

CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

ANNUAL REPORT 21-22



**NORTH PARK
UNIVERSITY**
CHICAGO

CMHC ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

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Letter from the Director

Dear Alumni and Friends,

Greetings from Chicago and North Park University! The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Masters (formerly Counseling Psychology) Program at North Park University admitted its first students in 2014. I have served as the Director of the program since 2016 as part of the School of Professional Studies. As both an educator and practicing professional counselor I am proud to highlight our commitment to preparing excellent mental health counselors for lives of significance and service. The mission of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program embodies the vision of North Park University as an inclusive Christian, City-centered and Intercultural academic community. At this moment in our society the need for mental health services has expanded greatly due to the pandemic and continuing social and political challenges. The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program seeks to meet that need through a curriculum that prepares Masters students for licensure as Professional Mental Health Counselors. As part of that preparation and training students are encouraged to affirm and utilize the spiritual and culturally diverse traditions of all persons. Our richly diverse faculty and students educate each other through dialog and training in the skills needed to serve the mental health needs of a diverse society. Our alumni of over 100 graduates have gone back



into their respective communities with a mission to overcome the stigma once attached to mental health services and educate individuals about the benefits of mental health counseling. Graduates from North Park serve in a variety of contexts from private mental health practice to community-based organizations providing counseling for clients recovering from trauma, substance abuse and emotional distress. In order to further ensure the quality and integrity of our program the Clinical Mental Health faculty is now pursuing accreditation through the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). Through receiving CACREP

accreditation the North Park Clinical Mental Health Masters program will demonstrate its commitment to rigorous standards for faculty, curriculum, and clinical training. I am deeply honored to hold a leadership role in counselor education at this critical time in the development of mental health awareness and welcome you to learn more about the outstanding Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program here in the School of Professional Studies at North Park University in the great city of Chicago.

Sincerely,
Michael DeVries, Ph.D.

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Mission and Vision

CMHC Mission Statement

To provide students with the academic foundation and training in the field of mental health counseling enabling them to become competent professional counselors serving racially, ethnically and spiritually diverse populations.

CMHC Vision

To develop a CACREP accredited counselor education graduate program, educating and training professional mental health counselors capable of providing a variety of effective mental health services with respect for the spiritual, cultural, sexual and racial identity of the clients they serve.



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Core Faculty



Michael DeVries, Ph.D.

Dr. DeVries joined the North Park faculty in 2016 as Director of the Masters program in Counseling Psychology (now Clinical Mental Health Counseling). Dr. DeVries is a graduate of Duquesne University in Pittsburgh PA. In addition to serving as Director of the Clinical Mental Health Program Dr. DeVries teaches courses in Counseling Theory and Psychopathology. He also provides mental health counseling services at Olive Branch Counseling Associates in Tinley Park. Drawing upon almost forty years of counseling experience Dr. DeVries creates a dynamic classroom environment through case studies based in real clinical counseling situations. Dr. DeVries is dedicated to educating and training professional counselors who value diversity, respect the dignity of all persons, and affirm the importance of spirituality in human flourishing.



Ashley Mitich, Ed.D., LCPC

Dr. Mitich has a doctorate in Counselor Education and Supervision and a Master's degree in Marriage and Family Counseling. She is an Associate Professor and Director of Clinical Training. Dr. Mitich has been at NPU since 2019, and teaches Research Methods, Human Development, Assessment, and Human Sexuality. She also has a private practice in the southwest suburbs. Dr. Mitich enjoys being involved in the Association of Counselor Education and Supervision and is a past president of the North Central Association of Counselor Education and Supervision. Currently, she serves as a CACREP site team member and enjoys presenting at conferences around the world in order to network. When Dr. Mitich is not working she enjoys crafting and sports.



Martha Mason, Ed.D., LCPC

Dr. Martha Mason, Ed.D., LCPC joined North Park in the fall of 2020. She has been in the mental health field for over 20 years in both direct service as a counselor and administrator, and in higher education as faculty. Current research interests include how service-learning benefits students and the community, applications of experiential interventions, and phenomenological exploration of various populations. Dr. Mason serves on the faculty senate and currently teaches Practicum and Internship courses, Group Therapy, Child and Adolescent Counseling, Counseling Techniques, Appraisal, and Substance Abuse. She presents at conferences both nationally and internationally on topics of psychological application and counselor education. In her free time, Dr. Mason enjoys reading, being in nature, and all things Harry Potter, Marvel, and Star Wars. She also has two fabulous daughters who attend North Park University!

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Adjunct Faculty



Freddy Tung, PhD.

My name is Dr. Freddy Tung. I am currently the Director of Counseling at Governors State University and adjunct faculty at North Park University and Multnomah University, focusing on courses in psychology and counseling. I teach Group Dynamics in the CMHC program since January 2019.

I am a proud Chicagoan, growing up in the Lakeview neighborhood. I have been married for just over ten years to my much better half, Hannah, and have two boys and two girls, ranging in age from two months to seven years. We have a love of travel, with Paris being our favorite international destination. I am a passionate Cubs fan, followed by the Bears, and Bulls.



Dr. Elizabeth O. Pierre, L.P.C.

It has been a joy and privilege to teach such a rich, diverse group of students at the School of Professional Studies (SPS) for 7 ½ years. I have taught the following courses regularly: Integrating Spirituality and Religious Concerns in Counseling and Trauma and Healing. I am grateful to have received the Katherine Gleason Cook Award for Teaching Excellence in 2021.

