director and the faculty mentor if so designated, or other graduate faculty if appropriate, meet with the student, discuss the concern(s) and present the remediation plan. The agreed-upon plan is available in writing and the student and faculty mentor sign the plan.
 - c. The faculty mentor monitors the student's progress during the identified remediation period.
 - d. During the remediation and at the conclusion, the faculty mentor reports the progress at graduate faculty meeting, always using the student's initials, not the name.
 - e. At the first graduate faculty meeting after the conclusion of the remediation, the graduate faculty review the completeness of the remediation plan and determine that the student has been successful or not. "Successful" means the return of the student to the regularity of the program; "not successful" may lead to a second remediation or to dismissal from the program.
 - f. The decision of the graduate faculty is communicated to the student in writing, by email and regular mail.

References

Biggs, J. (2003). *Teaching for Quality Learning at University* (2nd Ed.). Berkshire, UK: Buckingham Society for Research into Higher Education and the Open University Press.

Dismissal From the Program

Students failing to maintain a B (3.0) average beyond the first 23 credits may be dismissed from the program. Students failing to meet the prerequisites for placements, or failing to perform satisfactorily in any placement, including engaging in unethical practices or unprofessional behavior as outlined above, may be dismissed from the program (see below). Dismissal decisions are made by the Provost, upon recommendation of the Graduate Program Director in consultation with the appropriate Psychology Faculty. Appeal of such decisions is made through the procedures outlined in the RSC Catalog for resolution of academic grievances.

Admission to Practicum and Internship

There is a faculty review of student performance prior to admission to the practicum and internship. Students in the MHCCP program must obtain the permission of the Program Director prior to registering for a practicum and internship. In addition to meeting the academic requirements of RSC's Graduate SHS, admission to the practicum and internship will be based on a review by the program faculty. The successful internship candidate will present an academic portfolio prior to their Practicum that includes: (a) completion of all prerequisites with a grade of B or better in all counseling courses; (b) demonstrated aptitude for the counseling profession, including appropriate interpersonal skills; (c) successful completion of an ethics comprehensive examination; (d) completion of mandatory training in identifying and reporting child abuse; (e) copy of their Program of Study; (f) evidence of training curriculum for Medications for Addiction Treatment (MAT); (g) evidence of adherence to ethical and professional standards and (h) evidence of liability insurance obtained from either APA or NYMHCA. These portfolios will be reviewed during the Spring Counseling Skills course.

Requirements for Graduation

To graduate students must have completed all coursework with an overall average of B (3.0) or better, completed all placements satisfactorily according to the specific program requirements, and completed a thesis or research seminar. Degrees are conferred in May, August and December with graduation ceremonies in May. Students must file an application for graduation with the Registrar's Office via Self-Service and are encouraged to pay attention to filing deadlines.

Advisement

Advisement is an essential part of students' success; faculty advisors can help students reflect on their career paths, enroll in the appropriate courses to ensure the timely completion of the degree, and select electives that fit their interests and career goals. All MHCCP students are assigned an advisor at the time of matriculation and are required to meet with that advisor during their first semester at Sage. You are also strongly encouraged to seek advisement during your second semester to plan your course schedule for years two and three, review your progress in the program, and discuss career aspirations and internship placements. Since many of the courses are sequenced, and not all courses are offered every semester, regular advisement can be critical in helping you avoid delays in your progress through the program. Suggested course sequences are included in this Handbook beginning on page 18. In addition, the Graduate Psychology Program page on Moodle can provide useful advisement information.

Students may request a change of advisor from the Program Director and students may always request to meet with any graduate faculty at any time.

Drs. Marisa Beeble and Pat O'Connor are the advisors for all students in the Community Psychology program. Dr. Kim Brayton also advises the students in the Forensic Mental Health Certificate program.

