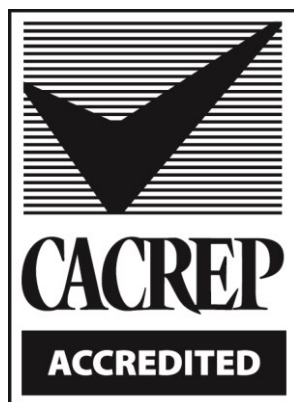




SCHOOL COUNSELING GRADUATE PROGRAM

Student Handbook

For Students Starting in Academic Year 2025-2026



Counseling Program Web Address: <https://www.uwrf.edu/programs/school-counseling>

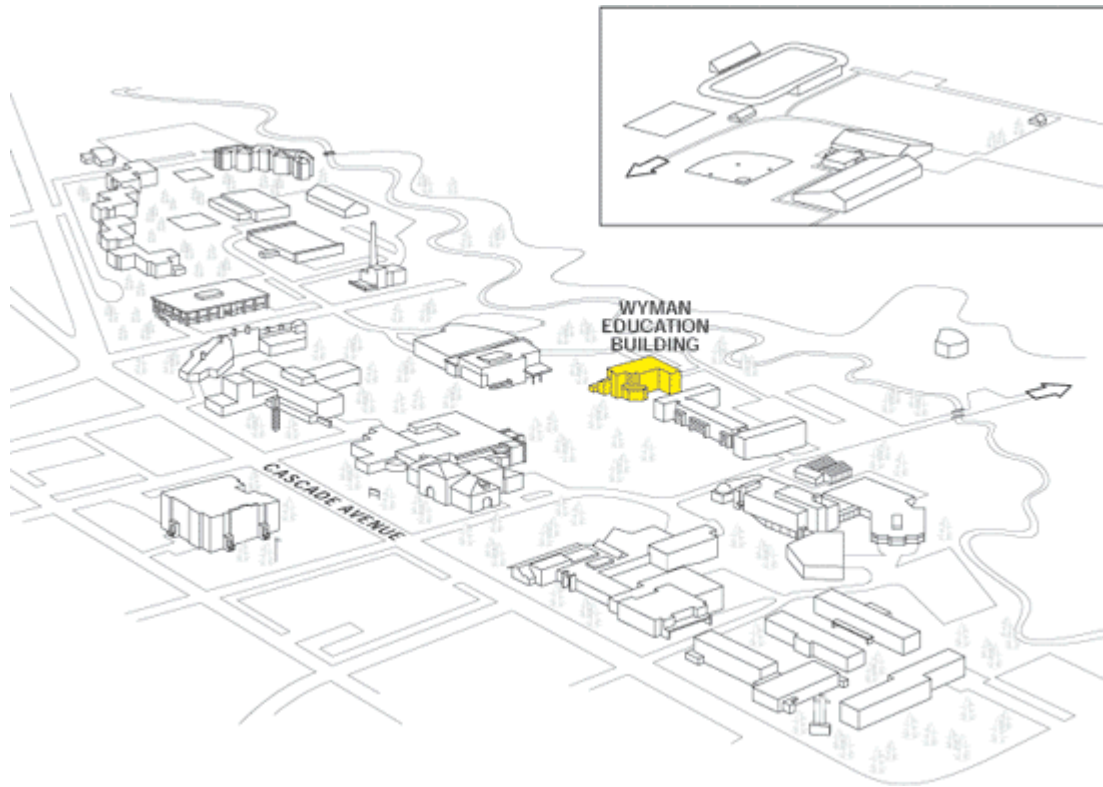
Campus Web Address: www.uwrf.edu

All academic inquiries may be directed by email to the Counseling Program Director,

Dr. Caroline Baker – caroline.baker@uwrf.edu

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN- RIVER FALLS CAMPUS MAP

The UWRF Counseling Program is housed in the Wyman Education Building (WEB), as labeled in the map below. The Wyman Building is centrally located on campus, adjacent to the University Center and the Chalmer-Davee Library. Parking is available behind the building at meters or in nearby lots.



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Counseling Program Handbook

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SECTION I: WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

Dear School Counseling Student:

Welcome to the Counseling Program at the University of Wisconsin River Falls (UWRF). We are committed to helping you achieve your goal of becoming a school counselor. School counseling is a profession that offers an opportunity for you to provide a wide range of services to help children and adolescents, their parents and families, and teachers, administrators, and other school personnel. According to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) (2025), *employment of school and career counselors is projected to grow 4% from 2023-2033, as fast as the average for all occupations. You can also find salary information [at this website](#).*

Initiated in 1968, the UWRF Counseling Program includes three full time faculty and approximately 40-50 students. The program resides in the Department of Counseling and School Psychology, in the College of Education, Business, and Allied Health (CEBAH). The program is CACREP accredited and prepares counselors for K-12 school settings. Completion of the Program leads to a Master of Science in Education (M.S.E.) degree, with an emphasis in school counseling. The minimum time to complete the degree successfully is two years, with a maximum of seven years. The UWRF Counseling Program is founded on the following program learning objectives.

Upon graduation from the UWRF Counseling Program, students will be able to:

- ✓ Identify as professional school counselors through language and behaviors;
- ✓ Implement and advocate for comprehensive Counseling Programs;
- ✓ Support student success by incorporating best practices through research, scholarly literature, and technology;
- ✓ Consult, collaborate and establish partnerships with stakeholders;
- ✓ Apply ethical, developmental, and cultural practices in school counseling.

