

NLU STUDENT COUNSELING CONNECTIONS

Issue 12



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Dates to Know: Trainings, CEUs, and More!

- National Louis University Counseling Association (NLUCA) Meeting
- May 5, 2020, 3-4 pm
- Wheeling room 310
- Zoom option available
- All NLU students welcome

1

- Assessing Boundaries and the Supervisory Relationship
- April 23, 2020
- Live Webinar
- See IMHCA.org for more details

2

- NCMHCE Test Prep
- April 25-26, 2020
- 9am-4pm
- Loyola Chicago
- 25 East Pearson Street, Chicago, IL

3

- 2 Day Workshop Presentation- Starting, Maintaining, and Expanding a Private Practice
- June 5-6, 2020
- 9am-3pm
- National Louis University Chicago Campus
- 122 S Michigan Ave, Chicago, IL

4

Note: Dates and locations subject to change.

Counselor Self-Care During COVID-19

- As we all know, the COVID-19 pandemic has altered our world, making the issue of self-care a timely one. The Counseling Program graduate assistants have each taken some time to reflect on what their self-care looks like right now.
- Carol Briggs, Chicago Campus, Class of 2021
 - When things are uncertain and you feel powerless, it can help to find ways to make a difference. I'm volunteering for my neighborhood's Community Response Team. We have a hotline set up to provide information, deliver goods to people's homes, provide virtual companionship to those feeling lonely, and do phone wellness checks for our neighbors. Volunteering has given me a sense of purpose and empowerment in this time when so much seems out of my control. It has also been a great way to continue to feel connected to people despite physical distancing. If you are able, look for ways in your community to help others.
- April Atwood, Lisle Campus, Class of 2020
 - Reframe what you are missing out on to what you are getting. I am grateful for getting time with family, time to exercise in the beautiful outdoors, extra downtime (saved at least by not having to drive to places) and an opportunity to ponder and cherish what is most important. What else can you be grateful for during this unprecedented time? Apply a little CBT to yourself and see if you can change your negative thought patterns into positive ones. Hang in there--we will get through this!
- Regina Verhelst, North Shore Campus, Class of 2020
 - I've been reflecting on how we as counselors can be there for both ourselves and clients as we all weather this time of crisis together. Especially as a beginning counselor completing internship, I have found it important to explore what it means to tend to my own needs and fears in order to hold space for clients. This is a unique time to explore how my personal/professional boundaries need to look in order to maintain my well-being as a clinician. One change I have made is scheduling less into my day when possible and building in more time for rest. This pace is helping my work seem more sustainable.



Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs

As mentioned in the winter newsletter, The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), recently reviewed NLU's school and clinical counseling programs for re-accreditation. The process wrapped up in January and re-accreditation was granted. To ensure that program goals and learning outcomes continue to line up with core, clinical, and school standards set forth by CACREP, the counseling department has made some changes in how data is collected and analyzed for key assessments.

What does this mean for students?

Professor Natasha Schnell notes that the changes won't have a significant impact on students. "The assignments haven't changed, the way in which we're assessing your development toward these goals hasn't changed. We're still looking for the same things." The assessment team hopes that what has changed will improve the quality of the program. Professor Schnell believes that the changes create a more "active role in assessing our teaching and how well our students are performing in these areas."

So, what exactly has changed?

The Assessment Team collaborates with and supports the faculty in developing and executing the annual assessment plan. Professor Bryant-Edwards, the Assessment Lead, outlined the following updates to the program assessment process:

- Instead of only having a capstone project in the final course, multiple courses throughout the program will measure the same learning outcomes. There will also be a final key assessment at the conclusion of the program like the capstone project.
- Data is being collected from rubrics of key assessment assignments.
- Assignments that are part of data collection for key assessments will be labeled and standardized throughout all campuses.
- Assignments that are used to measure program learning outcomes will be labeled with the prefix "PLO". For example, a final paper for HSC 503 will be labeled "PLO 2-A HSC 503" in the D2L assignments folder for that class.
- Professor Tara Bryant-Edwards analyzes the data to see if outcomes are being met and if there is consistency across campuses.