Part-Time vs. Full-Time Study

RSC graduate programs in psychology are designed primarily as evening programs to be completed on a part or full-time basis. Most courses are offered in the evening and some are offered on weekends, to accommodate students holding full-time employment. Online elective courses are generally offered asynchronously, while all core online courses have a synchronous component. Courses are offered in the fall, spring, and summer semesters; summer courses may be early or late or across the entire summer. Students taking 6 credits/semester are designated as part-time students; 9 credits/semester is considered full-time. You should note that registration for 4.5 credits/semester is required for eligibility for student loans; other forms of financial aid may require full-time status.

Although it is possible to attend RSC as a full-time student, the faculty does not necessarily advise this. Graduate school is different from undergraduate work in the depth and breadth of study, and in the demands on your time. To make the most of your graduate career, and become "masters of your profession," you will need time to read and reflect. You should approach the extensive reading you will be assigned thoughtfully and critically, and take advantage of the opportunity to extend your readings and research on your own. Rushing through assigned readings, or skipping them, shortchanges you and your fellow students, and may jeopardize your academic and professional preparation.

We also encourage all students to seek part-time employment in settings appropriate to their career goals while enrolled in graduate school. Nothing enhances learning like the opportunity to apply what you've learned in practice. While the jobs open to individuals with a bachelor's degree are limited in scope, and often low-paying, the payoff in learning is immeasurable. Further, prior paid employment in the field will greatly enhance your marketability when you complete your master's degree.

Practicum and Internships

Students in the Mental Health Counseling and Community Psychology program are required to complete a 100- hour practicum and 600 hours of internship, which includes at least 250 direct service hours. The practicum and internships are completed over the course of a calendar year, in a single setting; the practicum starts in June, approximately 12-15 hours per week for June, July and August, and the internship is across the academic year, during the fall and spring semesters. The internship is the equivalent of 20 hours per week. Most internships are available on a Monday through Friday, 9-5 schedule. Most students will find that they must modify their employment schedule, or perhaps even terminate their employment, to complete the experiential program requirements. Both the practicum and internship are unpaid positions. Plan ahead.

Course Prerequisites

Consult the RSC School of Health Sciences graduate school catalog for course descriptions, available online. Many courses have prerequisites, so it is important for you to plan your schedule carefully to avoid delays in progressing through your course of study. Capstone experiences should be taken upon completion of the regular course sequence. Psychology course prerequisites are in the following table. These psychology courses have no prerequisites: 505, 525, 551, 563, 570, 571, 575, and 592; HED 542, required for the CASAC-T, also does not have any prerequisites.

COURSE TITLE	NUMBER	PREREQUISITES
Eval/Tx Adults	FMH/PSY 515	PSY575, FMH/PSY 505
Eval/Tx Youth	FMH/PSY 520	PSY 575, FMH/PSY 505
Victims & Victim Services	FMH 510	FMH/PSY 505
Community Mental Health	562	551
Comm-Based Prev & Intervention	620	551
Family Counseling	587	525, 571
Externship (Community Psychology Requirement)	620	562, 620, 625 Instructor permission
Program Evaluation	625	562, 620
Thesis Development & Thesis	687 & 689	Must find faculty advisor
Research Seminar	690	Must have at least 33 credits
Counseling Skills	588	572
Practicum	606	588
Internship in Counseling I	610	606
Internship in Counseling II	611	610

A variety of elective and special topics courses are scheduled throughout the calendar year. They may or may not have prerequisites. You will be alerted to any prerequisite requirements in special topics courses offered through the psychology department. Please consult the RSC graduate catalog for prerequisites for courses offered in other departments.

Reporting and Identifying Child Abuse and Maltreatment

All students in the Mental Health Counseling and Community Psychology program are required to obtain a certificate for Mandated Reporters. Mental health counselors are Mandated Reporters under New York State Law, and this workshop offers state-mandated training with a certificate of completion. To register, contact available through the NYS Office of Children and Family Services at <http://nysmandatedreporter.org/TrainingCourses.aspx>. This workshop must be completed prior to enrollment in the Practicum. The certificate of completion should be saved and a copy presented in the portfolio submitted in the PSY 588, Counseling Skills class.

