

Student Retention and Dismissal Policy

University of Wyoming – Department of Professional Studies: Counseling Program

Revised Aug., 2016

A student's acceptance into any program does not guarantee his or her fitness to remain in that program. As counselor educators, we have an ethical and professional responsibility to protect current and future clients/students, the profession, and our program by insuring to the best of our ability that all students consistently meet the professional and ethical standards of the field. We do this through regular and ongoing evaluation of students' academic and non-academic performance. The faculty is responsible for assuring that only those students who continue to meet program expectations are allowed to continue in the program. Our goal is to be transparent about this review of student performance.

Evaluating Student Academic and Non-Academic Performance

Academic Performance includes coursework, clinical skills development, and timely progress toward degree completion. These are evaluated through your assignments and final grades each semester, through the Clinical Skills Evaluation form (or Supervision Skills Evaluation form) in your clinical courses, and through your completion of program courses and other requirements needed for successful graduation. A component of this progress requires you to maintain full time enrollment for 9 credit hours per semester with continued enrollment during the summer. Under some circumstances (e.g. major life event) you may be unable to enroll in courses for a semester. It is at the discretion of the faculty to determine appropriate actions to maintain enrollment in the program. Exceptions to this rule are made on a case-by-case basis. If you do not enroll in program of study classes for more than one semester, your status will be deactivated, you will be dismissed from the program, and will need to reapply if you would like readmission.

Non-Academic Performance includes adherence to standards of professionalism, ethical behavior, and self-regulation. These are evaluated through observation of interactions and behavior in each course, in your clinical work and interactions with colleagues, faculty and staff. There is ongoing evaluation at the end of each semester, along with the faculty annual review of students (using the Counseling Student Evaluation Form, students' self-reflections and feedback from faculty). Concerns about student performance and progress are discussed in weekly faculty meetings. If we have concerns about your performance, we will let you know as soon as possible. If you have questions about your performance at any time, please visit with your advisor.

Faculty seek to identify additional help students may need to be successful, and to recognize outstanding achievements of students in their work. Faculty may work on an informal basis with students evidencing academic or non-academic deficiencies when circumstances indicate that this method may be productive. The faculty member and student will discuss the problems, review appropriate measures of correction, and establish a timeline for change, documenting the process. However, the severity of the problem may not allow for this method and informal methods are not procedurally required. When, in the professional judgment of a program faculty member, a student is not meeting academic or non-academic program standards, or university standards, the faculty member will consult with the other program faculty and department head to determine appropriate steps.

Student Remediation and Dismissal

Counseling faculty have a responsibility to dismiss students who are unable to meet the academic and non-academic standards of the program. The faculty also recognizes their obligation to: a) assist students in obtaining help for improvement and b) consult with colleagues and document their decision to refer students for assistance or to request that students be dismissed from the program.

Student Improvement: A rating of "1" or "2" on any criteria on the Counseling Program Student Evaluation Form and/or serious concerns of faculty about student performance indicate the need for an improvement plan. A faculty member or members will discuss with the student and document what behavior(s) need to be changed, requirements for remediation, time limits for expected changes, and consequences if improvement efforts are unsuccessful. These meetings will be recorded. Lack of participation in the improvement plan or failure to fully meet the expectations of the plan will result in program dismissal.

Student Dismissal: The following circumstances constitute some cases of "unsatisfactory" performance and will result in dismissal from the program without an opportunity for remediation or improvement.

- A grade of "F" in any required Program of Study course
- More than two grades below a "B" in any required Program of Study courses
- A grade of "C" or below in any clinical course (Pre-Practicum, Practicum, Internship, Spvsn. Theory, Spvsn. Practicum)
- Failure to successfully meet all requirements of the student's improvement plan
- Failure of the written or oral doctoral preliminary / comprehensive examination, or of the doctoral dissertation defense
- Any serious ethical violation or unprofessional behavior