The Counseling Program at UWRF focuses on the *ASCA National Model* framework for comprehensive school counseling programs, as well as the school counseling and pupil services standards established by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI). Throughout the program, an emphasis is placed on addressing social, cultural, developmental, and ethical aspects of counseling, preparing the student to work with a diverse student population in a culturally sensitive and responsive manner. Prepare for an exciting and challenging experience. You will participate in a rigorous graduate school schedule with high academic demands to gain a deeper understanding of yourself and others.

This handbook contains important information about our program as well as student expectations. It represents the official policies and procedures associated with the Counseling Program at UWRF. You will find information about important topics such as courses, evaluation, and funding. It is your responsibility to read the handbook and familiarize yourself with the Program's policies. This is an ever-evolving document, so consult with your adviser or one of the faculty members if you have any questions. **Upon admission to the program, please sign and return the acknowledgement form at the end of the handbook to your instructor for COUN 610 during your first semester, indicating that you have read, understand, and agree with the policies presented here.**

Additional information about UWRF and graduate studies can be found at <http://www.uwrf.edu/GraduateStudies/>.

Again, we want to extend to you a warm welcome to the Counseling Program at UWRF. We look forward to working with you!

Dr. Caroline Baker
Dr. Jiwon Kim
Dr. Kelly Dunn
Mr. Angus McKechnie

University of Wisconsin River Falls Mission and Vision Statement

The University's mission and vision statements may be found here: <https://www.uwrf.edu/about/mission-vision-values>

College of Education, Business, and Allied Health (CEBAH) Mission Statement

Here, you may find the current and updated mission and vision statements for [Schools of Education, Allied Health and Social Work | University of Wisconsin River Falls \(uwrf.edu\)](#)

Diversity and Inclusivity

We support the Diversity and Inclusivity policy found here: [Global and Diversity Initiatives | University of Wisconsin River Falls \(uwrf.edu\)](#)

Counseling and School Psychology Department Mission Statement

Programs within the Department of Counseling and School Psychology prepare individuals to enter professional roles in school and mental health settings. The department is unified by common goals of providing graduate education to prepare our students to be thoughtful, involved, and responsive professionals, particularly in meeting the needs of children, their families, and others in a collaborative and problem-solving fashion. Members of the department collaborate to ensure that students develop expected proficiencies in their respective fields of study, consistent with state and national standards. Programs within the department adhere to the highest standards of the professionals in the fields of counseling and school psychology.

Graduates from our programs will develop both the knowledge base of their respective professions and interpersonal professional skills to work directly with children, and closely with parents, teachers, administrators, other school specialists, and community professionals, to provide support for learners with many needs. Graduates from our programs will value diversity and individual differences and follow a commitment to lifelong learning and professional development.

SECTION II: PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Counseling Program Mission Statement

The mission of the UWRF Counseling Program is to prepare school counselors who exhibit excellence in counseling practice and leadership, respect human dignity and cultural diversity in the broadest sense and commit to lifelong personal and professional growth. Additionally, program learning outcomes require that upon graduation from the UWRF Counseling Program, students will be able to:

- Identify as professional school counselors through language and behaviors;
- Implement and advocate for comprehensive Counseling Programs;
- Support student success by incorporating best practices through research, scholarly literature, and technology;
- Consult, collaborate and establish partnerships with stakeholders;
- Apply ethical, developmental, and cultural practices in school counseling.

Program Statement of Expectations

The counseling program is charged with the dual task of nurturing the development of counselor-in-training and ensuring quality client care. To fulfill these dual responsibilities faculty must evaluate students based on their academic, professional, and personal qualities. A student's progress in the program may be interrupted for failure to comply with academic standards or if a student's interpersonal or emotional status interferes with being able to provide ethical services to clients. For example, to ensure proper training and client care, a counselor-in-training must abide by relevant ethical codes and demonstrate professional knowledge, technical and interpersonal skills, professional attitudes, and professional character. These factors are evaluated based on one's academic performance and one's ability to convey warmth, genuineness, respect, and empathy in interactions with clients, classmates, staff, and faculty. Students should demonstrate the ability to accept and integrate feedback, be aware of their impact on others, and accept personal responsibility, and be able to express feelings effectively and appropriately. These expectations will be assessed through each class. (See the Comprehensive Evaluation section of the Handbook)

SECTION III: ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAM

Applying to the Program: Requirements and Deadlines

Click on the "Application Process" tab for detailed information here: <https://www.uwrf.edu/programs/school-counseling>

Means of Communication

Once admitted to the Counseling Program, you will receive a UWRF email account. Please activate this promptly, since all further communication (e.g., mandatory meetings, advising needs, events, etc.) will be sent to that address only.

Additionally, the Counseling Program posts relevant information to our [counseling listserv](#), so it is crucial for success to sign up for this, too. Please also consider following our Program [Facebook](#) page and [Instagram](#).

Nearing completion of the program, you will be asked for a permanent non-UWRF email address and other contact information so that we are able to reach you as needed.

New Student Orientation

Following the admissions process, a New Student Orientation occurs each semester. You are encouraged to attend this meeting to speak with other new and current students as well as program faculty. You will also learn about navigating the program, including course registration, degree plans, using technology, and becoming involved with the School Counseling Student Association.

