### Vermont State University

### Master of Science (MS) in

### Clinical Mental Health Counseling

### Weekend Format

### Student Manual

**Vermont**

**Wisconsin**

2024-25

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### WELCOME!

Welcome to Vermont State University and the MS (Program) in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (PCMH)! We look forward to getting to know you over the next several years, as students, counseling professionals and colleagues.

This ***Student Manual*** provides an overview of University and PCMH policies and procedures. Understanding these policies and procedures will help you progress skillfully and efficiently as a graduate student in PCMH.

Some policies discussed in this manual may also be included in the

**Vermont State University Graduate Catalog. The Catalog may be accessed from this page, by choosing Graduate Catalog: ’24-’25:**

[**https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/index.php?catoid=10**](https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/index.php?catoid=10)

However, this Student Manual provides additional information specifically for students enrolled in the Graduate Program (MS) in Clinical Mental Health Counseling, often abbreviated as PCMH. Vermont State University and PCMH reserve the right to modify these policies as necessary.

Please take the time to read the Student Manual thoroughly and to contact us with any questions. Students are responsible for reading and following all policies in the Student Manual and Graduate Catalogue, as well as any revisions or addenda to them during the time of their enrollment.

**Helpful Contacts and Resources**

Annamarie Cioffari, Ph.D., Director: [Annamarie.Cioffari@VermontState.edu](mailto:Annamarie.Cioffari@VermontState.edu); 802.626.6520

Michelle Rauch, M.S., Asst Dir & Advisor: [Michelle.Rauch@VermontState.edu](mailto:Michelle.Rauch@VermontState.edu); 802-626-6521

Sarah Chausse, Administrative Coord: [Sarah.Chausse@VermontState.edu](mailto:Sarah.Chausse@VermontState.edu); 802.626.6522

Financial Aid: [FinancialAid@VermontState.edu](mailto:FinancialAid@VermontState.edu) ; [Joann.Larson@VermontState.edu](mailto:Joann.Larson@VermontState.edu)

Student Accounts: [Deneen.Russell@VermontState.edu](mailto:Deneen.Russell@VermontState.edu)

Student Disability Services: [Pamela.Billings@vermontstate.edu](mailto:Pamela.Billings@vermontstate.edu)

**To login to the VTSU Portal:**

* Enter your username and password to log into the VTSU Portal. If you have forgotten and must reset your password, you will need the Student ID # listed in the Acceptance Letter you received from Admissions. Your username is your initials+5digits (i.e., abc01230).
* You will get automated reminders to reset your password. If your password expires, you will need your student ID number in order to reset it

**To access the Portal** (Course Registration, Canvas, the Library, VTSU email, Financial Services, etc.):

* Go to [www.vermontstate.edu](http://www.vermontstate.edu)
* Scroll to the bottom of the page. On the right, choose VSCS Portal;
* Choose “Student/Faculty/Staff”, “Vermont State University”

**What do I use the Portal for?**

* **Registration and Viewing Academic Progress**
* **Canvas:**
  + **Courses**
  + **PCMH Student Site** (Schedules, Booklists, Syllabi, Registration instructions & more, for all students and by Cohort).

You will receive an email from “InstructureCanvas”, in your VTSU e-mail with an invitation to join the PCMH Student Site in Canvas. Please accept the invitation, to be added to the Site.

* + Canvas Inbox - you can send and receive messages from here, but we do not recommend it. You can only send to people in a particular course in Canvas, and others cc’d may not be able to respond. It is not as reliable as your VTSU email.
* **VTSU E-mail: Please check this regularly, for messages from VTSU & PCMH.**
* **Campus Bookstore, eCampus (in the Class Registration tile)**
* The **Library:** is a great resource. Start clicking around to see what is available ASAP.
* **Student Finances**
* **Colleague-Self Service:** Courses you are registered for per term and progress toward your degree, including GPA and individual grades.
* **Access to IT support**
* **Student Forms**

**WI classroom location: UWSP-Wausau, 518 So. 7th Ave., Wausau, WI 54401, Terrace Rm**

**An Introduction to the M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling**

**Introduction**

The Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling offers a state-of-the-art graduate program in clinical mental health counseling (PCMH), in a Weekend Format (One-Weekend-A-Month, offered either In Person or Via Zoom, as scheduled by the program), on location at regional sites, including: Williston, VT and Milwaukee and Wausau, WI.