Professor Schnell notes that "if we notice that there's a particular group of students who may be struggling more than some other groups of students, we can look at what kind of supports we might need to put into place to make sure that we are meeting the needs of all students."

Increased feedback is another target for the program. To help ensure program goals and learning outcomes remain market-relevant, the program has multiple structured opportunities for feedback from a variety of stakeholders. Students and other stakeholders can find a link to a program survey at the end of this article. The feedback will be collected specifically for assessing the program's learning outcomes.

Program Goals (PGs) and Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) are publicly available on the Counseling Program website, in the MS Counseling Program Handbook and listed in each course syllabus. A link to the webpage containing PGs and PLOs is listed below. The webpage also provides a link to the 2018-2019 Executive Summary Assessment Outcomes Report for those who are interested in the data. **If you have further questions or comments regarding the counseling program assessment, how data is collected, or program learning outcomes, use the survey in this article to send that information to Professor Tara Bryant-Edwards by April 30, 2020.**

Survey for Feedback on PGs and PLOs

- [Program Assessment](#)

Program Goals and Learning Outcomes

- [Counseling Department Outcomes](#)

CACREP Visit Outcomes



Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs

NLU
CACREP
Team

Counseling Faculty	
Assessment Lead	Tara Bryant-Edwards
CACREP Coordinator	Donna Kirkpatrick Pinson
Co-Chairs	Laurie Siegel and Michael Guglielmo
Leadership & Administration:	
Associate Dean of Operations	Bettyjo Bouchey
CPSA Dean	Ignacio Lopez
Director of Curriculum, Accreditation, & Analytics	Lina Eskew
Director of Accreditation	Mital Patel
Director of Learning Design and Innovation	Arthur Schneiderheinze
Executive Director of Assessment and Accreditation	Joseph Levy

NLUCA

Pronounced: "En – Luke – Ah"

National Louis University Counseling Association

A Chapter of the Illinois Counseling Association (ICA)

Regularly scheduled meetings are held on the first Tuesday of every month from **3 to 4 PM** –in person at the **NLU Wheeling campus Room 310** or via **ZOOM** at **nl.zoom.us/j/662315314**

Winter quarter was an exciting time for NLUCA! We hosted 2 fabulous CEU events and began hosting NCE test prep workshops.

Focusing on Emotions Workshop led by Liz Black, LCPC from The Renfrew Center of Chicago

Liz Black, LCPC, site director of the Renfrew Center of Chicago, came to NLU to teach on a transdiagnostic approach to treating complex eating disorders. Attendees learned about warning signs to look out for as well as practical techniques to use with their own clients based in research.

Counseling and Resource Expo/CARE Fair

Kit Bolliger, NLU alumna, traveled all the way from North Carolina to share her expertise on equine therapy and how we can incorporate these strategies regardless of environment. Kit and her colleague, equine specialist Tim, shared case examples as well as the personal impact of working in equine therapy. Attendees also had the opportunity to network with representatives from local agencies and private practices.

Keep an eye out for information regarding the postponed Counseling Symposium and virtual NCE prep workshops!

Counseling Licensure Guidance (LPC/LCPC)

Licensure can be confusing to navigate. You are not alone if you have questions about what this path looks like upon graduating with your master's in counseling. In Illinois, a counselor can be credentialed as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) or a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC). Both the LPC and LCPC can provide counseling services, but only the LCPC can act as a clinical supervisor. LPCs are required to work under supervision of a clinician with a more advanced license. Clinicians are also required to renew their licenses every other year, whether you hold an LPC or LCPC license. Renewal requires you to take 30 hours of continuing education (CEUs). In Illinois, the license renewal deadline is March 31 of odd-numbered years.

