



# MHC 591: Professional Career Development

Fall Semester, 2021

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| <b>Instructor:</b>         | Jeffrey Christensen, Ph.D., LPC                       |
| <b>Class Day and Time:</b> | Friday 1:00- 4:00pm (3 hour weekly; 15 contact hours) |
| <b>Dates of Clas:</b>      | 10/8; 10/15; 10/22; 10/29; 11/5                       |
| <b>Class Location:</b>     | York 116  |
| <b>Office Location:</b>    | Rogers 329  |
| <b>Office Hours:</b>       | By appointment  |
| <b>Phone:</b>              | 503-768-6071  |
| <b>Email (preferred):</b>  | jchristensen@lclark.edu                               |
| <b>Prerequisite:</b>       | MHC 580 and current enrollment in MHC 582 or 583      |
| <b>Credit:</b>             | 1 hour  |

## **Required Text**

None, recommended readings will be posted to Moodle

## **Additional Materials & Equipment Required**

Not Applicable

## **Course Description**

This course is designed to apply career development principles to the professional development of counselors in a variety of roles and settings. Administration, supervision, consultation and other career-related opportunities for professional mental health counselors will be explored.

## **Course Goals and Objectives (Also Refer to Cover Sheet)**

1. Students will be informed about graduation requirements and will resolve any remaining issues or questions related to completion of their degree.

2. Students will learn about various approaches to supervision and will have the opportunity to apply knowledge about supervision to their current settings.
3. Students will learn about administrative opportunities in the counseling profession.
4. Students will update their resumes and apply to at least one counseling job setting or doctoral program (if applicable).
5. Students will learn about the LPC licensing process and will have the opportunity to ask questions about licensing.
6. Students will learn about private practice.

### **CPSY Department Attendance Policy**

Class attendance is expected and required. Any missed class time will be made up by completing extra assignments designed by the instructor. Missing more than ten percent of class time may result in failure to complete the class. This would be 4.5 hours of a 45 hour class (3 credits), 3.0 hours for a 30 hour class (2 credits) or 1.5 hours for a 15 hour class (1 credit.) In case of extreme hardship and also at the discretion of the instructor, a grade of incomplete may be given for an assignment or the entire course. In such cases, the work to be submitted in order to remove the incomplete must be documented appropriately and stated deadlines met. Students are expected to be on time to class and tardiness may be seen as an absence that requires make-up work.

### **Disability Services Statement**

If you have a disability that may impact your academic performance, you may request accommodations by submitting documentation to the Student Support Services Office in the Albany Quadrangle (503-768-7192). After you have submitted documentation and filled out paperwork there for the current semester requesting accommodations, staff in that office will notify me of the accommodations for which you are eligible.

### **Assignments & Activities Scale**

#### **Discussion Board Prompts = 15 points each (Total 60 points)**

Each week 2-3 prompts will be posted to Moodle and you are expected to respond to each question and post it on the discussion board. Your responses to each prompt are expected to be brief (about 1 paragraph, but no more than 3). Readings related to the prompts will be posted on the Moodle page and may be helpful for your response. Your responses may be used to facilitate class discussion the following class, though your responses will remain anonymous.

#### **Expertise Paper = 20 points**

What's your niche? What's your specialty? Whether you plan to immediately go into private practice or work for a community agency, having a niche in the field of counseling can be extremely beneficial when it

comes to searching for a job or building up a clientele. The objective of this short paper is to describe, in detail, either an area of expertise in the counseling profession that you already have or one that you plan to work on developing. For example, have you been working with trauma survivors and have accrued substantial skills working with trauma and clients with post-traumatic stress disorder? If so, describe what makes this area your specialty and what you plan to do to continue to sharpen current skills and develop new ones? How would you present your expertise to a potential employer or how would you market yourself to potential clients?

This write up should be 1 – 2 pages maximum and is **due on Moodle no later than 5:00pm on 10/22/21**.

### **Career Portfolio = 20 points**

The purpose of this assignment is to both prepare you for a post-graduation job search and to get you thinking and planning for your longer-term professional goals. While this assignment has several components, all narrative portions are intended to be brief (1-2 paragraphs). Bullet points are also okay and APA format is not necessary.

All of the below items should be compiled into **one** document and are **due on Moodle no later than 5:00pm on 11/5/21**.

The assignment is made up of the following components:

- **Autobiographical Information**
  - Name, current job title, and company (if applicable)
  - Work experience. Share your relevant work experience that contributes to your skills as a counseling professional.
  - Other experience. Education, volunteer work, interests/hobbies, professional memberships, and any other experience that contributes to your skills as a counseling professional.
  - Aspirations. What do you aspire to do in your current and future work as a professional counselor?
  - Career goals. List a minimum of 2-3 short-term **and** long-term career goals.
- **Brainstorm & Career Exploration**
  - While you have identified your current short and long-term career goals, it is important to acknowledge that life, the universe, and everything thereafter can (and often will) change. You may come to a point in your life where you want to do something different. You may become burned out and need a break. You may get the “itch” to challenge yourself after finding your bearings as a professional counselor. The point of this exercise is to identify where and how your education, skills, interests, and passions can translate to a career outside of direct counseling services.
    - **Brainstorm.** Make a list of passion and interests. They do not need to be job related, income generating, or have anything to do with counseling. Don’t think too hard. Write down 8-10 items.
    - **Generate ideas.** Come up with ideas for 3-5 potential careers based on your list of interests.
    - **Job list.** Based on the two above activities, come up with the following:

- A **dream** job. A job where money is no object and anything is possible.
- A **realistic** job. Given the limitations of reality (e.g. loans, life circumstance, etc.) what is a *realistic* job for your right now? How is reality in the present limiting to your professional vision?
- An **alternative** job. What is another job you would consider if you left the counseling field?
- **Resume (and cover letter if applicable)**
  - Pair up with a classmate and share your current resumes with each other. If you have a recent cover letter, share that as well.
  - Take time to review each other's resume and cover letters in detail.
  - Use the resume rubric (posted under Additional Resources on the Moodle page) to give each other feedback. The purpose is to provide your colleagues with constructive feedback on the strengths and weaknesses on their resume (and cover letter if applicable).
  - **Include a final copy of your resume in your Career Portfolio.** Write a brief paragraph or two about what feedback you received from your colleague and what, if any, changes you made to your original document.

#### **Course grading scale**

94-100% = A

90-93% = A-

87-89% = B+

84-86% = B

80-83% = B-

77-79% = C+

74-76% = C

70-73% = C-

≤69% = F

#### **Course Outline**

**This outline is designed to be our schedule for the Fall semester. Based off class discussion, additional readings may be assigned. If there is a change needed, it will be discussed in class.**

| <b>DATE</b> | <b>TOPIC(S)</b>   | <b>ASSIGNMENT</b><br>(due day of class)                      |
|-------------|---|--|
| 10/8        | Introductions, Syllabus, Looking Back to Look Forward, Self-assessment                    | Discussion Board   |
| 10/15       | Graduation requirements, Job search, Resume review, Managing job offers, Career goals     | Discussion Board; Resume & Cover Letter for Career Portfolio |
| 10/22       | Surviving and thriving in Mental Health systems, Self-care and Burn-out, Advocacy         | Discussion Board; Expertise Paper                            |
| 10/29       | What to Expect After Graduation, Licensing, Certifications, Private Practice, Supervision | Discussion Board   |
| 11/5        | Wrapping up   | Career Portfolio   |