Enrollment Caps

Most courses in the graduate program have caps on student enrollment. This is done to ensure the quality and integrity of the learning experience. Once a course is full, students are placed on a waiting list and will only be allowed to register should an enrolled student drop the course. When a waiting list exceeds the minimum enrollment required by the graduate school, every effort is made to add another section. This is not always possible, however, because faculty commitments and the availability of adjunct faculty. The waiting list is controlled by the Registrar. Faculty members cannot intervene in the waitlist process. To accommodate student needs, many overlapping courses (i.e., required by students in other psychology degree programs) are offered several times throughout the year.

Capstone Experiences

Thesis PSY 687/689 or Research Seminar PSY 690. All graduate students in Psychology must engage in independent scholarship as a culminating experience. Students may elect to complete PSY 690 or PSY 687/689. The Research Seminar involves writing and presenting a scholarly paper on a topic of the student's interest, under faculty supervision. The thesis requires the student to engage in independent research under faculty supervision. The student is expected to review the literature on a topic of interest, formulate a research question, and answer that question. The student may elect to design an experiment and collect data from research participants or utilize an existing national data set for data analysis. Students will write a scholarly paper based on their research findings and present their thesis research to the graduate faculty.

Students wishing to continue their graduate education at the doctoral level and students desiring careers in research or university teaching are especially encouraged to pursue the thesis option. It is the student's responsibility to find a faculty adviser to supervise their research, as well as a faculty reader. Note that it is expected that completion of a thesis will take at least a year.

Practicum

Students in the Mental Health Counseling & Community Psychology program complete a 3-credit practicum designed to introduce students to the practice of group and individual counseling in institutional and/or community settings. Students will work with clients under supervision. In addition, a weekly practicum class will provide instruction in advanced counseling theories and techniques. The practicum and internships are completed in the same site.

Portfolio: prior to starting the practicum, students must submit a portfolio with the following: (a) completion of all prerequisites with a grade of B or better in all counseling courses; (b) demonstrated aptitude for the counseling profession, including appropriate interpersonal skills; (c) successful completion of an ethics comprehensive examination; (d) completion of mandatory training in identifying and reporting child abuse; (e) copy of their Program of Study; (f) evidence of training curriculum for Medications for Addiction Treatment (MAT); (g) evidence of adherence to ethical and professional standards and (h) evidence of liability insurance obtained from either APA or NYMHCA. (a) program of study with completion of all prerequisites with a grade of B or better in all counseling courses; (b) demonstrated aptitude for the counseling profession, including appropriate interpersonal skills; (c) successful completion of an ethics comprehensive examination; (d) completion of mandatory training in identifying and reporting child abuse (described above); (e) evidence of adherence to ethical and professional standards and evidence of liability insurance obtained from either APA or NYMHCA. They may then apply for permission to register for the practicum and internship. Every effort is made to help the student identify a placement in an agency or setting that matches their interests.

Internship

The academic year-long internship (September through May) is the culminating experience in the MHCCP. Students spend 300 hours per semester (approximately 20 hours/week) in a community agency and/or institution providing counseling services. Students may start their internship after they have met the requirements to start internship and successfully complete their practicum. Students gain supervised experience in evaluation, assessment, consultation, treatment planning, individual, group, and/or family therapy, etc., depending on the mission of the placement agency. In addition to the supervision provided on-site, students receive group supervision in a required internship class.

Students on internship are expected to abide by the Ethical Standards for Psychologists and Code of Conduct (APA, 2002). Failure to do so will be considered grounds for dismissal from the graduate program.

Practicum and Internships are offered for one calendar year, starting in the summer, followed by the internships in the fall and continuing in the spring. Students are expected to spend the year at the same agency, although special circumstances may result in a student choosing to spend one part in a community-based agency and the second part in an institutional setting. Sage has developed internship agreements with many local agencies, but some travel may be required if the student wishes a placement in a special setting. Every effort is made to place students in settings of their choice. Students may arrange internships in their home communities. All new internship sites must be approved by the Graduate Program Director and the Internship Coordinator.

The practicum and internships are non-paid experiences. Students working in agencies providing mental health services may elect to arrange their internship with their employing agency, however; the internship **must** provide a substantially different experience than their current work.