Becoming a Licensed Professional Counselor

As NLU counseling students, we attend a CACREP-accredited program. This means that we have the opportunity to take the National Counselor Exam (NCE) prior to graduating with our master's degree. With a passing score on the NCE, and a master's in counseling diploma, we can automatically become a Nationally Certified Counselor (NCC). While this is not the same as the LPC license, it does facilitate the process towards acquiring that license.

Steps to LPC

1. Take National Counselor Examination (NCE)
2. Upon graduation, send in official transcript to NBCC
3. Become Nationally Certified Counselor (NCC)
 1. Includes 700 hour practicum/internship (240 direct hours)
4. Send score from NBCC to IDFP
5. Submit [application](#) and fee to IDFP
6. Wait
7. Receive LPC license!

Becoming a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor

Depending on your career goals, you may want to pursue becoming a LCPC. You may want to go this route if you would like to further your career by providing supervision or working independently in a private practice. The main distinction is that as a LCPC, you no longer require weekly supervision. You do not need to become a LPC first to become a LCPC but you still need to pass both the National Counselor Exam (NCE) and National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE).

Steps to LCPC

1. Work as a counselor full-time for 2 years or time equivalent of 3,360 hours (1,920 hours of face-to-face counseling and 1 hour weekly supervision)
2. Pass both the National Counselor Exam (NCE) and National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE)
 1. If you have already taken and passed the NCE exam you do not need to retake it to become a LCPC.
 2. You do not need to become a LPC to become a LCPC but you still need to pass both exams.
3. Send score from NBCC to IDFP
4. Submit application and fee to IDFP.
5. Wait
6. Receive LCPC license!

Additional Counseling Certifications

As counselors, we commit to a lifetime of learning in order to best support our clients. Some may maintain a generalist practice, knowing a little bit about a lot of issues, while others may choose to specialize in one area. Upon graduating with a master's in counseling, there are plenty of ways to verify one's competence in these specialties through an additional certification. Counselors may pursue an additional certification in order to enhance their current knowledge or perhaps establish a new area of expertise. During grad school or internship is a great time to start learning about certification opportunities to begin to discern what your path might look like.

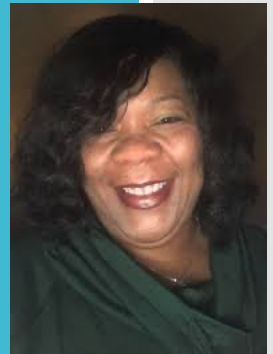
Generally, certifications fall into two categories: therapeutic modalities or treatment concerns. Additionally, the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC) offers three specialty certifications. These certifications offer nationally recognized credentials and the opportunity to participate in the development of national counseling standards. NBCC also maintains a network which generates client referrals. Certification typically requires some amount of classroom training, practical work experience, and specialized supervision. Some can be completed concurrently alongside a master's in counseling, such as the Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CADC) credential while others require post-master's experience first.

As certification involves an investment of time and resources, one may want to consider the benefits first. Certification demonstrates your commitment and expertise in a particular facet of counseling. It communicates to clients that you have undergone specialized education and training in order to deeply understand their particular concerns. In some cases, certification may be required for employment or hospital privileges in certain fields or reimbursement by managed care companies. For example, according to the EMDR International Association, certification is not required for a clinician to practice EMDR—training alone is sufficient—but many choose to become certified in order to increase reimbursement or job opportunities. The Certified Eating Disorders Specialist (CEDS) credential through the International Association of Eating Disorder Professionals (iaedp) seeks to promote the highest ethical standards for care of clients with eating disorders, ensuring that these clinicians demonstrate the expertise needed to address their concerns. Certification may also increase employment opportunities by setting yourself apart from other job candidates.

All in all, certification is an important professional decision for each counselor to make. There is a certification available for almost any clinical interest. A list of several is included below, but we encourage you to begin your own research to find out what further training is out there that appeals to you.

