



GRADUATE PROGRAM IN MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING
STUDENT HANDBOOK

1/1/25 rev



MASTER OF SCIENCE IN MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

SUNY Old Westbury Mission Statement

The State University of New York at Old Westbury is a dynamic and diverse public liberal arts college that fosters academic excellence through close interaction among students, faculty and staff. Old Westbury weaves the values of integrity, community engagement, and global citizenship into the fabric of its academic programs and campus life. In an environment that cultivates critical thinking, empathy, creativity and intercultural understanding, we endeavor to stimulate a passion for learning and a commitment to building a more just and sustainable world. The College is a community of students, teachers, staff, and alumni bound together in mutual support, respect, and dedication to the Mission.

Commitment to Diversity

At Old Westbury, we take pride in our origins being centered in creating a community that has and continues to welcome non-traditional students of all ages, ethnic and racial groups, as well as various walks of life, resulting in one of the most diverse student bodies in the nation (<https://www.oldwestbury.edu/diversity>). The M.S. Program in Mental Health Counseling is firmly committed to issues pertaining to multicultural diversity and seeks faculty members, staff, and students who reflect such diversity, including, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, religious/spiritual orientation, disability status, and national origin. Issues of human diversity are integrated throughout the entire curriculum and program in that students are actively exposed to numerous opportunities to develop competence in addressing issues pertaining to cultural and identity group membership with various populations. The program also seeks to create a space for growth, collaboration, and collegiality among faculty, staff, and students around respecting and affirming various dimensions of cultural diversity.

Program Philosophy

The theoretical orientation of the M.S. Program in Mental Health Counseling promotes a psychotherapy integration approach. Student trainees are encouraged to discover the psychotherapeutic/philosophical orientation that best fits them and to integrate and use treatment techniques derived from all models of psychotherapy.

The M.S. Program in Mental Health Counseling operates on a cohort model. Students enter as a class and go through the curriculum together, fostering a sense of cohesion and trust that will facilitate introspection, discussion and constructive feedback and, ultimately, growth. Cohort sizes are kept small so that we can monitor the progress of each student's academic, clinical and personal experience.

Our training curriculum is based on the belief that the best therapists are those who have achieved a greater degree of self-awareness and insight. We promote introspection and personal growth as a path to facilitating the growth and development of others. Psychosocial and cultural factors, including class, race, gender, religion and sexual orientation, represent direct and powerful influences on the development of health and pathology. These factors are inherent in both the training and psychotherapeutic process and must be understood and integrated.

Our clinically experienced faculty exposes students to the major treatment models and students are trained to develop treatments based upon the needs of the client and the strengths and weaknesses of various treatment models. Students are trained in an integrated model that considers both science and practice. A systematic selection of integrated techniques is taught based upon a broad and unified theoretical approach. The program expects and models the highest standards of professionalism and ethical practice as defined, in part, by the American Psychological Association (APA) and American Counseling Association (ACA). Furthermore, the program assists in promoting student development of these qualities. The faculty provide support throughout the program in the form of academic advisement, psychological support, and career guidance. Students are encouraged to apply for membership in professional associations (e.g., NYMCHA, ACA, AMHCA) to network, stay abreast of issues in the field and serve in governance.

Program Description

The 60 credit M.S. in Mental Health Counseling program at Old Westbury prepares students to provide culturally competent counseling and assessment to a diverse population in compliance with guidelines described in NY State Article 163, Section 8402. Graduates are eligible to sit for the exam for licensure as a Mental Health Counselor during or after completion of the post-masters supervised experience requirement. The license will allow its holder to work in professional settings in

community agencies, practice independently, open a private practice and receive third party payments.

New York State Education Department (NYSED) Section 8402 defines the practice of mental health counseling as: (a) the evaluation, assessment, amelioration, treatment, modification, or adjustment to a disability, problem, or disorder of behavior, character, development, emotion, personality or relationships by the use of verbal or behavioral methods with individuals, couples, families or groups in private practice, group, or organized settings; and (b) the use of assessment instruments and mental health counseling and psychotherapy to identify, evaluate and treat dysfunctions and disorders for purposes of providing appropriate mental health counseling services.

As required by licensing law, students will be instructed in and demonstrate competence in the following areas:

- human growth and development (MH6500);
- social and cultural foundations of counseling (MH6130; MH6520; MH7120);
- counseling theory and practice (MH6110; MH7100; MH7500);
- psychopathology (MH6120);
- group dynamics (MH7110);
- lifestyle and career development (MH7510);
- assessment and appraisal of individuals, couples, families and groups (MH6510);
- research and program evaluation (MH7520);
- professional orientation and ethics (MH6100);
- foundations of mental health counseling and consultation (MH6530);
- clinical instruction (MH6140; MH6540);
- completion of a one year, 600 hours supervised practicum or internship in mental health counseling (MH7130; MH7530).