Students who are employed full-time will have to plan their internship experiences carefully, and may have to modify their work schedules to accommodate the practicum-internship requirement. Students are encouraged to begin internship discussions with their advisor early in their graduate career.

Prerequisites for internship. Students must complete required coursework as illustrated in the course sequence prior to enrolling in the practicum and the practicum must be completed before the internship. Students in the Forensic Mental Health Certificate must complete PSY 515 and PSY 520 before the internship. Additionally, students will be expected to demonstrate competency in the areas of assessment, treatment planning, counseling, and ethical awareness prior to enrollment. Competency will be assessed by a faculty committee based on class performance and examination. If the student fails to demonstrate competency, as determined by the faculty committee, possible alternatives/avenues for remediation will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Students may wish to present a case study based on their internship experience.

Externship

All students in the Community Psychology programs are required to complete an externship which comprises a placement in a community setting which does not include direct client services. Students may develop outreach programs, design and implement program evaluations, or complete other projects as appropriate to the setting. Students work with the externship supervisor and the potential placement to develop an acceptable experience.

Students must complete 33 credits and all prerequisite coursework prior to enrolling in the externship. Students are encouraged to present their externship research.

Research Initiative

Please discuss your research ideas with individual faculty members. You may be able to join a research project already underway or find a faculty member whose research interests complement yours. The research you are involved in may be eligible to count towards your capstone requirement (in place of your Research Seminar or Thesis) to graduate, and you will be able to become a co-author on the project you are involved in.

The Spirit of Learning at Russell Sage College

Statement on Appropriate Conduct on Campus

All members of Russell Sage College community are expected to conduct themselves in a way which respects the learning environment. Thus, Sage has the right to remove any student from a classroom, other academic area, or program at any time if the student's behavior is contrary to the spirit of learning or hinders the operation of the program in any way. Violent, disruptive, harassing or intimidating behavior is not tolerated in the classroom or any other place on campus. Any student whose conduct disrupts a class or other learning environment may be required to leave the premises immediately and subjected to disciplinary and/or legal action.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Russell Sage College is committed to providing equal access and responding to the needs of students with disabilities, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act. A student seeking academic adjustments under the Americans with Disabilities Act must register and provide documentation to the Director of Accessibility Services. Any student in need of classroom assistance or modification under the Americans with Disabilities Act must inform the instructor of the needed adjustment by first obtaining the necessary accommodation letters from the Director of Accessibility Services in order for reasonable accommodations to be provided. It is recommended that students do so at the onset of classes as reasonable prior notice needs to be given. The Director of Accessibility Services can be contacted in Troy at 65 First Street Troy NY 12180 (518) 244-6874 or in Albany at 140 New Scotland Avenue, Albany NY 12208 (518) 292-8624.

Policy on Academic Honesty

Russell Sage College maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and ethical conduct in all aspects of academic work, including the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools and resources. Since academic honesty is a foundation of teaching, learning, and scholarship, academic dishonesty in any of its forms, including cheating, plagiarism, misuse of RSC resources, improper use of artificial intelligence, and failure to comply with guidelines for the conduct of human research, will not be tolerated. A full statement of the policy on Academic Integrity can be found as an appendix to the Student Conduct Code on the Russell Sage College website. A hard copy can be requested from the Dean of Students in Albany Kahl Campus Center 145 (518) 292-1753 or in Troy McKinstry Student Center (518) 244-2207.

During your graduate program, certain assignments may permit or direct you to use artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT for specific purposes and with specific directions. On those assignments, you may use such tools. You are expected to include a disclosure statement at the end of assignments describing which AI tool you used and how you used it. For example, "ChatGPT was used to draft about 50 percent of this assignment and to provide revision assistance. AI-produced content was edited for accuracy and style." On all other assignments, **you are not permitted to turn in any work that is created, completely or partially, by ChatGPT or another AI tool.** If you use these tools in an unauthorized manner, you may be asked to resubmit the assignment, receive a "0" or an F on the assignment, or receive a failing grade for the course. There may also be additional student conduct ramifications following a formal charge of academic misconduct.