- **Specialties in therapeutic modalities**
 - EMDR Certification <https://www.emdria.org/page/21>
 - Certificate in expressive arts therapies <https://www.c4creativeartstherapy.com>
 - Registered Dance/Movement Therapist (R-DMT) <https://adta.org/how-to-become-a-dmt/>
 - Certified Group Psychotherapist (CGP) <https://www.agpa.org/cgp-certification/>
- **Specialties in treatment concerns**
 - Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CADC) <https://www.iaodapca.org/credentialing/counselor-2/>
 - Certified Eating Disorder Specialist (CEDS) <http://www.iaedp.com/certification-overview/>
 - WPATH Certified Gender Therapist (LGBTQ+ Counseling) <https://www.wpath.org/gei/certification>
- **NBCC Specialty Certifications** <https://www.nbcc.org/certification/specialtycertifications>
 - Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor
 - Master Addictions Counselor
 - National Certified School Counselor

Congrats to Dr. Brown, 2019 ACACI Research Award Recipient!



- Dr. Christine Brown, Assistant Professor at National Louis University, was recognized at the 2019 Illinois Counseling Association Conference and was awarded the 2019 ACACI Research Award. The award, presented by the Association for Child and Adolescent Counseling in Illinois, honors an Illinois research project which has the potential to enrich the scope of counseling practice with youth. Dr. Brown conducted a qualitative study that explored both the perceptions and experiences of self-efficacy on college persistence among Black/African American first-generation college students.
- Her research utilized a qualitative phenomenological approach to explore and understand how Black first-generation college students (BFGCS) are successful in college persistence. Individual interviews were conducted to examine students' lived experiences as they navigated the complexities involved towards degree attainment. Findings revealed that students' self-efficacy beliefs were critical in their decisions to persist and having a sense of belonging, supportive network, confidence, and the execution of organized actions were positive outcomes for students. The results show that Black first-generation college students are unique and counselors across settings are to consider responsive practices and draw upon self-efficacy as a critical resource among students. In addition, the profession calls for culturally competent counselors and this study found counselors are to understand the unique cultural dynamics among BFGCS to engage parents in preparation of their students for college. The utilization of counseling strategies as a responsive practice and drawing upon self-efficacy is critical. Additionally, counselor educators are to be more intentional in their preparation of counselors to serve racially/ethnically diverse students.
- National Louis University congratulates Dr. Brown on her award and applauds her continued commitment to social justice in counseling, research, and education!

What's Happening in the Counseling World?

Medicare Reimbursement

H.R. 945 and identical bill S.286- The Mental Health Access Improvement Act of 2019 was introduced in the House of Representatives and Senate on January 31, 2019. H.R. 945 was introduced to amend sections of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of marriage and family therapist services and mental health counselor services under part B of the Medicare program.

Medicare is an insurance program covering millions of older Americans (65 and older) and those with disabilities. Currently, Medicare covers psychiatrists, psychologists, and licensed social workers, but does not cover licensed professional counselors. Passage of this legislation would provide greater access to mental health services for the millions of Medicare recipients in the United States. According to the American Counseling Association, this bill was passed in the House of Representatives and the Senate in previous years but was never passed in both chambers during the same session of Congress. There are several ways licensed clinicians can support the passage of this bill and advocate for their profession and clients served:

- 1. Go to ACA's Government Affairs website, click on the *Take Action* page (<https://www.counseling.org/government-affairs/actioncenter>) where you can submit a prepared message that will be sent to legislators on your behalf.
- 2. Contact your representatives about Medicare legislation by calling the U.S. Capitol at 202-224-3121. Sharing confidential stories about how your clients are affected by a lack of Medicare coverage can be especially impactful.
- 3. Schedule an in-person meeting with a staff member in your representative's nearest district office to discuss the Medicare bill and its importance.

Multicultural and social justice counseling competency requires "social advocacy outside the office setting to address local, state, and federal laws and policies that hinder equitable access to employment, healthcare, and education for privileged and marginalized clients." (MSJCC, 2015) The National Louis Counseling Association (NLUCA) encourages all counselors to demonstrate these competencies by supporting the passage of The Mental Health Access Improvement Act.