**History**

The Master of Science Program in Clinical Mental Health Counseling began as the Program in Community Mental Health and Mental Health Counseling in 1995 at Trinity College of Vermont, in collaboration with its Center for Community Change through Housing and Support, a national technical assistance center focused on mental health and community supports. Trinity College of Vermont closed its doors in July of 2001, after a distinguished 75 year history of celebrating women and educating women and later men as community leaders committed to social justice.

The development and growth of PCMH through its first six years was made possible by generous support from the Center for Community Change, the Vermont Department of Mental Health, the Vermont Department of Health. Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs, the van Ameringen Foundation, and Trinity College of Vermont. The program then moved to Southern New Hampshire University, from 2001 to 2018.

In the Fall of 2018, the program became a part of the Vermont State College System, joining the Northern Vermont University (NVU). In 2023, NVU merged with the other Vermont State College universities into Vermont State University.

**Mission, Objectives and Purpose**

## **Vermont State University Mission**

Vermont State University prepares all students for meaningful work and responsible citizenship by fostering their intellectual, personal, and creative growth in an accessible, caring, and inclusive community. As Vermont’s regional public university, our technological, professional, and liberal arts programs engage with partners throughout Vermont and beyond to provide students with rich real-world learning while meeting the needs of our communities and the state.

**MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling**

The mission and purpose of the MS in CMH are consistent with the overall mission and vision of Vermont State University, to foster the individual growth of each student, promote diversity and inclusion, and provide innovative professional education.

**Mission.** The program’s mission is to prepare clinical mental health/professional counselors to work in community and private practice settings, in order to promote individual and community wellness, resilience and recovery. The program’s weekend format and cohort model are designed to be highly accessible to working adults and to encourage a diverse group of students, including people currently working in the field, people in recovery and family members, as well as the general public. Through the cohort model, students develop a strong learning community, during the graduate program and beyond, as lifelong learners and leaders in clinical practice, policy and administration.

In addition, our graduates are prepared to meet the needs of individuals with mental health challenges and related substance use/misuse disorders. Graduates demonstrate a strong grounding in the knowledge and skills of the counseling profession, as well as in: person-centered and strength-based approaches; culturally competent practice in a multicultural and diverse society; integrated, evidence-based clinical practice in mental health and addictions, and a commitment to leadership, systems change and advocacy within the profession, the community, and the larger society. Faculty are scholar/practitioners who bring national and local expertise in clinical mental health and substance use counseling, integrated service delivery, research and administration to the program.

**Endorsement.** Graduates of the M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling are prepared to pursue licensure as Clinical Mental Health or Professional Counselors and to work in a wide variety of settings, including private practice, community mental health agencies, residential settings, educational institutions, and other settings that serve people with mental health challenges (practice or consultation to primary care, schools, corrections, child welfare, and so forth). Graduates are ready to engage in any and all of the roles of a clinical mental health counselor, including clinical practice, management and leadership, and advocacy. As both course work and practice highlight working to enhance the mental health and wellness of a diverse population, graduates are prepared to engage therapeutically with a wide variety of individuals, including children, adolescents and adults. Further, because of the program’s innovative approach to integrating substance use counseling in the curriculum, graduates are additionally prepared to work with people experiencing co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders, in settings such as substance use treatment centers.

**Learning Outcomes**

The program has aligned its Learning Outcomes with the MA in Counseling, offered on campus at VTSU. It also has identified 9 courses which are substantially equivalent and which may be taken with either program.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Students who successfully complete a Counseling Masters (MA in CSL, MS in CMH) will:

1. Knowledge: Use academic study to develop content area knowledge in the common core areas in counselor education, as well as for specializations in clinical mental health, substance use disorder and school counseling.