Background and Criminal Checks

Upon acceptance to the Counseling Program, you are required to complete a national background check. This occurs prior to taking *COUN 610: Introduction to School Counseling* and again before enrolling in Internship. Information is sent to you through your UWRF email address by the Associate Dean of the College. Additional background checks may be required if your degree plan lasts more than 2.5 years. Further, field placement sites may require their own background checks to work in their schools.

Reciprocity/Transferring Credits

Applying credits from other programs or institutions is considered on a case-by-case basis. To transfer credits into the UWRF Counseling Program the following criteria must be met:

1. No more than 9 graduate credits may be transferred in.
2. Credits must have been earned from an accredited University or College.
3. Credits must be from graduate level courses.
4. Credits must have been completed no more than 7 years from the anticipated time of graduation from the counseling program.
5. Courses must meet the expectations for the UWRF Counseling Program (learning objectives).
6. Courses must be reviewed by the instructor of the UWRF course to ensure that they meet the learning objectives.
7. Final approval is by the program director for the counseling program.
8. Students must provide course syllabi, at the very least, to be considered for transfer.

Applying External Credits to Graduation

Students are encouraged to participate in professional development and enriching opportunities. However, if such opportunities award credit hours:

- Students are eligible to take one graduate credit per academic year outside of UWRF (September through August) if:
 - the UWRF Counseling Program does not offer this course
 - the graduate course is pre-approved by program faculty (the course description must be submitted to the student's adviser)
- Upon successful completion of the one credit the student must submit official transcripts to the UWRF Counseling Program.

SECTION IV: FUNDING

Tuition and Fees

You can find detailed information about graduate student tuition, fee schedules, and policies regarding payment at <https://www.uwrf.edu/StudentBilling/>. It is your responsibility as a student to review payment policies and procedures to ensure compliance.

Paying for Graduate School

There are several ways to fund your graduate school experience. Please visit this website for a summary of options including financial aid, scholarships, grants, and other loans: <http://www.uwrf.edu/CSP/Funding-Graduate-School.cfm>

There are minimum credit hour requirements to maintain financial aid and scholarships per semester. To find out more about types of financial aid, applying for financial aid using the Federal Application for Financial Student Aid (FAFSA), and specific financial aid policies at UWRF, please visit <http://www.uwrf.edu/FinancialAid/>.

Tuition Reciprocity with Minnesota

Through an agreement between the states, Minnesota residents can benefit from reduced tuition costs with Wisconsin public universities. Minnesota residents can apply for reciprocity online and should do so as soon as they have applied for graduate school. Reciprocity benefits will be automatically renewed each year with continued enrollment at UWRF and Minnesota residency. Should enrollment discontinue, reapplication is necessary. Visit the website for more information: <http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=97>

Graduate Assistantships/Student Worker

The Counseling Program generally offers 1-3 graduate assistantships per year, depending on program budget and needs. Duties may include assisting with research, writing, classes, accreditation, student and stakeholder meetings, practicum and internship preparation, and other projects, averaging 8-16 work hours per week. Graduate Assistants are paid an hourly rate determined by the University during the academic year (August to May). Preference is given to current counseling students who have completed at least one graduate program course. To receive announcements regarding this opportunity and to apply for the position, join the [School Counseling listserv](#) and “like” the [Facebook](#) page and [Instagram](#).

SECTION V: ADVISING

Who is Your Adviser?

Your adviser will be one of the program faculty members. Upon admission to the program, you will receive a letter notifying you of your adviser. Your adviser will work with you on completing a degree plan and will help you make choices to ensure timely progress. We strongly recommend checking in with your adviser each semester.

Degree Planning

Plan to contact your adviser as soon as you are accepted into the program, and check-in at least once per semester. You will discuss overall goals and objectives and create a tentative timeline to completion or “degree plan”. This document serves to ensure timely progress through the program. COUN 610 is required in your first semester, and, in general, 600 level courses should be completed before 700 level courses. Find current Degree Plan forms on our [website](#).

SECTION VI: PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Minimum Credit Hours to Graduate

Students entering the program starting in Fall 2022 and beyond will need 60 credit hours to graduate. Plan to take core counseling classes during fall and spring semesters, in the evenings between 4:00-8:00pm (typically 4:30-7:15pm). Electives are offered during summer and J-term.

For students who entered the program between 2014 and spring 2022, 48 graduate-level semester credit hours are required to successfully complete the program. During this program transition from 48 to 60 credits, some students on the 48-credit requirement may end up paying for more than 48 credits. Please discuss this with your adviser.

J-term and Summer Course Credits

Students taking summer course credits must adhere to the following guidelines:

No more than 9 credits total in the summer session

No more than 3 credits in a 3-week period of time (in other words students may not take more than three 1-credit electives in summer session)

Students taking J term course credits must adhere to the following guidelines:

No more than 2 credits in a 2-week period of time (in other words students may not take more than one 2-credit elective in j term session)

If an exceptional circumstance warrants credits above these limits, please talk with your adviser.