Prior to joining the SPS, I obtained a master's in counseling psychology from Boston College and my doctoral degree in Pastoral Theology/Clinical Track from Garrett Theological Seminary. My research focuses on the relationship between trauma, race, faith, and culture and how these particular social factors impact recovery. I especially appreciate engaging my research with colleagues from different parts of world. I have traveled to South America and Africa to learn and to partner with colleagues and communities who are affected by trauma on multiple levels. My scholarly interests also include the role forgiveness plays in recovery. Finally, I am currently developing an outline for a book on singleness that will illustrate a more robust theological perspective on this relationship status and the significance of having healthy friendships that promote well-being. I also am licensed professional counselor (LPC) and meet with clients weekly at Thamani Counseling Services in Chicago. At Thamani clinicians can present and my last two presentations have been on the role of forgiveness in recovery and on faith, sex, and sexuality. This was another wonderful way to learn from my colleagues and expand my thinking about my research. For rest and fun, I love being with my family and friends, trying new restaurants, and walking for miles.

Featured Alumni



Abby Pfeiffer '20, LPC

For the first half of my professional life, I pursued a career in the marketing and communication field. However, my desire to become a mental health therapist far out-weighed staying in a high paying job with security and upward mobility. Being a mom of two young boys, when I embarked on my journey to become a counselor, I was looking for a program that wouldn't break the bank and was in close proximity to where I lived. North Park's MA program checked all the boxes. However, the experience the program provided went above and beyond my expectations. North Park provided a myriad opportunity to connect and collaborate with a diverse group of peers and professors. This enabled me to learn, observe, and practice many theoretical approaches. This has made me a more flexible clinician with the ability to meet the needs of a diverse clientele. Additionally, North Park allowed me to form and grow strong, lasting relationships with both peers and professors. All of which I still lean on today for support and guidance.

Today, I am working for a private practice in Chicago and have nearly 25 clients. I am over the moon excited to finally be working with clients and pursuing my dream career. My comfort level and success today is largely due to my experiences at North Park.



Chrissy Storey, '19, M.A., LPC

I am grateful for my experience at North Park University (NPU) in it's preparation for my work as a counselor. While at NPU I learned the foundations of the art and science of being a therapist. I learned from professors with varied theoretical orientations which allowed me to grow in my understanding and develop by own theoretical lens. My classes prepared me for the breadth of experiences I would have in my therapy office.

I am grateful for the program bringing in an alumni to share about her experience getting her license and preparing for the NCE. They also offered an official practice test simulation in a computer lab. Both of which helped me to confidently prepare and pass the NCE with a great score. I went on the earn my LPC several months after graduation and having been working at a group private practice since then. I am a staff therapist and work with a variety of clients in young to middle adulthood. I am on track to complete my hours and be able to apply for my clinical license at the end of the year.

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Alumni Survey

A survey of Alumni was conducted in 2020 in an effort to assess program objectives and improve the quality of the CMHC program. Fourteen alumni responded to the survey. Over 71% of Alumni responding to the survey are currently employed in providing mental health services.

Strongly Agree (4) Agree (3) Disagree (2) Strongly Disagree (1)

Prompt	Average Response
My program helped prepare me to work effectively with diverse populations.	3.3
My program helped prepare me to advocate for clients and understand how to influence policy to enhance the practice of clinical mental health counseling.	3.3
I experienced an inclusive and respectful learning environment.	3.4
My program helped prepare me to promote an inclusive and/or therapeutic environment.	3.4
My program helped me to develop a strong professional counselor identity/orientation.	3.2
My program prepared me to ensure clients succeed with their identified goals.	3.3
My program helped prepare me to manage legal, ethical, and professional development issues.	3.5
My program helped me demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and practices of culturally appropriate diagnosis.	3.2
My program prepared me to critically analyze and implement research-based practices.	3.1
My program prepared me with appropriate professional clinical skills.	3.4

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Advisory Board

Clinical Mental Health Counseling
Program Advisory Board

The Advisory Board provides perspective and information to the North Park Clinical Mental Health Program related to curriculum, ethical practice, and current issues impacting the professional counseling community. The Advisory Board meets regularly with Core Faculty.

Advisory Board Membership

Derek Harris, M.A., LCPC
Judi Zink, M.A. LCPC, NCC
Diedre Robinson, M.A., LCPC
Barry Hinkeldey, M.A. LPC
Abby Pfeiffer, M.A., LPC



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Internships in Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Ashley Mitich EdD, LCPC

Associate Professor and Director of Clinical Training

CMHC students are required to complete a minimum of 100 Practicum hours and 600 Internship hours. Forty percent of the hours need to be direct client contact. Full-time students start Practicum at the beginning of year two. However, applications for Practicum/Internship begin during year one. Students are able to seek out sites (agencies, in-patient, private practice, hospital, schools, etc.) in the Chicagoland area. Students attend a 10 week Practicum, 4-week Intro to Internship, 14-week Internship I, and 7-14-week Internship II. Extended Internship is available for students who do not complete their hours during Internship II. Students complete a training agreement with their site supervisor at the beginning of Practicum. Evaluation and Hour logs are obtained at the conclusion of Practicum, Internship I, and once complete.



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Continuing Education Program

A significant part of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program includes providing education and training to the broader North Park community and Licensed Professional Counselors through an ongoing Continuing Education Program. Workshops addressing a wide variety of topics and issues are offered to students and the community each Spring. A partial list of recent workshops is below:

- ▶ Existential Approaches to Mental Health Counseling: Basic Concepts, Michael DeVries, Ph.D. Professor of Counseling
- ▶ Providing Tele-Health Services to Today's Clients, Karla Ivankovich, Ph.D. Adjunct Professor
- ▶ The Supervisory Agreement: Ethical Issues, Ashley Mitich, Ed.D, Associate Professor of Counseling
- ▶ Crafting a Creative and Mindful Counseling Practice, Martha Mason, Ed.D, Assistant Professor of Counseling





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