This includes: counseling and helping relationships; history of and orientation to the counseling profession; ethical practice; social and cultural diversity; human growth and development; group counseling; diagnosis, assessment and testing, and research and program evaluation.

1. Counselor Disposition: Demonstrate, in the classroom and in field placements, growth towards a counselor disposition grounded in a strengths-based, person-centered, wellness and recovery-oriented and ethical approach. \*\**See Counselor Disposition form in the Appendix*

This includes: empathy, respect, genuineness, acceptance, openness, and professional behavior.

1. Counseling Skills & Practice: Demonstrate, in the classroom and in field placements professional counseling practice, grounded in culturally relevant, evidence-based and promising approaches.

This includes: foundational counseling skills, teaming and collaboration, and state-of-the-art interventions in integrated mental health, health and SUD counseling. (Evidence-based and promising approaches includes an understanding of the value of peer-run services and community-involvement and inclusion.)

1. Ethics: Develop a personal code of ethics, grounded in the ACA, AMHCA, ASCA and NAADAC codes, which reflects an understanding of diverse world views, cultural competence as relevant to the counselor role, and ethical practice.

This includes: self-awareness, personal growth, self-care, supervision and ethics related to clinical practice, research and academic honesty.

1. Leadership & Systems Change: Demonstrate ability to critically analyze information for purposes of program evaluation, advocacy, consultation, systems change and personal and organizational leadership.

Information includes: the research literature, data collected to evaluate personal practice and programs, first person-accounts and client satisfaction.

**Program Structure and Format.**

**Delivery Format.** Courses are offered one weekend a month, on location in regional sites, across the calendar year. Most courses run for 2 months, with two intensive class weekends (8:30-5:30, Saturday & Sunday) and independent work in the Canvas/LMS before, after and in between class weekends. Students typically take one course at a time, and two courses per Term (with occasional overlap in the summer term and overlap with field placements & Masters Project). The year-round program has 3 Terms: Fall, Winter/Spring and Summer Term. Students are provided a Schedule for the program at the time they begin. Students are notified re: which class weekends are required In Person, and which will run synchronously online.

**Degree Requirements.** Students complete a Master of Science degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling, requiring 63 to 66 credits, dependent on whether students complete 700 or 1,000 hours of practicum (1 to 3 credits) and internship (6 to 9 credits). Students complete all of the required course work for an M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling, across the lifespan, and also complete a specialization in integrated mental health and substance use treatment for children, youth, and families, or for adults. While licensure is not guaranteed, the program prepares students to pursue licensure as clinical mental health or professional counselors, and meets the educational requirements in each of the states in which it is offered.

In states that offer pre-approval of the educational requirements for licensure, the program is pre-approved as a 60+ credit program (for VT's LCMHC and WI's LPC). In Wisconsin, students must complete 65 credits, including 3 credits of Practicum. In Maine, students must complete 66 credits and 1,000 hours of practicum and internship, in order to qualify to apply to be licensed as Clinical Professional Counselors.

**Specializations and Options.** The program offers two specializations in Integrated Mental Health and Substance Use Counseling: one in the area of Children, Youth, and Families; and one in the area of Adults. Courses may be taken toward the M.S. degree or as professional development/continuing education coursework.

**Cohort Model and Weekend Format.** The Master's program begins with an Orientation. Classes meet one weekend per month, all day Saturday and Sunday (8 hours per day), across the calendar year. The 3-credit courses last eight weeks or 16 weeks. The majority of courses run in an 8-week format, involving two weekends of face-to-face instruction (in a classroom or via zoom, as scheduled by the program), plus out-of-class learning online and at home through readings, written assignments, other course materials, and application in their internship and work settings. The program uses Canvas as its learning Management system. Students are generally enrolled in (and therefore focused on) one course at a time, and two or three courses per Term. Because of the sequential nature of the program, students in each cohort complete most course work in the program together. This fosters strong "learning communities" of peers and networks of alumni.