For guidance in proper referencing of sources, as well as how to avoid plagiarism, reach out to your instructor or your academic advisor, consult the most recent editions of the following works, which are available in the reference section of the libraries on the Troy and Albany campus, or visit Solutions for help on either campus.

- Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, New York, Modern Language Association.
- Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press. <https://researchguides.library.wisc.edu/c.php?g=177820&p=1167371>
- American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual for the American Psychological Association*, Washington, D.C., American Psychological Association. <http://apastyle.apa.org/>

Religious Observance

Russell Sage College recognizes the value of participation in and observance of religious obligations and practices by individual students. No student will be penalized because a religious observance prevents participation in any course requirement. An opportunity will be provided for each student to make any requirement missed for an absence due to religious observance. A student who intends to be absent from classes for a religious observance must notify each instructor in advance and make arrangements to cover missed course materials and to complete the course requirement(s) missed. The College reserves the right to confirm the existence of the observance through an interfaith calendar.

E-Mail Policy for Russell Sage College

Sage considers Sage Gmail (username@sage.edu) the exclusive vehicle for official college e-mail communication. As such, username@sage.edu will be considered the official e-mail address for writing and forwarding electronic correspondence. All users are expected to regularly check their Sage e-mail account (on Gmail) and to acknowledge messages in a timely manner. In addition to general College notices, faculty members frequently use the College's e-mail system to notify and correspond with members of their classes. It is recommended that students frequently access their College assigned e-mail account for information. Any electronic business conducted with the College must be done via a sage.edu account.

Credit Hour Policy

All courses offered at Russell Sage College—graduate, undergraduate, and professional—comply with definition of the credit hour and the policies established by the New York State Commissioner of Education and the US Department of Education regardless of delivery modality. A contact hour is described as the interaction between faculty and students via lecture, discussion, research, project/problem, debate, etc. For lecture class formats, one credit requires a minimum of 12.5 faculty contact hours (750 minutes) and a minimum of 30 hours of out-of-class student work over the course of a 15-week semester. For example, a three-credit course is thus equal to a minimum of 37.5 faculty contact hours (2,250 minutes) with the expectation of a minimum of 90 hours of student out-of-class work time.

Suggested Course Sequences

The following pages provide a guide to the successful completion of your degree here at RSC. Of course, you may vary your schedule because of your own circumstances but recognize that it might be more difficult to complete your degree. Please meet with your advisor to carefully plan your schedule.

**Community Psych Program Sequence
(Completion in two years)**

Phase I courses (no prerequisites):

551, 563, 570, 585, Org &
Mgmt course

Electives: 505, 571,

567, 575, 592, 599

Phase II courses:

562, 620

Phase III courses:

625, 630, 690/687+689

SUGGESTED SEQUENCE OF COURSES

(only): course only taught in that semester

Fall		Spring
YEAR ONE		<i>Phase I</i>
<i>Phase I</i>		Org & Mgmt elective
551- Frameworks		FMH 550 – Grant-writing Wkshp
563- Behav Res Meth		<i>Phase II</i>
585- Risk and Resilience		620- Comm Based Prev & Interv (only)
	Summer	687 Thesis Development
	<i>Phase I</i>	
	690/689-ResSem OR Thesis	
	Elective	
YEAR TWO		
<i>Phase I</i>		<i>Phase III</i>
Elective		625- Prog Eval (only)
<i>Phase II</i>		630- Externship
562- Comm. M.H. (only)		Elective

1. Phase I must be finished before Phase II (except as indicated above) and Phase II before Phase III.
2. There is flexibility in course selections except for courses listed as (only).