Grading

Syllabi describe the requirements and grading procedures associated with that course. Please discuss with the instructor and/or your adviser if you have questions. Generally, classes are graded A, B, C and F, but some classes are Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory. It is important to note that University policy is that graduate students maintain at least a B average as found [here](#). The Program adheres to the University’s policy on grading systems as found here: <https://www.uwrf.edu/Registrar/Grades.cfm>

Group Assignments

Learning in the Counseling Program is based upon group work. Group work provides necessary skill practice for your future role as a school counselor. When engaging in group work keep these expectations in mind:

- Each group member is responsible to the entire group. Any issues should be addressed early and within the group first. If issues cannot be resolved, then faculty should be informed.
- Group members are expected to reflect on their group participation throughout the group process.
- Group members are expected to participate equally in the project preparation AND presentation in order to receive the same grade.
 - NOTE: for COUN 732 active participation and facilitation in all group activities is a requirement.
- Group members may only miss presentations under exceptional circumstances. If exceptional circumstances occur, it is that group member's responsibility to make sure the group presenters cover their material seamlessly.
- If a group member is absent from a presentation, the instructor will note the circumstances and discuss with program faculty. Should a pattern of absences emerge, consequences could include a meeting with the course instructor, an individual reduction of your assignment grade, and/or working with your adviser to form a student improvement plan.
- Grading is the responsibility of the faculty; however, student input may be required as part of the grading process.

Core & Required Course Descriptions

COUN 610: Introduction to School Counseling (3 credits)

This course is designed to familiarize students with an overview of the field of school counseling and basic skills. (F, Sp)

COUN 612: Lifespan Human Development (3 credits)

This course provides an overview of developmental theories as they apply to a K-12 setting. Prerequisites: COUN 610 is a pre- or co-requisite. (Sp)

COUN 615: Cultural & Ethical Foundations of Counseling (3 credits)

This course will explore multicultural and social justice counseling competencies and professional ethics for school counselors. Prerequisite: COUN 610. (Sp)

COUN 620: Career Counseling (3 credits)

This course introduces students to a variety of career counseling theories and practices appropriate for use in K-12 comprehensive Counseling Programs. Prerequisite: COUN 610. (F)

SPSY 622: School Behavior Assessment & Intervention (3 credits)

This course covers knowledge and skills needed by school-based mental health professionals for making data-based decisions about student behavior. Common school-based assessment techniques used for making classification and intervention decisions are emphasized. Evidence-informed intervention practices are introduced. Prerequisite: 610 (Sp, Su)

COUN 732: Group Counseling (3 credits)

This course focuses on the study of techniques and theories of group counseling through supervised experience in small groups. The purpose is two-fold: (1) to acquaint the student with the theories and techniques of the major approaches to group counseling through didactic presentation and (2) to integrate content with practical application via student involvement in various types of group experiences. This course is designed to facilitate experiential learning. Prerequisite: 610 (Sp)

COUN 753: Counseling Theory and Skills (3 credits)

This course will present the basic theories of counseling. The intent of the course is to provide Counseling students with a basic understanding of the major theories of counseling as well as specific skills for interviewing and counseling. Students will practice counseling skills in a clinical setting. Prerequisite: COUN 610. (F)

COUN 770: Comprehensive Counseling Programming (3 credits)

Students engage in the process of developing a comprehensive Counseling Program, based on the ASCA National Model. Prerequisites: COUN 610. (F)

SPSY 795: Research & Program Evaluation (3 credits)

This course emphasizes applied research for school-based mental health professionals. Students will learn the skills needed to conduct a program evaluation in a school setting. Knowledge and skills developed include topic development, goal setting, data collection, data analysis, and dissemination of results. Both quantitative and qualitative methods are covered. Students will complete an applied program evaluation after completing the course. (F, Su)

COUN 798: Independent Study (2 credits)

This course requires enrollment in the semester directly following SPSY 795. You will be working with other students and faculty to complete a program evaluation project with a local school.

SPED 530: Exceptional Child (3 credits)

This is a survey course examining the general aspects of the exceptional child. Emphasis centers on the historical, philosophical and social background leading to legislative provisions for individuals with disabilities; definitions and eligibility criteria of each area of disability to include referral procedures in terms of when, how and where; models for delivery of services; multidisciplinary staffing procedures; individualized education programs; due process; characteristics of various exceptionalities including gifted and talented and attention-deficit disorders; and examples of accommodative techniques in the classroom. The impact of the diversity of issues posed by the environment and people surrounding persons with disabilities is a major focus. Attention is also directed toward working with parents and community agencies. Identification of high-risk students within each area of exceptionality is examined. Current issues and trends and other controversies are examined briefly. Field experience, which can be part of the human relations component for education majors only, is a requirement of the course. (F, Sp, Su based on enrollment; sometimes online)

Field Placements

COUN 614: Counseling Practicum (4 credits)

A 100-hour practicum experience will require students to work with clients, under the supervision of program faculty and licensed counselors, to practice individual and group counseling skills. Audio/video tapes, live supervision, and written transcripts may be required to facilitate supervision. Prerequisites: COUN 610. (F, Sp)

This field placement occurs during your 2nd or 3rd semester within the program, so it is strongly advised that you begin arranging your schedule for this experience upon entry to the program. You will need approximately 4 hours per week in an approved school setting, plus the weekly seminar, which starts at 4:00pm. More information is provided to you at the mandatory Pre-Practicum meeting during the semester before you plan to enroll in the course. At this time, you will receive the list of Approved Sites for the Practicum Experience. ***Please do not contact any sites until you have attended this meeting.***

Within the extent and limitations of Sections 895.46(l) and 893.82, WI Statutes, the State will pay judgments for damages and costs against its officers, employees and agents arising out of their activities while within the scope of their assigned responsibility in the program at the facility. Participation in field placements is at your own risk. UWRF does not provide health insurance compensation or workman's compensation coverage.

Students entering practicum and internship will be required to show proof of supplemental liability insurance. Joining ASCA is one option for this, and others can be discussed with your adviser.