Students complete a 100-hour Practicum and, two or three 300-hour internships that are taken concurrently with other course work. Students complete an integrative Masters Project as a culminating learning experience on a topic of their choice, toward the end of the course sequence.  The program works with licensing boards, in the states in which it is offered, to meet the educational requirements for licensure as a clinical mental health or professional counselor. Additional course work and internships may be offered. The university does not guarantee that students who complete the program will become licensed, as licensure requirements may change, and licensure also requires passing national exams and post-Masters’ supervised practice.

**Program Evaluation:** The program uses multiple sources of information, with input from students, instructors, alumni, field supervisors and other workforce development networks, for continuous improvement. A summary of processes and evaluation data may be seen in Appendix C.

**Admissions to PCMH**

**Admission Requirements.** VTSU requirements vary depending on the program to which you are applying; specifics are noted on the application. In general, however, all graduate programs require the following in addition to the application:

* An official transcript from all institutions attended
* Three academic and/or professional references.
* A personal statement/essay stating why you are interested in graduate study (PCMH specifies its essay requirements on the application.)
* Current resume
* An interview with a Counseling faculty member after receipt of all required materials.

**Admission deadlines and acceptance.** Students are admitted on a rolling basis. Students receive acceptance letters via email from Admissions. Students who wish to defer enrollment should speak with the program and with Admissions.

**Transfer Credit and Credit for Prior Training.** All applicants for enrollment at VTSU are notified that credits earned at any college are transferable only at the discretion of the receiving college. VTSU and PCMH do not grant advance standing for prior education and training.

<https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=143#transfer-courses>

* The requested course must demonstrate content related to the program, similar description and objectives to the course to be replaced, and advanced academic materials and assignments.
* The issuing institution must be accredited by a regional or national accrediting organization recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.
* The course must have been completed at the graduate level within five years of the date of matriculation or start date for non-degree programs and carry a grade of B or higher. At the discretion of the program director, the 5 year limit may be waived.
* While earned grades are used in determining transferability of credits, grades issued by outside institutions are not included in the calculation of a student’s GPAs.
* Courses for which transfer credit is granted cannot be repeated for additional credit.
* Use of transfer credits should be limited; a suitable guideline is a maximum of 30% of the total credits for a VTSU degree or non-degree program up to 12 credits.  Some programs may set a lower maximum.
* Non-degree programs such as graduate certificates, post-baccalaureate sequences, and CAGS may not accept transfer credits or may limit the quantity.
* Consortium or affiliation agreements with other colleges or universities may specify transfer arrangements which supersede the criteria listed above.
* Articulation agreements with non-accredited third-party providers, such as internal extension offices or external educational organizations, may define the protocols for transfer credits.
* Exceptions to the standard protocols listed here must be submitted to the Graduate Standing Committee for review and approval.  Exceptions are subject to review and approval by the Graduate Dean and the Provost.

Specific to the MS in CMH:

* Practicum and Internship courses are not accepted for transfer credit.

Students must submit a transfer course request to their academic advisor, along with an official transcript (sent to VTSU from the granting institution), a course description and a syllabus, in order for the program and VTSU to evaluate the request. Course descriptions are researched to be sure that credit accepted does not duplicate credit accepted from any other source for the same student. Transfer credit requests must be approved by the Program Director and the Graduate Dean and Registrar.

**Advanced standing.**

No advanced standing is granted.

**Readmission.** Readmission entails acceptance for re-enrollment at any time following termination of a previous enrollment. A conversation with a PCMH Academic Advisor is strongly encouraged.

**Program Curriculum**

Students seeking the Master of Science must earn a minimum of 63 to 66 credits

with a GPA of 3.0 or better on the 4.0 scale, including completion of an approved 100 hours of practicum and two or three 300-hour internships.