**Mental Health Counseling & Community Psych Program Sequence
(Completion in three years, including summers)**

Phase I courses (no prerequisites):

Counseling sequence: 525, 567, 571, 542 Community sequence: 551, 563

Both sequences: 570 Electives: HED 542, FMH 505

Phase II courses: Counseling sequence: 572, 543 Community sequence: 562, 620

Phase III courses: Counseling sequence: 588, 606; Community sequence: 625,
630 Both sequences: 690/687+689

Phase IV courses: Counseling sequence: 610, 611

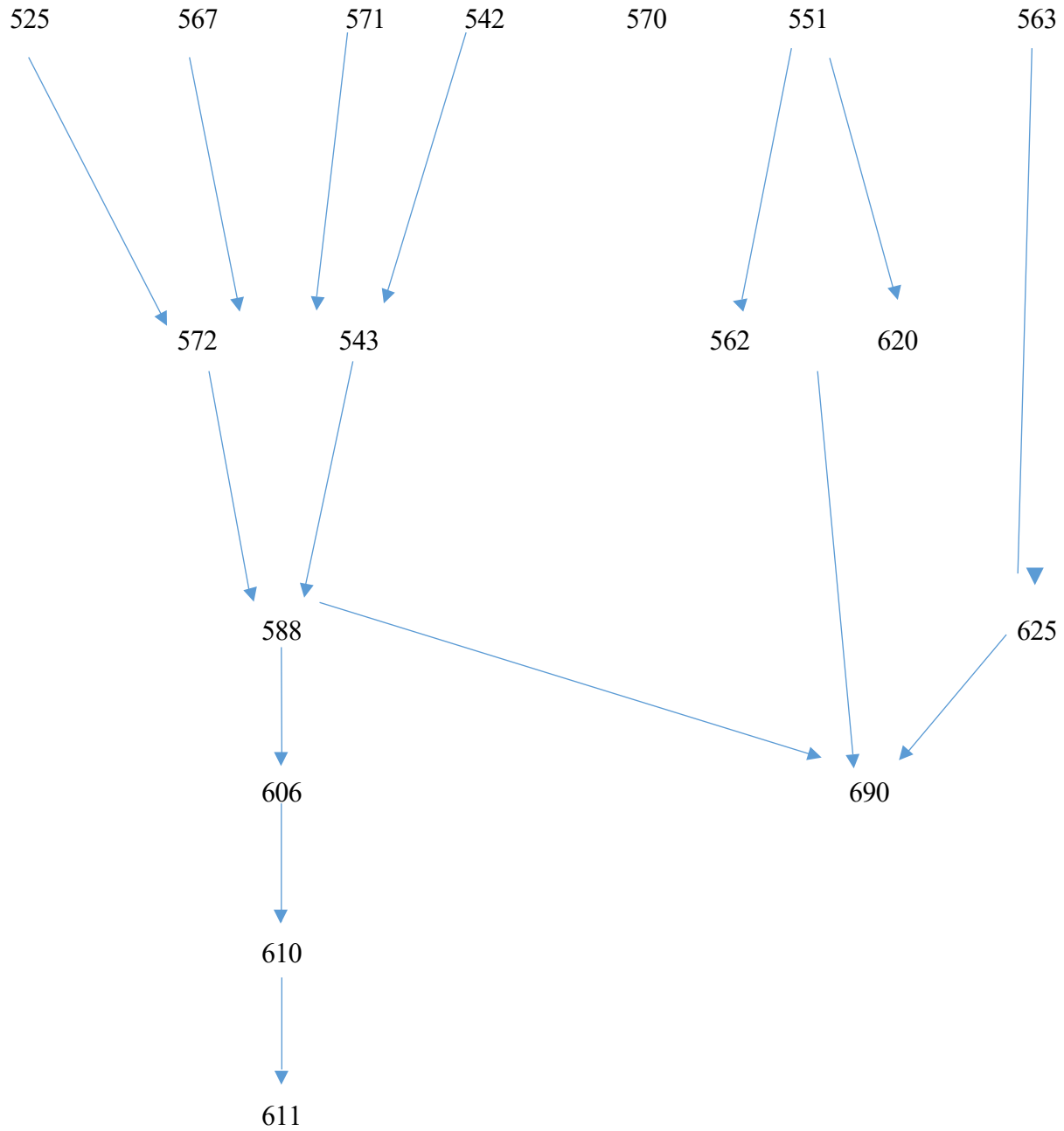
SUGGESTED SEQUENCE OF COURSES

Fall		Spring
YEAR ONE		YEAR ONE
<i>Phase I</i>		<i>Phase I</i>
525- Prof Issues (CO)		567- Group (CO)
551- Frameworks (CM)		542 – Psychopathology
571- Theories of Couns (CO)		563 – Research Methods
	Summer	
	<i>Phase I</i>	
	570- Developmental	
	Elective	
YEAR TWO		YEAR TWO
<i>Phase II</i>		<i>Phase II</i>
543 – Career Counseling		572- Assessment
562- Comm. M.H.		Elective
572- Assessment		<i>Phase III</i>
		588- Couns Skills
	<i>Summer</i>	
	<i>Phase III (B)</i>	
	690 – ResSem OR 687	
	Thesis Development	
	606-Practicum	
YEAR THREE		YEAR THREE
<i>Phase IV</i>		<i>Phase IV</i>
610- Internship		611- Internship
Elective		625- Prog Eval

1. Phase I must be finished before Phase II, and before Phase III (except as noted in the above schedule), etc.
2. Total of Three Electives

Counseling Courses

Community Psych Courses



ELECTIVES:

Counseling: 3 electives

**Counseling & Community Psych Program Sequence with
FMH Certificate (extra course; 3 years)**

Phase I courses (no prerequisites):

Counseling sequence: 525, 567, 571, 542 Community sequence: 551, 563

FMH sequence: 505 Both sequences:

570 Phase II courses:

Counseling sequence: 572, 543 Community sequence: 562,

620 Phase III courses:

Counseling sequence: 588, 606; Community sequence: 625,

630 Both sequences: 690/687+689

