



UNIVERSITY of  
Western States



# Clinical Mental Health Counseling Admissions Webinar

**MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling**

**January 2025**

# Schedule for Today's Webinar

- UWS Overview
- CMHC program director
- Why UWS?
- Standardized Patient Program
- Online structure, learning and resources
- License eligibility
- Program and curriculum overview
- Practicum, internship and culminating experience overview
- Entry requirements, financial aid and next steps!



# University of Western States

- **1904:** UWS founded as the second oldest chiropractic college.
- **1986:** Regionally accredited by the **Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)**, a member of the **Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)**.
- **2010:** Evolved into a leading institution within the field of health and wellness education.
- **2018:** Launch of MS

## **Other graduate degree programs include:**

- Doctor of Chiropractic
- Doctor of Clinical Nutrition
- Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine
- MS Human Nutrition and Functional Medicine
- MS Sports Medicine
- MS/EdD Sport and Performance Psychology (CMHC specialization available)



# Program Director – Dr. Amy O'Hana



- PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision from Oregon State University
  - 23 years experience as a professional counselor; 21 years experience as a university professor and clinical supervisor
  - Published author
  - Specializes in mental health issues impacting performance populations
- Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in Oregon and Nationally Approved Clinical Supervisor (ACS)



# UWS Programs and Certification

- **MS Clinical Mental Health Counseling**

- Prepares students for counseling licensure.
- Ideal for careers in mental health treatment.



- **EdD in Sport and Performance, Clinical Mental Health Counseling Specialization**

- Prepares students to sit for Certified Mental Performance Consultant exam and counselor licensure.
- Ideal for applicants looking to expand their income streams to include consulting and clinical work.

# UWS Programs and Certification

- **Certification in Rehabilitation Counseling (beginning Sp25)**
  - Prepares students to sit for the CRC, or Certified Rehabilitation Counselor Examination
  - Certification requires a conferred Master's degree and state license
  - Curriculum is 30 credits which aligns with the UWS MS-CMHC curriculum (20 credits)
  - Not currently eligible for federal financial aid

Course #	Course Name	Credits	Term Offered	Term Planned or Completed
COUN6101	Ethics and Professional Identity <b>(must be taken in first term)</b>	4	All	
COUN6801	Medical and Psychosocial Aspects of Disabilities	4	FA	
COUN6110	Personality and Counseling Theories	4	WI/SU	
COUN6832	Case Management and Community Partnerships	4	WI	
COUN6705	Assistive Technology Supporting Mental Health Counseling	2	WI	
COUN6715	Tests and Assessments	4	FA/SP	
COUN6135	Career Counseling	4	WI/SU	
COUN6120	Research Methods and Program Evaluation	4	FA/WI/SU	
Certificate Total		30		



# Why Choose UWS?



- Focus on holistic wellness
- Innovative CMHC **Standardized Patient Program**
- Preparation for state licensure, including required academic courses, clinical hours and preparation for:
  - National Counselor Exam (NCE)
  - National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Exam (NCMHCE)
- *No GRE requirement*
- *No out-of-state tuition*
- *No master's dissertation requirement*
- *Flexible enrollment*

# Overview of the MS-CMHC degree

- **Credit hours:** 90 quarter credits (60 semester)
- **Format:** online
- **Length:** 8-12 quarters (and up to 5 years)
- **Entry terms:** April and October
- **Open to:** US citizen and permanent residents





# Mental Health Standardized Patients

- Professional standardized patients with improvisation skills.
- Carefully trained to portray actual counseling clients.
- The use of Standardized Patients (SP) allows student to:
  - Better understand the structure and flow of a typical counseling session
  - Practice counseling skills in a safe environment
  - Complete a new patient intake and conduct subsequent follow-up sessions for the same case over several weeks
  - Develop interpersonal and communication abilities while building rapport with a client
- Skillsetter (another SP platform) also used in multiple courses
- Unique teaching methodology

# UWS Program Structure

- **Quarter System:** Four quarters per year, 11-week quarters
- **Time commitment:** Each 4-credit course = approximately 12 hours of work/week + 15 hours per week for clinical field experience (last 5 quarters of the program)
- Asynchronous learning environment with required face-to-face work for clinical field experience
- Weekly, engaging application-based discussion forums
- Readings, papers, and creative projects
- Asynchronous classes vs. synchronous supervision



# Becoming a Licensed Counselor

## Licensed Counselors:



- Have completed rigorous education and training to pass qualifying exams
- Are trained to **assess, diagnose and treat** mental health disorders
- Are passionate about helping people build coping skills, live with and overcome psychological and behavioral disorders, and lead healthier lives.
- Do not prescribe medication.
- Are not psychologists, social workers, marriage and family therapists, or psychiatrists.

## Every state has different licensing requirements

- Course assignments ask you to locate and review these requirements
- Check your state's government regulations website for more information!



# MS Clinical Mental Health Counseling Curriculum

- Students can take up to 5 years as needed
- **Local community practice:**
  - CMHC Practicum (one term) and Internship (four terms/one year) located in your community (10-15 hours per week synchronous)
- **Core courses include content on:**
  - Ethics, personality theory, counseling methods, psychopathology, human growth and development, psychopharmacology, multiculturalism, career, group, addictions, trauma-informed treatment, and much more
  - Three electives (such as eating disorder treatment, human sexuality counseling, case conceptualization, rehabilitation counseling, etc.)