The program is designed to be completed in two years of full-time attendance. Graduates will be prepared to work in a variety of private, public and not-for-profit community social service agencies, hospitals, and mental health clinics or in private independent practice.

It meets the credit requirements established by the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, Section 52.32 (effective January 1, 2010), that include at least 60 semester hours, or the equivalent, of study.

Admission will be based on evidence of a candidate's ability and motivation for graduate-level work. The student's GPA in graduate-level courses for the Master of Science in Mental Health Counseling must average 3.0 or higher for successful

completion of the program. Every candidate must complete a minimum of fifty-four credit hours in graduate-level work at Old Westbury.

ADMISSIONS

Applications are accepted only for the Fall semester. The MHC Graduate Admissions Committee will make admissions decisions based on the following required criteria:

1. Baccalaureate degree in Psychology or other relevant field from a regionally accredited institution
2. Minimum grade point average of 3.0 for all undergraduate and graduate work, with at least a 3.0 average in psychology courses, or strong evidence of recent academic achievement. Applicants holding graduate degrees in a related field will be evaluated using their graduate grade point average, which must be a minimum of 3.0.
3. Successful completion of 15 credits of undergraduate coursework in Psychology is required. Credits in General Psychology, Statistics, Experimental Methods or Research Methods in Social Science, Abnormal Psychology and Personality Theory are recommended.
4. Completed application for admission to the MS in Mental Health Counseling Program
5. Official transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate work
6. Two letters of recommendation from professors or employers
7. Completion of personal statement
8. Admission interview with MHC faculty to assess overall fit for the program.
9. International students must meet additional criteria, including the following TOEFL scores: paper exam = 550; computer exam= 213; Internet exam= 80. Students taking the IELTS English (Cambridge) exams must pass with a broad band score of 6.5. Students must also have their overseas documents evaluated by AACRAO International or WES (World Education Services).
10. Preference is given to applicants who have work or volunteer experience in activities related to counseling

Effective Fall 2021, Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores will no longer required for admission.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

(Each MH course will be offered every other semester, unless otherwise specified)

MH6100 Professional Orientation and Ethics – 3 credits

This course is concerned with the professional nature of the counseling relationship and what it means to be a caregiver. The roles and responsibilities of counselors are presented and discussed. The Ethical Principles of the American Psychological Association and of the American Counseling Association are presented in detail. Relevant case examples are presented. Candidates are required to solve multiple

ethical dilemma scenarios and to understand the complex issues involved in working with clients/patients. This includes issues involved in working with children, substance using populations, and with clients in non-clinical environments such as employment settings. HIPAA guidelines and requirements are also covered. (Prereqs: Baccalaureate degree in Psychology or other relevant field; Admission into MHC program)

MH6110 Introduction to Counseling Theory and Practice – 3 credits

Survey of the major theoretical orientations of the counseling profession, including relevant research and factors considered in applications. (Prereqs: Baccalaureate degree in Psychology or other relevant field; Admission into MHC program)

MH6120 Psychopathology – 3 Credits

This course is designed to address the etiology and classification of psychiatric illness and emotional disorders. Organized around the principle of reciprocal determinism this course examines the interaction among biological, psychological and environmental factors in the development of psychopathological behavior. The diagnostic approach of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) and the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) is taught as well as a more developmental approach to diagnosis. (Prereqs: Baccalaureate degree in Psychology or other relevant field)

MH6130 Psychosocial & Cultural Perspectives: Theory and Practice I – 3 Credits

The focus of this course is the cultural contexts of counseling in a multicultural and diverse society. Such factors as culture, ethnicity, race, age, gender, sexual orientation, mental and physical characteristics, education, family values, religious and spiritual values, socioeconomic status, and other unique characteristics of individuals, couples, families, ethnic groups and communities are considered. The impact of social forces such as racism, sexism, classism, ageism, ableism, heterosexism, and other types of institutional and individual discrimination on the lives of clients and on the counseling relationship are central to the curriculum. (Prereqs: Baccalaureate degree in Psychology or other relevant field; Admission into MHC program)

MH6140 Practicum I – 3 Credits

Students are supervised in class on a weekly basis, critiquing tapes of their counseling sessions and discussing client problems and counseling relationships. Students will learn intake and interviewing skills. (Prereqs: Baccalaureate degree in Psychology or other relevant field; Admission into MHC program)