Site supervisors for both Practicum and Internship will receive 5 CEUs per student supervised per semester. They must be the supervisor of record on the site agreement form.

COUN 771-772-773: Internship (4 credits each)

The internship is the culminating experience of the graduate counseling program. Students select school settings in which to obtain practical training. This fieldwork is combined with group seminars providing additional supervision and group discussions of topics relevant to the professional practice of counseling. Prerequisites: COUN 610, 612, 614, 615, 620, 732, 753, 770, SPSY 622 & 795, SPED 530, COUN 798; or consent of instructor. (F, Sp)

Only after all core counseling courses have been completed, and the student has successfully passed the comprehensive exam, can he or she begin Internship. A minimum of 600 clock hours in the schools must be completed; students do this in various combinations including all 600 hours in one semester or dividing the experience over several semesters. Every student must complete 200 clock hours at each grade level (i.e., elementary, middle, and high school). During Internship,

students are expected to participate in all of the roles of a professional school counselor, including individual, small and large group counseling, as well as other components of comprehensive school counseling models.

Students secure their own internship sites, with strong support from the program and internship coordinator. This process starts the semester before you plan to complete internship. Announcements and deadlines are sent out to the program [listserv](#), and a mandatory pre-internship meeting is held early each semester to outline specific policies and procedures. *Do not contact anyone to serve as your internship supervisor until you have attended this meeting.* Sites must be within a 2-hour radius of River Falls or be approved by Program Faculty. UWRF may require an additional background check. Please note that some school districts may require additional background checks at your own expense.

Within the extent and limitations of Sections 895.46(l) and 893.82, WI Statutes, the State will pay judgments for damages and costs against its officers, employees and agents arising out of their activities while within the scope of their assigned responsibility in the program at the facility. Participation in field placements is at your own risk. UWRF does not provide health insurance compensation or workman's compensation coverage.

Students entering practicum and internship will be required to show proof of supplemental liability insurance. Joining ASCA is one option for this, and others can be discussed with your adviser.

Site supervisors, for either Practicum or Internship, will receive 5 CEUs per student supervised per semester. They must be the supervisor of record on the site agreement form.

Electives & Descriptions

Students will work with their adviser to choose electives to reach the 60-credit total program requirement. Electives are current topics in school counseling, supplement the core curriculum, and are taught by practitioners in the field.

COUN 700, 701, 702, 717, 718, and 719 (2 credits each) may be offered and reflect the past "elective tracks" system. Topics include substance use prevention and response in the schools or higher education administration. (Su, J-term)

COUN 789: Special Topics in Counseling (1 or 2 credits each)

Courses under this catalog number vary and *may* include Solution Focused Counseling- Advanced Skills, Technology, PBIS, Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), Advanced Ethical Issues, and other current topics related to school counseling.

Prerequisite: COUN 610 (Su, J-term)

Comprehensive Examination

Students are required to take and pass a comprehensive exam after all core courses have been satisfactorily completed and prior to enrolling in Internship. The exam takes place primarily at the end of both fall and spring semesters. Information regarding the exam is sent to students via the [listserv](#) well in advance of the exam date. Students must sign up to be admitted to the exam. Successful completion requires a demonstration of comprehensive knowledge and application of core course content. Format is consistent with all Counseling course exams (see below).

A passing score for each question is required for successful completion of the exam. Should a student fail one question, they will be given an opportunity to retake part of the comprehensive examination, answering a different question. Should a student fail the retake or both parts of the initial exam, the student must wait until the next comprehensive examination offering to retake the entire exam.

Course and Comprehensive Exam Policy:

The following is permitted during counseling course exams and comprehensive examinations:

- When indicated, any type of resource (e.g., hard copies, jump drives, internet, Googledocs) may be used, with the acknowledgement of the academic honesty policy. Please avoid questionable behaviors through document sharing sites. You may not work with peers/others to complete any exam.
- Students may use personal devices to complete the exam; UWRF computer labs are also permitted and may be required.
- No copy of the exam or exam response may be stored with the student.
- Additional accommodations will be made based on documentation from the UWRF Disability Resource Center.

SECTION VII: OTHER STUDENT SUPPORTS

School Counseling Student Association (SCSA)

Upon acceptance into the Counseling Program, students automatically become members of the student group. The SCSA is a free, student-led organization with a faculty adviser. Each year, the SCSA sponsors events such as the fall and spring Welcome Back Socials, the National School Counseling Week speaker events, and some funding for students to attend conferences. The SCSA Treasurer applies for funding each year to support these activities. Involvement and leadership are strongly encouraged. The group would not exist without its members taking initiative and getting involved. It's also a great resume addition, so volunteer to help plan an event, serve as Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, for one of the committees, or as President of the Association.

Discrimination & Harassment

The University of Wisconsin-River Falls strives to maintain our campus as a place of work and study for faculty, staff, and students that is free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and harassment. If you have concerns about such behavior, contact your instructor, the Program Director, the Department Chair, or the [Dean of Students Office](#).

For a quick list of links to student supports, go to this website: [Students | University of Wisconsin - River Falls \(uwrf.edu\)](#)

Special Accommodations

The University of Wisconsin-River Falls welcomes students with disabilities into its educational programs, activities, residential halls, and everything else it offers. Those who will need academic adjustments or accommodations for a disability should contact the Ability Services Office. Decisions to allow adjustments and accommodations are made by the [Disability Resources Center](#) on the basis of clinical documentation that students provide to sufficiently indicate the nature of their situation.