Professor Siegel Faculty Spotlight



- Laurie Siegel is a full time professor in the counseling department at National Louis University, Lisle Campus. In addition, she co-chairs the counseling department along with Dr. Michael Guglielmo. Professor Siegel has an extensive helping background. She started out in the education field. Before getting her bachelor's degree in education she had an associates in early childhood education. She was a director of a daycare and also taught kindergarten at the same facility. In her early years in the helping field, she spent time working with children in hospitals. During that time she decided she wanted to work in a helping field and began to work on her bachelor's degree in nursing. Very quickly, while caring for patients' physical needs, she realized she mostly wanted to help care for patients' unmet emotional needs. Professor Siegel quit nursing school and began to pursue her bachelor's in education.
- Professor Siegel received her degree and was licensed to teach grades K-9. While she was working with children in the education field she continued to help meet the emotional needs of others. She then felt a need to return to school to obtain a master's degree. On the encouragement of a Professor at Governor State University she took a few counseling classes and loved it. Professor Siegel knew she had found her calling. She began to pursue a master's degree in Community Counseling.
- Professor Siegel has had many achievements over the past 28 years of working in the helping field. Not only does she hold a master's degree in community counseling, she has a master's in school counseling and a masters in school administration. She was the director of a clinical counseling program at a social service YMCA, which included a crisis intervention program, homeless program, and an adolescent addictions program. She then went on to work at CPS as a school counselor. Eventually Professor Siegel's path crossed with National Louis University. She began to teach courses as an adjunct professor. She then went on to be a full-time faculty and eventually was named co-chair of the counseling department.
- Laurie Siegel is currently president of the Illinois Mental Health Counseling Association (IMCHA). She is certified in addictions (MISAI) and hypnotherapy certified. She has just started her first private practice called Life Solutions Counseling Services. She has been in private practice for over 20 years. Professor Siegel has co-authored a book with her co-chair Michael Guglielmo called *Moving Through It*. The book is about how to pair cognitive behavioral therapy with exercise to help clients suffering from anxiety and depression. Currently she is researching happiness and has plans to be published on the subject in the near future. In her spare time Professor Siegel enjoys running and has completed several half and full marathons. She enjoys painting and gardening and recently received an honorable mention award through the city of Chicago for her beautiful garden.
- Professor Siegel's advice to students is to utilize training, professional development, and join professional organizations. And whatever your passion is, dedicate the time and energy to pursue it!

Student Spotlight: Emily Koch 1st year student Class of 2022 Lisle Campus

Emily got her bachelor's degree in psychology from Liberty University and worked as an aide in an elementary level special education classroom with children with mild cognitive and developmental delays and/or autism in her early college years. She started her degree as a special education major, but after having her first 2 children and returning to school, she realized she did not want to work in the school system. With the encouragement of her own personal therapist combined with a long-standing zest and curiosity about what it means to be human, she switched her major to psychology.

Emily has just finished her second quarter at NLU. She states, "going back to school has been one of the best decisions I have made, even as I juggle managing a household and four kids (ages 14, 9, 7, and 5)". She plans to graduate in June of 2022.

Emily says she chose to go into counseling because she cares about and is interested in people. She believes that it is never too late to become what we might have been and that every person has the capability and aptitude of reaching their best self with the right support. Emily says she "believes in the power of good therapy for achieving a level of healing and wellness that we may not have achieved, and I look forward to being a therapist in a few years so that I can practice helping others reach their potential."

Emily says she has a lot of plans for the years following the achievement of her degree and licensure. She can see herself working in a group practice while she works on completing her supervision hours for her second license. However, she states she would eventually like to be "my own boss in private practice, taking in other therapists and supervising newly licensed therapists down the road." In particular, she says, "I am extremely interested in working with creative and intellectually gifted adults. This population often experiences debilitating levels of shame, anxiety, depression, and self-rejection as a result of growing up as an outlier and/or repeatedly hearing the message that they are 'too much' from parents, peers, and teachers." Her long-term goals include achieving her PhD, perhaps conducting some research, and eventually becoming a professor and author.