MH6500 Lifespan Development – 3 Credits

This course presents perspectives on the major psychological and socio-cultural issues in development from childhood through adulthood with an emphasis on empirical data and theory. (Prereqs: Baccalaureate degree in Psychology or other relevant field)

MH6510 Assessment Techniques in Counseling – 3 Credits

This course presents and teaches interview techniques directed at the acquisition of data to allow diagnosis and treatment planning. Candidates are taught how to conduct mental status exams. There is a focus on the integration of psychological tests into patient assessments and treatment plans. Special attention is paid to level of care assessments and the assessment of suicide potential and other violent behavior. (Prereqs: MH6110, MH6120, MH6130; or by permission)

MH6520 Multicultural Counseling Lab – 3 Credits

The Lab provides an opportunity for students to apply their theoretical and clinical knowledge about counseling in multicultural contexts. Role playing, journaling, discussion and writing will focus on helping students understand how their position in the social structure, and their attitudes, beliefs and knowledge about their own and their clients' background can facilitate or hinder the counseling process. Students will learn how to use their personal experience and knowledge to enhance the growth and development of their clients. (Prereqs: MH6100, MH6110, MH6130; or by permission)

MH6530 Principles and Techniques of Counseling – 3 Credits

The focus of this course is on the practical application of specific counseling and psychotherapy techniques across the four phases of engagement, pattern search, change and termination. There is an emphasis on helping the student trainee to develop clinical thinking and treatment planning from an organized theoretical orientation and integrating multiple treatment techniques from all treatment models. Short-term solution focused and goal attainment approaches are also covered. (Prereqs: Baccalaureate degree in Psychology or other relevant field)

MH6540 Practicum II – 3 Credits

Students will complete a 100-hour placement at college service centers and off-site placements. Class provides weekly supervision for counseling and professional issues arising from the placement experience. Students will make a professional case conference presentation. Students will critique tapes of their counseling sessions, when approved. Students will receive supervision from the site service staff as well. (Prereqs: MH6100; MH6110, MH6130, MH6140; or by permission)

MH7100 Counseling Children and Families – 3 Credits

Students will learn theories relevant to counseling children and families. Basic intervention issues, such as clinical judgment and empirically supported treatments, will also be discussed. (Prereqs: MH6100; MH6100; MH6130; or by permission)

MH7110 Group Counseling – 3 Credits

This course covers group development, dynamics, group counseling theories, leadership styles, counseling methods and types of group approaches utilized in group therapy. Class will consist of a lecture/discussion component and an experiential component. (Prereqs: MH6100, MH6110, MH6130; or by permission)

MH7120 Psychosocial & Cultural Perspectives: Theory and Practice II – 3 Credits

The focus of this course is the further study of the cultural contexts of counseling in a multicultural and diverse society. Strengths and limitations of social systems and institutions (e.g., hospitals, community mental health centers) in which clients are treated and counselors work will be discussed. Programs and policies impacting care (e.g., managed care) will also be examined for their impact on client care. (Prereqs: MH6110, MH 6130, MH6520; or by permission)

MH7130 Clinical Internship in Mental Health Counseling I – 6 Credits

Students will complete a fieldwork experience in college service centers, community agencies or hospital settings under the supervision of agency personnel and college faculty. Interns are expected to perform a full range of mental health counseling functions. The internship requires a minimum of 300 clock hours with a minimum of 120 clock hours in direct service work. Direct service work includes: (a) individual counseling, (b) group counseling, (c) family counseling, (d) psycho-educational groups, and (e) consultation. This course results in a grade of CR/NC. (Prereqs: MH6100, MH6510, MH6520, MH6530, MH6540; or by permission).

MH7140 Integrating Cognitive Behavioral Techniques – 3 Credits

This course will focus on the theories and techniques of the most common forms of CBT at this time, ACT, DBT, MBCT and REBT. We will discuss the similarities and differences in theory and application of these CBT approaches, as well as their application to a variety of common psychotherapeutic problems. (Prereqs: MH6110, MH 6130, MH6520; or by permission)

MH7500 Diagnosis and Treatment of Addictive Disorders – 3 Credits

This course examines the interaction among biological, psychological and environmental factors in addiction and recovery. Assessment and diagnosis are taught as they relate to the development of an intervention strategy. Treatment methods and patient-treatment matching are covered in detail, including the integration of traditional methods of psychotherapy and addiction counseling with self-help approaches. (Prereqs: MH6100, MH6110, MH6120; or by permission)

MH7510 Career Development – 3 Credits

Candidates are taught methods of exploration of clients' career interests and abilities which may be assessed via structured interviews and/or assessment inventories which is then applied to career selection. Career paths are explored. Techniques to improve personal and professional presentation are discussed as are various networking techniques. (Prereqs: Baccalaureate degree in Psychology or other relevant field)