WEB 235 is intended for use by faculty, staff, and students as a lactation room, a meditation room, or a small meeting room. The room is identified by a small sign that says, "Personal Consideration & Meeting Room." Instructions are provided for reserving the room. A door sign that says, "occupied" is provided, and the room can be locked for privacy.

Counseling Services

Counseling Services are available to currently enrolled UWRF students. Services are confidential, free, and provided by professional staff not affiliated with the Counseling Program. On-campus counselors located in 254 Rodli Hall provide individual counseling. Students may call or stop in to schedule an appointment. If you find that personal problems, career indecision, study and time management difficulties, etc. are adversely affecting your successful progress at UWRF please contact the Counseling Services at 254 Rodli Hall. For more information, visit the Counseling Services website at <https://students.uwrf.edu/student-health-counseling/counseling-services> or <https://www.uwrf.edu/student-life/falcons-care>.

The Counseling Program Faculty and Staff do not serve as counselors in this office, nor do Counseling Program students conduct field placement activities in these offices.

Student Health Services

Certain clinical health services are provided through Student Health Services for registered full-time and part-time UWRF students through contractual agreements with local healthcare facilities. For more information, visit <https://students.uwrf.edu/student-health-counseling/counseling-services> or <https://www.uwrf.edu/student-life/falcons-care>.

Career Services

UWRF provides students and alumni with free career services. In their office, students are able to perform online job searches, speak with career counselors, get help writing/editing resumes and cover letters and speak with prospective employers at career fairs and mock interviews. For more information, please visit the Career Services website at <http://www.uwrf.edu/CareerServices>.

Writing Centers

The UWRF Online Writing Lab ([OWL](#)) is a virtual space where students may receive friendly, competent assistance to help them improve as writers. The OWL provides assistance during any stage of the writing process and provides interactive feedback to its clients through synchronous and asynchronous tutoring sessions. The UWRF OWL (Online Writing Lab) offers

a variety of online reference materials for students. The Department of English also offers writing assistance in the [University Writing Center](#).

Division of Technology Services (DoTS)

The Division of Technology Services (DoTS) at UWRF provides support, training, and updates, including changing hardware and software, to ensure that students and faculty have access to learning based information systems. DoTS should be contacted when you encounter trouble accessing UWRF email, Canvas, or eSIS. Information about DoTS and their services can be found on their [web page](#).

Police/Security

The mission of the University Police Department is to protect and serve the university community, visitors, and campus property. For more information see their website at <http://www.uwrf.edu/Police/>. You may also call 715-425-3133 for assistance, or 911 in an emergency.

The UWRF Police Department is located at **103 Regional Development Institute, 410 S. 3rd Street, River Falls, WI 54022**
Email them at police@uwrf.edu

Graduate Studies

Graduate Studies is responsible for setting university policies regarding graduate education including the admissions process, financial aid, and graduation requirements. You can find more information at: <http://www.uwrf.edu/GraduateStudies/Index.cfm>.

Textbooks

A list of required texts is emailed to the [listserv](#) before each semester. Instructors will send out course information at least one week ahead of the first night of class, including required texts. Students can choose where to obtain their text copies. Find estimated costs and purchasing options here: <https://www.uwrf.edu/CSP/Counseling/CounselingTextbookCosts.cfm>

Inclement Weather Policy

If the University is closed, then counseling and school psychology classes will also be cancelled. If the University remains open, the CSP Department will determine the status of evening classes by 1:00pm that day. Please check email and the Canvas site to see if classes will be held, or if an alternate method of class (such as online) will be required. In either case, we trust students will make the best decision for themselves regarding travel and class attendance.

SECTION VIII: SCHOOL COUNSELOR LICENSING

Praxis

The Praxis exam (*Professional School Counselor*) is a requirement for licensing in many states. Although not currently required in Wisconsin or Minnesota, it is strongly encouraged that students successfully complete the Praxis exam (*Professional School Counselor-Test Code 0421 or 5421*) to increase portability of your degree and ease of licensure in other states. It is recommended that you speak with your adviser about planning for the test. To learn more about the exam visit the website [Current Counseling Students | University of Wisconsin - River Falls](#)

*Use code **1918-UNIV WI-RIVER FALLS-EDUCATION** when selecting your institution so we can track your score.*

State Requirements

The Counseling Program at UWRF prepares students for licensure in Wisconsin and Minnesota, though other states may have different requirements. Please refer to the following website for more detailed information: <http://www.uwrf.edu/CEPS/EPP/Licensing.cfm>. Upon acceptance into the program, you should consult the state licensing department in the state in which you plan to work and confirm that the UWRF program meets their requirements. Additionally, you may visit the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction licensing website at <http://dpi.wi.gov/tepd/licensing>.

Applying for a State Educator's License

In the final semester of your Counseling Program, you can begin to apply for school counseling positions. Find the process for College endorsement of your state license application here: <https://www.uwrf.edu/CEPS/EPP/Licensing.cfm>

SECTION IX: PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING ORGANIZATIONS

Membership in a professional organization provides support in the forms of social networking, best practices, professional development, and leadership opportunities. It is encouraged that students join at least one school counseling professional organization while in the program. Here are a few options, although there are many more:

National

American School Counseling Association (ASCA): www.schoolcounselor.org

State

Wisconsin School Counselor Association (WSCA): www.wscaweb.org

Minnesota School Counselors Association (MSCA): www.mnschoolcounselors.org

SECTION X: ADDITIONAL ITEMS

Social Media & Technology

School counselors must remain current and responsible with technology as it enhances student learning, including social media. This means maintaining knowledge and awareness of policies, new tools, trends, and software. We advise you to participate in social media cautiously. Anything posted to a social media site is public and permanent and represents you personally AND professionally. When you engage via social media, avoid doing anything that will discredit yourself, the UWRF Counseling Program, or the profession of School Counseling. Please choose carefully what messages and pictures you post, as well as what your friends post on your behalf. Inappropriate photos or comments could cost you a job. We advise that you do not connect online with K-12 students from your practicum or internship sites. More information can be found in [UWRF's Social Media Policy](#).