Emily's advice to students is balance. She says she knows it's difficult, but "you cannot let your degree program become the center of your life. Family, friends, hobbies, exercise and other forms of self-care, as well as personal therapy are all very important factors that contribute to your overall wellness. Keep a practice of examining your life closely and enjoy the journey as much as the destination."



Reflections on Internship Experience

By Sara Holmes, School Counseling Student, Class of 2020, North Shore Campus



I started my school counseling internship in the summer of 2019 at Niles West High School. Niles West was my second interview, and when they offered me an internship spot a couple of weeks later, I accepted without hesitation. Niles West is a very diverse school with over fifty languages spoken, and I knew that this would be a great environment to get my internship experience in. I also got a really good vibe from the counselors that interviewed me, and truly thought I could learn a lot from them. Internship has changed a lot for me from my first day on August 5th to now. I went from only coming two days a week, not really knowing what I was doing, and following my supervisors around like a lost puppy, to coming five days a week, fulfilling the role of not only counseling intern but testing coordinator, having my own busy schedule, and a list of students that I counsel on a regular basis.

I have learned more than I could have imagined from my time spent at the high school, and still have a few months to go. I have really realized how different the school counselor role is from a clinical mental health role, although we do use the foundation and basics of the counseling skills I have learned from NLU along with a lot of other important things. I have learned so much about the school system and how everything works, as well as post-secondary options for high school students and the college application process. The best part of the internship has been being able to form relationships with students and the feeling that I have given them a safe space to talk throughout the year. It's a great feeling walking down the hall and having several students and teachers greet me by name, remembering the first day when I knew no one, or when a student unexpectedly comes looking for me to talk. Advice I would give to those entering a school counseling internship would be to simply show up and work hard. No one is expecting you to be perfect or know everything. You may feel lost at first, but things start to fall into place and you will start to get the hang of it along the way. - Sara Holmes, School Counseling Student, Class of 2020, North Shore Campus

Reflections on Internship Experience

By Melanie Reicher,
School Counseling
Student, Class of 2020,
Lisle Campus

I was lucky enough to find a school counseling placement in the district where I was a teacher. It has been nice to look at the students and the district in a different capacity and with a different mindset. The district has a brand new college/career curriculum as of the start of the school year, so it has been great to see how that is rolling out and has been nice to use my teaching background to help develop some of the classroom lessons.

What I have reaffirmed through the internship process, is that building a meaningful relationship with students is the MOST important thing a school counselor can do. When a counselor has a true and sincere care for students, they can feel that, and they will open up to you and allow you into their lives. When working with students who are struggling, I always remember to extend grace and compassion. Because every single student comes from a different background, it is important to meet students where they are at and be there to listen to them and to help troubleshoot situations that are occurring in their lives.

Something I have found helpful is working under a Solution-Focused Approach to help guide students to a solution and then help them to reach that solution together. The more time that students are in your office, the less time they are in academic classes. So, finding a way to be a support system, while also pushing them to be their best selves, is a very important balance to strive for.

While it is important to plan ahead and stay on top of your own personal assignments, remember to take things one day at a time. Looking too far ahead can be stressful! Make sure you have a plan for the pockets of spare time that you have in your life and figure out where the assignments and internship work fits into those pockets so that you are not waiting until the last minute for some of the big things that are expected of you.

SPRING 2020

CPSA Faculty



Co-Chair

Professor Siegel



Co-Chair & Campus Coordinator

Dr. Guglielmo



Dr. Brown



Campus Coordinator

Professor Schnell



Dr. Yates



Professor Bryant-Edwards



Campus Coordinator

Dr. Stewart



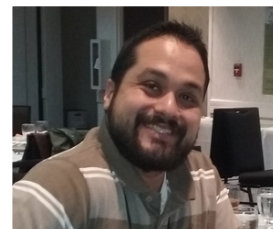
Dr. Derweesh



Dr. Kirkpatrick-Pinson



Dr. VanderSchaaf



Professor Zavala

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