MH7520 Research Methods in Counseling – 3 Credits

This course is designed to prepare counselors to be educated consumers of psychological research and to be capable of understanding and conducting research related to counseling, program evaluation and needs assessment methods and design. Particular attention is paid to issues related to psychotherapy outcome studies. (Prereqs: MH6100, MH6510; or by permission)

MH7530 Clinical Internship in Mental Health Counseling II – 6 Credits

Students will develop advanced clinical reasoning and conceptualization skills at a fieldwork experience in community agencies or hospital settings under the supervision of agency personnel and college faculty. Interns are expected to perform a full range of mental health counseling functions. The internship requires a minimum of 300 clock hours with a minimum of 120 clock hours in direct service work. Direct service work includes: (a) individual counseling, (b) group counseling, (c) family counseling, (d) psycho-educational groups, and (e) consultation. This course results in a grade of CR/NC. (Prereqs: MH7130 or by permission)

Child Abuse Identification and Reporting Workshop – 0 credits

Mandated workshop for New York State providers preparing them to identify and report suspected cases of child abuse. Will be offered every semester. No prerequisites.

SAMPLE SEMESTER TABLE							
Year 1 FALL		Year 1 SPRING		Year 2 FALL		Year 2 Spring	
Course Title	Cred	Course Title	Cred	Course Title	Cred	Course Title	Cred
MH 6100 Professional Orientation and Ethics	3	MH7500 Diagnosis & Treatment of Addictive Disorders	3	MH7100 Counseling Children & Families	3	MH6500 Lifespan Development	3
MH6110 Intro to Counseling Theory & Practice	3	MH6510 Assessment Techniques in Counseling	3	MH7110 Group Counseling	3	MH7510 Career Development	3
MH6120 Psychopathology	3	MH6520 Multicultural Counseling Lab	3	MH7140 Integrating Cognitive Behavioral Techniques	3	MH 7520 Research Methods in Counseling	3
MH6130 Psychosocial & Cultural Perspectives: Theory & Practice I	3	MH 6530 Principles & Techniques of Counseling	3	MH7130 Clinical Internship in Mental Health Counseling I	6	MH7530 Clinical Internship in Mental Health Counseling II	6
MH6140 Practicum I	3	MH6540 Practicum II	3				
Total Credits	15	Total Credits	15	Total Credits	15	Total Credits	15

NOTE: Child Abuse Identification and Reporting Workshop (0 Credits) will be offered and available every semester.

College Email

Each student will receive a College email address. **ALL official College communications will be sent to the student's Old Westbury email address.** Students should be able to access this email and check it regularly.

Professional Experience Placements

All students will complete professional experience placements (Practicum II; Clinical Internship I and II) as part of their training. As part of these experiences, students must have the following in place:

Online Field Placement Platform

All students are expected to register for the online field experience management platform, Tevera, as part of their professional experience courses. This platform will

allow students to review available placements, track their hours and upload supervisor evaluations. Students continue to have access after graduation for use in licensure application. Please note there is a separate, one-time enrolment fee required, paid directly to Tevera.

Student Malpractice Liability Insurance

All students must have an active student malpractice liability policy in place prior to starting any professional practice placement. These can be purchased at low cost as part of professional association memberships (e.g., ACA, NYMHCA).

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend class regularly and arrive punctually. Class attendance and participation are crucial for acquisition of information and professional development and socialization into the field. Students are allowed one absence and are expected to notify relevant faculty of the absence. Reasons for any further missed classes will be discussed with the professor and will negatively impact the student's grade. Excessive absences will lead to a Retention and Review Committee hearing and could result in dismissal from the program.

Grading Policies

The grading system used on transcripts provides for letter grades consisting of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, F, CR (credit), NC (no credit), I (incomplete), W (withdrawal), and WN (Withdrawn Never Attended). A notation of NR (not reported) is assigned if a grade has not been reported. A notation of WN is assigned for students who never attended. All students whose names remain on the official class roster, prepared at the end of the add/drop period, are assigned one of the above grades.

All grades except CR, NC, I and W are calculated in the student's GPA. However, in cases where students repeat a course, the newest grade replaces the old one(s) in the GPA calculation. All grades, however, will remain on the transcript.

All courses must be taken for a letter grade except for MH7130 Clinical Internship in Mental Health Counseling I and MH7530 Clinical Internship in Mental Health Counseling II, which are designated as CR/NC courses. If a student receives a NC they will not be considered in good academic standing and will be scheduled for a Retention & Review Committee hearing.