Photography

Photographs may be taken during Program activities such as class, orientations, National School Counseling Week, and at conferences. These will be shared with Program stakeholders through social media sites and on our webpage, among other places.

Use of Student Work

The faculty of the program will access and utilize student lab videos completed in classes such as COUN 610, COUN 732, or COUN 753 as teaching methods for skill-based classes within the program.

Artificial intelligence (AI)

AI models are rapidly evolving and becoming commonplace in all facets of life. The policy below is current as of the writing of this handbook, but may change upon program review. Please consult your instructor for class-specific policies on the use of AI.

ChatGPT, and online assignment help tools, such as Chegg®, are examples of online learning support platforms that, in general, cannot be used for course assignments or exams. The assignments in this course are designed to help you develop writing, analytical, and/or critical thinking skills.

For example, the following are prohibited in our courses and exams:

- Submitting all or any part of an assignment, quiz, or exam to an online learning support platform. (e.g., submitting a test question to an online learning platform and requesting that input be provided by users).
- Incorporating any part of an AI-generated response in an assignment.
- Using AI to brainstorm, formulate arguments, or template ideas for assignments.
- Using AI to summarize or contextualize source materials.
- Submitting your own work for this class to an online learning support platform for iteration or improvement.

Any assignment content composed by any resource other than you, regardless of whether that resource is human or digital, must be attributed to that source through proper citation. If you doubt whether you are using an online learning support platform appropriately, I encourage you to discuss your situation with your instructor or adviser. This technology is new, and we are all in the process of learning appropriate boundaries related to its use.

Unattributed use of online learning support platforms, like Chegg, and unauthorized sharing of instructional materials are forms of academic dishonesty and may result in an initiation of the [Academic Misconduct process through the Dean of Students Office](#).

Readmission/Re-Entry to the Program

If you choose to suspend coursework for a semester or more, you may need to apply for re-entry. More information can be found at the Registrar's Office here: [Policies and Procedures | University of Wisconsin River Falls \(uwrf.edu\)](#)

Non-Candidate for Degree (NCD)

Individuals taking courses under the provisional or pending admission status may enroll under the following conditions:

1. Not more than one three-credit course may be taken per semester.
2. Not more than nine credits may be taken pending an admission decision. Credits taken beyond the allowed nine will not be counted toward a degree when you are admitted to regular status.
3. NCD credits do not guarantee acceptance into the Counseling Program. Credits taken are not a factor in the admission process but may be used toward a degree in counseling at UWRF if you gain regular admission to the Counseling Program.
4. Only the following courses may be taken prior to regular admission:
 - a. COUN 610: Introduction to School Counseling
 - b. SPED 530: Exceptional Child

Contact the program director for guidance before registering for any class.

Student Grievance Policy

If a student wishes to make a complaint, they should first discuss the matter directly with the instructor/supervisor. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved at this level, the complainant should then discuss the matter with the Program Director. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved by the Program Director, the complainant should then make a written complaint to the Department Chair and then the Dean of the College, including a clear statement of the problem and arguments or evidence to support the complaint. The Dean will discuss the matter with the complainant and Program Director and will attempt to resolve the matter and render a decision. A final complaint in written form may be made to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs. The complainant may be accompanied by another member of the university community at any stage of the complaint process.

Students are encouraged to become familiar with the [University Student Handbook](#), too, which contains information about grade and suspension appeals processes.

Academic Honesty

The application of the [UWRF Academic Conduct Policy](#) will be fully adhered to in this program.

Program Accountability- Data-Informed Practice

The Counseling Program collects data through various surveys each year. This data is used to make programming decisions to enhance school counselor training. The data is discussed by program faculty and will only be shared in anonymous aggregate form outside of the program. The surveys are as follows:

- Exit Survey- this survey goes to all graduates immediately after graduation and surveys perceptions about, strengths of, and areas for growth in the Counseling Program.
- Hiring/Employment Survey- this survey asks immediate past academic year graduates of the program about their employment status as school counselors. It is conducted every October.
- Employer Survey- this survey gathers data from employers of our graduates using the Program Learning Objectives to form the survey questions. It goes out every October about the past academic years' employed school counselors.
- Site Supervisor Survey- this survey goes out every year in October to all previous academic year Internship site supervisors to assess intern performance around the Program Learning Objectives.