Phase IV courses:

Counseling sequence: 610, 611

SUGGESTED SEQUENCE OF COURSES

	Summer	
Fall		Spring
<i>Phase I</i>		<i>Phase I</i>
525- Prof Issues		567- Group
571- Theories of Couns		542 -Psychopathology
PSY 505 Intro to FMH		563 – Research Methods
	FMH Course	
	570 Developmental	
YEAR TWO		<i>Phase II</i>
<i>Phase I</i>		620 Comm Based Prev
551- Frameworks		<i>Phase III</i>
<i>Phase II</i>		588- Couns Skills
572- Assessment		FMH Course
543 – Career Counseling		687 Thesis Development
	<i>Phase III</i>	
	690/689-ResSem OR Thesis	
	606-Practicum (only)	
YEAR THREE		
<i>Phase IV</i>		<i>Phase IV</i>
610- Internship		611- Internship
562- Comm. M.H.		625 Prog Eval
FMH Course		

1. Phase I (CO) must be finished before Phase II (CO), Phase I (CM) must be finished before Phase II (CM), and Phase II (CO) before Phase III (except as noted in the above schedule), etc.
2. Total of four FMH electives.

Mental Health Counseling & Community Psychology Concentrations

Take as electives

Option 1 – Couples & Family Counseling Concentration
PSY 587: Family Counseling
PSY 548: Child Psychopathology or PSY 549: Play Therapy (in-person only)
PSY 519: Couples Counseling
Option 2 – Substance Abuse and Addiction Counseling Concentration (CASAC cert.)
PSY 592: Alcoholism/Drug Addiction: Vulnerabilities, Dynamics & Problems
HED 542: Chemical Dependence Education & Prevention
PSY 539: Neuropsychology
Option 3 – Trauma & Acute Care Concentration
PSY 541: Trauma Informed Counseling
PSY 539: Neuropsychology
PSY 585: Risk & Resilience <u>or</u> PSY 540: Psychopharmacology
Option 4 - Forensic Mental Health (certificate; in-person only)
FHM 505: Intro to FMH
FMH 535: Mental Health Law or FMH 527 – Family & Juvenile Law
FMH 515: Eval & Tx of Adult Offenders
FMH 520: Eval & Tx of Youthful Offenders

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