While students must pay for every course they take, financial aid will not pay for repeated courses unless the department/program requires a minimum grade for graduation and the previous grade was below the requirement. Courses not required

to be repeated by the department will not count toward credit load for purposes of financial aid eligibility.

Incomplete

A grade of Incomplete (I) may be assigned by the instructor when:

- extenuating circumstances, such as accident or illness, make it impossible for the student to complete the course work by the end of the semester;
- the student has completed most of the course work at a passing level;
- the instructor expects that the student will be able to complete the remainder of the course requirements by the end of the following semester.

A grade of "I" remains in effect for one semester. A student must make appropriate arrangements with his/her instructor to complete the course requirements. The instructor will inform the student concerning the specific scope and nature of the work that must be completed. To certify fulfillment of course requirements, the instructor is expected to submit a letter grade by the end of the following semester. If the instructor does not submit a grade, the Registrar will automatically assign a grade of F. Students who are completing an incomplete should not re-register for that course in the semester that they are completing the incomplete.

Withdrawal

"W", signifying withdrawal, may not be assigned as a final grade. After the end of the add/drop period and up to the seventh week of classes, a student may withdraw from one or more courses by filing an official withdrawal form in the Office of the Registrar. The Registrar will then record a W on the student's transcript.

Please Note: Nonattendance in classes does not constitute withdrawal.

In extraordinary circumstances, the Registrar will record a "W" on a student's transcript after the seventh week of the semester, but prior to two weeks before the final day of classes, if the instructor has approved the withdrawal and the student has filed the necessary form with the Registrar. Students should consult the College calendar each semester for specific withdrawal dates.

Any student who has not withdrawn officially from a course will remain on the final grade roster and will be assigned a final grade of "F" from the

instructor. Withdrawals may affect a student's subsequent eligibility for financial aid awards.

Please consult the Office of *Financial Aid* for further information on the effect of "W" grades on continued eligibility for student financial aid. A grade of "W" does not affect the GPA.

Other Information on Grades

Once submitted to the Registrar, grades other than 'I' cannot be changed except under extraordinary circumstances. Under no circumstances may a grade be changed after the degree has been awarded.

A student, whose name appears on the class roster compiled at the end of the add/drop period, continues his or her registered status until the end of the semester, unless that student has **officially** withdrawn from the class. Consequently, liability for billing and eligibility for financial aid, as well as liability for probation, suspension or dismissal continues to apply to all students on this roster, unless the student has officially withdrawn at the Office of the Registrar.

Grade-Point Average (GPA)

Each letter grade carries the following quality points:

<u>GRADE</u>	<u>QUALITY POINTS</u>
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.5
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.5
C	2.0
F	0
W	0
I	0
CR	0
NC	0

Two calculations of grade point averages appear on the student's transcript: a semester grade point average and a cumulative grade point average. No quality

points are assigned to CR (Credit), NC (No Credit), I (Incomplete), W (Withdrawal), WN (Withdrawn Never Attended) or NR (Not Reported).

To be awarded a master's degree, a graduate student must finish his/her program with a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 (B) or better. Grades counted in the cumulative GPA. must be earned in graduate-level courses taken at SUNY Old Westbury, and all courses must appear on the student's Old Westbury transcript.

All grades in graduate-level courses will be counted in computing the GPA. with the following exceptions:

- Grades earned in courses given by other institutions for which transfer credit has been allowed.
- Grades earned in undergraduate courses taken for undergraduate credit.
- Program courses with CR/NC grades

Academic Standing

Graduate students whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation. Students on academic probation have one semester in which to raise their GPA. to 3.0. **Any student whose GPA remains below 3.0 at the end of the probationary period will be dropped from the College.**

Any student who receives a grade of "F" in any course or any student whose cumulative GPA is less than 3.0 will automatically have a hearing scheduled with the Graduate Mental Health Counseling Retention and Review Committee.

Students who are placed on Academic Probation will be evaluated by the Graduate Mental Health Counseling Retention and Review Committee. The committee will review all relevant materials and meet with the student to assist the student and provide direction and support. This committee can also be convened whenever there is a concern about a student's performance or possible need for assistance. Since all students are held to the highest standards of professionalism and ethics this committee also addresses matters of concern in these areas.

No student will be dismissed from the program without Graduate Mental Health Counseling Retention and Review Committee involvement.