Comprehensive Student Evaluation

The Counseling Program is charged with the dual task of nurturing the development of counselor-in-training and ensuring quality client care. To fulfill these dual responsibilities faculty must evaluate students based on their academic, professional, and personal qualities. A student's progress in the program may be interrupted for failure to comply with academic standards or if a student's interpersonal or emotional status interferes with being able to provide ethical services to clients. For example, to ensure proper training and client care, a counselor-in-training must abide by relevant ethical codes and

demonstrate professional knowledge, technical and interpersonal skills, professional attitudes, and professional character. These factors are evaluated based on one's academic performance and one's ability to convey warmth, genuineness, respect, and empathy in interactions with clients, classmates, staff, and faculty. Students should demonstrate the ability to accept and integrate feedback, be aware of their impact on others, and accept personal responsibility, and be able to express feelings effectively and appropriately. These expectations will be assessed through each class. (See the Expectations section of the Handbook)

Policy for Student Retention, Remediation, and Dismissal from the Program

The University requires graduate students to maintain a B-average across courses. Find out about the Academic Suspension and Probation Policy here:

<https://www.uwrf.edu/Registrar/CurrentStudents/AcademicPoliciesandRecords/SuspensionProbation.cfm>

Counseling Program faculty members strive to support student success and retention. Specific tools we use to support students include:

- Advising and availability of faculty
- Frequent communication through classes, email, and phone calls
- Weekly discussion and collaboration between instructors about student progress
- Addressing student performance concerns immediately and with clear expectations
- Linking with campus support offices
- Utilizing assessments as outlined below

Student Assessment Plan

The Counseling Program at UW-River Falls trains students to be school counselors based on state and national standards, and evaluates student knowledge, skills, and demeanor for entry into the profession. Once admitted to the program, the following assessments are used to evaluate student progress:

- 1) Coursework and exams (see course syllabi)
- 2) Mid-semester Evaluation: The mid-semester evaluation occurs each semester and provides a snapshot of the student's overall performance across all enrolled classes at that moment.
- 3) Comprehensive Evaluation Tool: Rating Scale: More information below.
- 4) Comprehensive Examination (see Handbook description)
- 5) Practicum and Internship site and university supervisor evaluations (see related Handbooks)
- 6) Praxis Examination (optional- see Handbook description)

Comprehensive Evaluation Tool: Rating Scale (see Website for Forms)

During Practicum or as needed based on other assessments above, a rating scale is utilized to evaluate each student's comprehensive program performance and is kept in the student's file. A meeting is scheduled with the student's adviser to review performance in the program. The outcome of this meeting could include:

- No action is required. (score 3 or higher)
- Discussion of ways to improve specific areas of performance. (score of 2)
- Develop a written plan for improved student performance. (i.e., Student Improvement Plan; score of 1-2)

In addition to the scaled evaluation of the student, additional information may be utilized from informal sources, which may include observations of students or reports from other interested parties.

Areas for Concern

Potential issues that may warrant a Student Improvement Plan or dismissal from the program include, but are not limited to, the following student behaviors:

- **Problematic professional demeanor** (i.e., not treating others with respect, responsiveness to feedback, lack of interpersonal skills)
- **Problematic professional skills** (i.e., related to cultural competence, collaboration with others, professional appearance, meeting deadlines, etc.)
- **Impairment** (i.e., physical, mental, or emotional problems that put clients at risk or prevent a student from performing their responsibilities at an acceptable level.)
- **Knowledge and academic skills** (i.e., lack knowledge of content, writing ability, participating in class, etc.)
- **Ethical violations.** Counselors have a responsibility to read, understand, and follow the *ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors* and adhere to applicable laws and regulations.

Student Improvement Plan

The purpose of a Student Improvement Plan is to provide counseling students the opportunity and support needed to resolve academic performance or demeanor issues that fall below expectations. While each case is different and requires individual assessment, the following factors may indicate that the problem may represent a more serious impairment rather than a problematic behavior that is easier to remediate:

- The student does not acknowledge, understand, or address the problematic issue when it is identified.
- The problematic issue is not merely a reflection of a skill deficit that can be rectified by training.
- The problematic issue is not restricted to one area of professional functioning.
- The problematic issue has the potential for ethical or legal ramifications if not addressed.
- A disproportionate amount of attention by training personnel is required.
- The problematic behavior does not change as a function of feedback.
- The problematic behavior negatively affects the public image of the agency, university, or training site.

Student Improvement Plan Process

Should a Student Improvement Plan be needed, the faculty will meet with the student to review the concerns and create a written plan for improvement. Students will be encouraged to submit their own ideas for improvement, but examples of actions that may be included (but not limited to) in the improvement plan include taking additional coursework, a decrease in course load per semester, a temporary suspension of practicum or internship, increased supervision and/or faculty advisement, leave of absence, and individual counseling.

The plan must include scheduled review dates and target dates for each issue identified. Progress must be reviewed at least once every semester for the Fall and Spring semesters, and additional reviews may be scheduled as necessary. After each review, a copy of the Student Improvement Plan, including student and faculty signatures, must be completed and filed in the student's program file. A copy is given to the student.

If progress toward improvement is viewed by faculty as insufficient, they may recommend either a change in the improvement plan or dismissal from the program. A recommendation of dismissal will then go to the full program faculty for review, and to the Dean for approval. The student will have an opportunity for appeal, as outlined in the University's Student's Rights and Responsibilities and Program Student Handbook.



**UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
RIVER FALLS**

COUNSELING PROGRAM

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT AND UNDERSTANDING OF STUDENT HANDBOOK

Please sign, date, and return this form to your COUN 610 instructor upon your first night of class or to your adviser.

I have read and I understand the contents of the **2025-2026** UWRF School Counseling Graduate Program Student Handbook. I also acknowledge that while student information is kept confidential, the Faculty and Staff associated with the Counseling & School Psychology Department may communicate with each other about student progress and work together to monitor and assist students during their time in the program.

Student's Signature

Date

Student's Printed Name