## Curriculum Sequence – MS-CMHC

Course #	Course Name	Credits	Grade
COUN6220	Counseling Methods and Practices	4	G
COUN6101	Ethics and Professional Identity	4	G
COUN6145	Psychopathology and Appraisal	4	G
COUN6010	Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling	4	G
COUN6110	Personality and Counseling Theories	4	G
COUN6130	Group Counseling	4	G
COUN6715	Tests and Assessments	4	G
COUN6115	Human Growth and Development	4	G
COUN6540	Pre-Practicum	4	G
COUN6135	Career Counseling	4	G
COUN6150	Multicultural Counseling and Advocacy	4	G
COUN6555	Clinical Counseling Practicum <i>Pre-reqs: COUN6101, COUN6220, COUN6540</i>	4	P/NP
COUN6235	Psychopharmacology	4	G
	Approved Elective 1 (see table below)	4	G
	Approved Elective 2 (see table below)	4	G
COUN6120	Research Methods and Program Evaluation	4	G
COUN6140	Addiction Counseling	4	G
	Approved Elective 3 (see table below)	4	G
COUN6575	Clinical Internship (4 credits/term for 4 terms) <i>Pre-req: COUN6555</i>	4 (16 total required)	P/NP
COUN6845	Capstone-CMHC	2	G
Curriculum Total		90	





## Electives

Course #	Course Name	Credits	Grade
COUN6020	Eating Disorder Treatment	4	G
COUN6085	Business Basics for Clinicians and Consultants	4	G
COUN6106	Play Therapy	4	G
COUN6425	Ethical Use of Telehealth Platforms (Must be taken with COUN6705)	2	G
COUN6565	Trauma-Informed Treatment	4	G

Course #	Course Name	Credits	Grade
COUN6570	Case Conceptualization and Treatment Planning	4	G
COUN6611	Human Sexuality Counseling	4	G
COUN6705	Assistive Technology Supporting Mental Health Treatment (Must be taken with COUN6425)	2	G
SPP6210	Psychology of Performance Excellence	4	G
SPP6550	Sport Psychology	4	G
SPP6650	Psychology of Performing Arts	4	G
SPP6653	Performance Psychology in High-Risk Occupations	4	G





# How Do I Find a Practicum/Internship?

- Course assignments help start the search process
- Instructor feedback to hone application and interview skills
- CMHC faculty field coordinator-led site placement process
- Direct contact with mental health agencies in your community
- Join professional associations for networking
  - American Counseling Association
  - Regional and state counseling organizations





# MS Field Requirements

- **Practicum**

- One term
- 10 - 15 hours per week at a clinical site in your community
- Synchronous supervision (90 minutes per week)
- Client intakes, co-therapy, individual sessions with lower risk clients

- **Internship**

- Four terms (up to six as needed)
- 10-15 hours per week at clinical site
- Synchronous supervision (90 minutes per week)
- Assessment, case conceptualization, treatment planning
- Work with individuals, couples, families, and groups





# Admissions Requirements

- Schedule a phone advising appointment

Admissions advisor will help determine your eligibility for the program

- Official transcript from every institution attended

Transcripts from international universities required

- Submit a completed online application before the priority deadline

Priority and final deadlines posted at [uws.edu/apply/](https://uws.edu/apply/)

- Complete the entrance essay fully addressing the prompt

Each essay should be between 250-500 words

# Admissions Requirements

- Two formal letters of recommendation
  - Close professional recommenders and mentors encouraged, one must be academic in nature
  - See our tip sheet for best practices when requesting recommendations
- Personal interview with the Program Director
  - (Qualified applicants will be selected for this last step)
- Tuition deposit to guarantee your place in the cohort

\$300, applied to first quarter tuition required for all accepted students.
- Successfully pass a background check
  - University covers cost



# Financial Aid Resources

- Tuition is due on the first day of the quarter
  - Tuition is calculated by the credit hour
  - Payment plan available through the office of financial services
    - [businessoffice@uws.edu](mailto:businessoffice@uws.edu)
    - 503-847-2555
  - More information available at UWS.edu



- Financial aid is available for both degrees (MS-CMHC and EdD-SPP w/ CMHC Spec)
  - [finaid@uws.edu](mailto:finaid@uws.edu)
  - 503-847-2563
- Be enrolled in part time or full-time
- Remain in academic good standing (3.00 GPA)
  - Required for financial aid



# Next Steps

- Connect with our advisors to schedule an advising appointment
- Inquire about information via [www.uws.edu](http://www.uws.edu)
- We recommend applying at least six months in advance
  - Fall cohort begins in October
  - Spring cohort begins in April





# Questions?

- **Talk to an admissions advisor!**
  - Reach out to your assigned advisor, or contact [admissions@uws.edu](mailto:admissions@uws.edu) or 800-641-5641 to set up an appointment
- Review our website at [www.uws.edu](http://www.uws.edu) for answers to many common questions
- Financial Aid questions: [finaid@uws.edu](mailto:finaid@uws.edu) or 503-847-2563
- Start your application at [www.uws.edu/apply](http://www.uws.edu/apply)

MY APPLICATION      LOGOUT



CALENDAR

**Your Advisor**

Name of Advisor  
503-251-XXXX  
XXXXXX@uws.edu