Professional Competence Review Policy

Consistent with the ethical codes of the American Counseling Association (ACA, 2014) and American Psychological Association (APA, 2017), the Mental Health Counseling

(MHC) faculty take their professional obligation of mentoring, guiding, and supporting our students' professional development very seriously. As part of their development, all MHC students must have knowledge of these professional codes and adhere to the high level of ethical conduct therein. MHC faculty are professionally and ethically required to ensure that students in the MHC program are aware of the ethical requirements of being a mental health counselor. The ACA provides:

F.7.e. Teaching Ethics: Throughout the program, counselor educators ensure that students are aware of the ethical responsibilities and standards of the profession and the ethical responsibilities of students to the profession. Counselor educators infuse ethical considerations throughout the curriculum. (ACA, 2014)

Students in the MHC program are expected to practice self-care and demonstrate self-awareness regarding any personal or psychological issues which might interfere with their ability to function ethically. It is the professional and ethical responsibility of MHC faculty to ensure that this level of awareness is developed and adhered to by the student. The ACA Code of Ethics (2014) in Section F: Supervision, Training, and Teaching states:

F.9.b. Limitations; Counselor educators, throughout ongoing evaluation, are aware of and address the inabilities of some students to achieve counseling competencies. Counselor educators do the following: (1) assist students in securing remedial assistance when needed, (2) seek professional consultation and document their decision to dismiss or refer students for assistance, and (3) assure that students have recourse in a timely manner to address decisions to require them to seek assistance or to dismiss them with due process according to institutional policies and procedures.

Personal Counseling

As part of this professional and ethical endeavor, MHC students are encouraged to seek personal counseling services for themselves during the time they are enrolled in the program. Consistent with the philosophy that counseling can be helpful to all persons, not just individuals who have emotional or mental disorders, graduate students are encouraged to learn about themselves from being a client in a counseling relationship. In addition to self-exploration, being a client provides counseling students with the opportunity to experience what they ask their clients to do, which helps them to empathize more fully with clients for whom they provide services.

A distinction is made between advisement and counseling. Advisement focuses on academic and professional goals and growth whereas counseling assists people with personal concerns and psychological adjustment. Although MHC faculty are qualified

to fulfill both functions, ethics of the counseling profession prohibit them from engaging in dual relationships with their students. Because faculty members are asked to evaluate students' academic and professional growth, they are asked to refrain from providing personal counseling services to students and their family members. Students who would like to seek professional counseling may consult with MHC faculty regarding other services and referrals, including the College Counseling and Wellness Center.

Functional Competence

Students must demonstrate functional competence in fulfilling the professional tasks and duties of the discipline. The MHC faculty considers functional competence to include, but not be limited to the following (Source: McAdams, Foster & Ward, 2007):

- Openness to new ideas
- Flexibility
- Cooperativeness with others
- Willingness to accept and use feedback
- Awareness of own impact on others
- Ability to deal with conflict
- Ability to accept personal responsibility
- Ability to express feelings effectively and appropriately
- Attention to ethical and legal considerations
- Initiative and motivation

Student Review Procedure

The Mental Health Counseling program may recommend that a student be placed on a Remediation Plan, placed on a Professional Conduct Hold or dismissed from the MHC program when ethical standards are violated, and/or functional competence is inadequate.

In view of the seriousness of such situations, the Mental Health Counseling Program has established the following procedure for addressing questions regarding retention or readiness for professional experience placement:

Review Level One

As a first level of action, a Mental Health Counseling faculty member shall meet with the student(s) in question, express the specific concern(s), and recommend a Remediation Plan to correct the situation. The Remediation Plan outlines specific actions and proposes a timeframe for the student to complete the plan. This consultation will set forth any ethical standards that may have been violated and/or any functional competency criteria that are lacking so that the student is aware of the deficiencies and can act to take corrective action. This plan will be provided to the Director and included in the student's file. If the student does not pursue the

action plan or resolve the concern a Level Two Retention and Review Hearing will be convened to determine next steps.

Review Level Two

Review level two is initiated either when a more serious issue initially occurs (e.g., substance use at placement) or a Remediation Plan is not successfully completed. A Retention and Review Hearing by the Mental Health Counseling Graduate Director and concerned faculty member(s) shall be scheduled to discuss the specific concerns, and further attempt to help the student remediate the deficiencies or determine the student's ongoing role in the program. During the Retention and Review Hearing, using the ethical standards and/or competency criteria which are of concern for that specific student, Mental Health Counseling faculty will review the student's status in the program, provide the student the opportunity to present any appropriate information, and further elaborate on the nature of their concerns. The Hearing Board will then recommend one of the following:

- **No further action:** In such cases, the concerns are deemed to require no further action and the student will be allowed to continue in the program of study without restriction.
- **Remediation Plan:** This Plan outlines specific actions and proposes a timeframe for the student to complete the plan. Although the student may continue classes and professional experience placements, if the remediation plan is not successfully completed within the specified time span, the Retention and Review Board will convene to determine the appropriate action.
- **Professional Conduct Hold:** This is a recommendation that the student pause their course work or discontinue a professional experience placement while they attempt to complete the specific requirements of the Remediation Plan. Remedial action may include being required to repeat course work, obtain personal counseling, or complete other departmental requirements. Upon completing the Remediation Plan, the student may request a Level Two Retention and Review Hearing to consider removal of the hold. The Hearing Board's recommendation is forwarded to the Dean along with the student's response, if the student decides to submit one. If the student disagrees with the Dean's decision, the student can submit a written appeal to the Provost within 5 business days. The Provost's decision is final.
- **Discontinuation of Studies:** This is a recommendation for dismissal, with no option to continue in further coursework in the Mental Health Counseling Program. The Hearing Board's recommendation is forwarded to the Dean along with the student's response, if the student decides to submit one. If the student disagrees with the Dean's decision, the student can submit a written appeal to the Provost within 5 business days. The Provost's decision is final.

The MHC program is committed to providing the necessary resources and support to students to facilitate their education and training as competent and ethical counselors. We will work transparently and collaboratively through this process to assist students with issues as they arise.

Honors

Currently, the program participates in the college wide Honors Convocation and offers one award, Academic Excellence. Those students with a high grade point average earn this award. The grade point average (GPA) is not set and changes each year based on the overall class GPA. A statistical analysis is performed to determine the students who have a GPA that is unique as determined by standard deviation. Eligible students can also apply for Psi Chi, the national honors society for psychology.

Time Limit for Completion of Program

A matriculated student will have five (5) years from the date of matriculation (exclusive of armed services obligations) to complete all requirements for the master's degree.

Extensions of time and appropriate leaves will be considered, by the program and the college, based on the merits of the applicant's case.

Reinstatement

Students who have previously attended Old Westbury and wish to return after an absence of up to one year (four semesters, including summer sessions) must file an *Application for Re-Admission* at the Office of the Registrar at least one month prior to the beginning of the semester.

Students who are absent for more than one year must reapply for admission. The Graduate Mental Health Counseling Retention and Review Committee will determine whether readmission is appropriate based on the submissions by the applicant.

Students with outstanding financial obligations to the institution will not be reinstated until all obligations have been satisfied.

Veterans

Students expecting to receive Veterans Administration benefits must be certified by the Office of the Registrar after registration. To receive certification by the Registrar, the student must submit appropriate documentation, including:

- V.A. Certificate of Eligibility and
- Discharge papers, certified by the County Clerk

Non-Discrimination / Anti-Harassment Policy

SUNY Old Westbury is committed to an educational and employment environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work or study in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal treatment and prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment. Therefore, the College expects that all relationships among persons at the College will be professional and free of bias, prejudice and harassment.

It is the policy of the College to ensure equal treatment without discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, citizenship, marital status, sexual orientation or any other characteristic protected by law. The College prohibits and will not tolerate any such discrimination or harassment.

Definitions of Harassment

1. Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination and is illegal under federal, state and local laws. For the purposes of this policy, sexual harassment is defined, as in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines, as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic treatment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting such individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or study performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or learning environment.

Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not so subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may include, but are not limited to: unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors; sexual jokes and innuendo; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies; leering, catcalls or touching; insulting or obscene comments or gestures; display or circulation on the campus of sexually suggestive objects or pictures (including through e-mail); and other physical, verbal or visual conduct of a sexual nature.

2. Harassment on the basis of any other protected characteristic is also strictly prohibited. Under this policy, harassment is verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, citizenship, sexual orientation, marital status or any other characteristic protected by law or that of his/her relatives, friends or associates, and that: (1) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or study environment; (2) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or study performance; or (3) otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment or learning opportunities. Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to: epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes and display or circulation on the campus of written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group (including through e-mail).

Individuals and Conduct Covered

These policies apply to all applicants, employees and students, and prohibit harassment, discrimination and retaliation with respect to employment, programs or activities at the College, whether engaged in by fellow employees, supervisors or managers, faculty members or students or by someone not directly connected to the College (e.g., an outside vendor, consultant or customer). Conduct prohibited by these policies is unacceptable in the workplace/classroom and in any college-related setting outside the workplace/classroom, such as during business (college) trips, business (college) meetings and business (college)-related social events.

Retaliation is Prohibited

The College prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports discrimination or harassment or participates in an investigation of such reports. Retaliation against an individual for reporting harassment or discrimination or for participating in an investigation of a claim of harassment or discrimination is a serious violation of this policy and, like harassment or discrimination itself, will be the subject of disciplinary action.

Academic Integrity Policy for School of Arts and Sciences

As members of the Old Westbury community, students are expected to adhere to standards of honesty and ethical behavior. Plagiarism and other types of academic dishonesty are condemned at all academic institutions. These acts detract from the student's intellectual and personal growth by undermining the processes of higher learning and the struggle with one's own expression of ideas and information.

Good academic procedure requires giving proper credit when using the words or ideas of others.

Plagiarizing means “presenting somebody else’s words or ideas without acknowledging where those words and ideas come from” (Ann Raimés, *Keys for Writers*, 7th ed.). Examples include:

- copying material from the Internet or other sources and presenting it as one’s own
- using any author’s words without quotation marks; using any quotation without credit
- changing any author’s words slightly and presenting them as one’s own
- using ideas from any source (even in one’s own words) without proper credit
- turning in any assignment containing material written by someone else (including tutor or friend); buying work and submitting it as one’s own
- submitting the same assignment in more than one class without permission of the instructor

Know what plagiarism is and how to avoid it; for guidance see Raimés or any other college writing handbook.

Other types of academic dishonesty include unauthorized collaboration or copying of students’ work (cheating); falsifying grades or other assessment measures; destroying the academic work of another student; the dishonest use of electronic devices; and others. When detected and verified, plagiarism and other academic dishonesty will have serious consequences.

Please note: In this matter, ignorance of the Academic Integrity Policy is never an acceptable excuse.

PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

School of Arts and Sciences Graduate Programs

First Reported Offense:

Recommended Penalty: Failing grade for the specific course

Maximum Penalty: Suspension

Second and Subsequent Reported Offense:

Recommended Penalty: Suspension

Maximum Penalty: Dismissal

All School of Arts and Sciences Programs

Violations of plagiarism that occur outside of class (For example: work submitted for competitions, job applications, admissions to programs) may be considered a "Reported Offense".

Any student found in violation of the Academic Integrity Policy may not be eligible for scholarships, honors or induction into academic societies. Students cannot withdraw from the course or apply for a grade of CR/NC while the matter is pending or if they are found in violation of academic policy. In some cases, in addition to academic consequences, violations may have other ramifications including those listed in the Code for Student Conduct.

A student may appeal the decision of the faculty/staff member through the Academic Grievance Procedure as outlined in the SUNY Old Westbury College Catalog.

Grade Grievance Policy

If a student disputes a grade, the student must follow the following steps to resolve the dispute:

1. The student must inform the course instructor of the dispute and engage in a conversation to understand and resolve the matter.
2. If this first attempt is unsuccessful the student will formally write to the instructor outlining in detail exactly why the grade is being disputed and presenting whatever evidence is relevant. The student will forward a copy of this document to the Director of the Mental Health Counseling Program.
3. The Program Director will gather information from the instructor and may or may not meet with each of the parties involved and any other parties deemed relevant by the Program Director.
4. The Program Director renders a decision. If the student is not satisfied with the Program Director's decision the matter, along with all documentation, is referred to the Dean and the Dean will render a decision.
5. If the student is not satisfied with the Dean's determination the matter, along with all relevant documentation, is referred to the College's Academic Practices Committee who will evaluate and render a decision. The decision of the Academic Practices Committee is final.

Funding Opportunities

The program actively seeks funding opportunities to assist students with the cost of their studies. Please see below for university/college funding opportunities that students may be eligible to apply for.

SUNY Graduate Diversity Fellowship Program

Program faculty will advise students of upcoming deadlines. Eligibility criteria are as follows:

1. Applicants must have earned by the time of enrollment, a baccalaureate degree granted by an accredited U.S. college or university, or an international university of recognized standing.
2. Be a U.S. citizen or have obtained permanent resident status by the time of enrollment.
3. Students must contribute to the diversity of the graduate program to which they have been admitted. Economic or other disadvantage may be a basis for assessing a student's contribution to enhancing diversity. Membership in a racial/ethnic group that has historically been underrepresented in the graduate or professional program in which admission is sought may serve as a plus factor in making awards.

Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (CSTEP)

Our students benefit from stipends for textbooks and to assist with costs of licensure preparation or the licensure exam. Other CSTEP funding opportunities and benefits can be found at: [CSTEP Benefits](#). Eligibility requirements and application details can be found at: [CSTEP Eligibility and Application](#). To apply for this program students should set an appointment with a CSTEP advisor.

Currently, Dr. Cooper is an advisor for CSTEP and will assist you with this process.

Psi Chi

Psi Chi, the national honors society in psychology, has funding opportunities for eligible members. Eligible students will have the opportunity to apply to Psi Chi after their first semester in the program.