**Foundation Courses**: 16 Credits (Courses are 3 credits unless otherwise noted):

* Orientation and Immersion Weekend (no credit)
* CMH 6005 - Overview of Clinical MH & SU Counseling
* CMH 6105 - Helping Relationships & Clinical Counseling Techniques
* CMH 6155 - Practicum (Seminar and Field Experience), Minimum Credits: 1
* CMH 6165 - Additional Practicum (required in WI for the LPC), Minimum Credits: 2
* CMH 6805 - Diagnosis, Assessment & Psychopathology
* CMH 6215 - Treatment Planning in Clinical MH & SU Counseling
* CMH 6505 - Internship I

**Clinical Specialization Courses**: 9 Credits (Courses are 3 credits, unless otherwise noted). Students must complete one (1) of the following two sets of courses:

Integrated Mental Health and Addictions Treatment for Children, Youth and Families

• CMH 6355 - Clinical I: Integrated Mental Health & Addictions Treatment, Child &

Family

• CMH 6365 - Clinical Skills II: Crisis, Trauma, Complex Issues (Child, Family)

• CMH 6895 - Early Childhood and Infant Mental Health

OR

Integrated Mental Health and Addictions Treatment for Adults

• CMH 6455 - Clinical Skills I: Integrated Mental Health & Addictions

Treatment, Adult

• CMH 6465- Clinical Skills II: Crisis, Trauma, Complex Issues (Adult)

• CMH 6925 - Elders: Mental Health and Addictions

**Advanced Courses: 38 Credits** (Courses are 3 credits, unless otherwise noted)

• CMH 6625 - Internship II

• CMH 6825 - Human Growth and Development

• CMH 6655 - Program Evaluation and Systems Research

• CMH 6665 - Professional Counseling Orientation & Ethics

•CMH 6705 - Organizational Leadership & System Change

• CMH 6755 - Mental Health, Addictions & Family Systems

• CMH 6765 - Psychopharmacology in Mental Health & Addictions, Across the

Lifespan

• CMH 6905 - Master's Project, Credits: 2

• CMH 6885 - Clinical Counseling Theories

• CMH 6835 - Group Process

• CMH 6855 - Social and Cultural Foundations

• CMH 6055 - Measurement & Testing

• CMH 6865 - Career and Lifestyle Development

**Additional Coursework:**

The following course is required for students completing 66 credits.

• CMH 6635 - Internship III (optional, required for Maine LCPC)

Total Credits: 63, 65 (WI) or 66

**Student Progress**

All students are reviewed biannually, for Academic Progress. In addition, all students are reviewed at the completion of CMH 6505/Internship I for continued advancement towards the Master of Science degree. This is generally at the midpoint of their progress through the program.

The Program reserves the right to administratively withdraw students whose academic, clinical or internship performance or conduct is not sufficient for continuation to the Master’s level.

Progress through the Master of Science:

* CMH 6105 and 6805 are prerequisites to beginning the Practicum (CMH 6155, 6165) and Clinical Specialization courses (CMH 6355 and 6365 or 6455 and 6465)
* Completion of CMH6155/Practicum is a prerequisite for enrollment in 6505/Internship I.
* Completion of CMH 6155/Practicum and CMH 6505/Internship I is a prerequisite for enrollment in CMH 6625/Internship II.
* A student may delay CMH 6505/Internship I and enroll in Internship I at the time that the rest of his/her cohort is enrolled in CMH 6625/Internship II.
* Students who have not completed at least the first half of Internship I (CMH 6505) with a Satisfactory (passing) mid-term evaluation and grade, by the midpoint of the program may be required to stop all further enrollment in advanced course work towards the M.S. until at least 1.5 credits of CMH 6505/Internship I has been completed. Failure to complete any of the Foundation or Clinical core course work (6355 and 6365 or 6455 and 6465) by this point in time also may result in a student being denied further enrollment in Masters courses until the deficient course work is successfully completed.
* Completion of all Foundation and Clinical core course work and of CMH 6655/Program Evaluation and Systems Research are prerequisites for enrollment in CMH 6905/Masters Project.
* It is recommended that students take CMH 6825/Human Development before enrolling in CMH 6895/Early Childhood and Family Mental Health and CMH 6925/Elders: Mental Health and Substance Abuse.
* The Advanced courses above are considered freestanding and may be taken out of sequence with program prerequisites, except that:
  + CMH 6805/Diagnosis, Assessment & Psychopathology is a prerequisite for CMH 6055/Measurement and Testing.
  + CMH 6355 and 6365 or 6455 and 6465 (Clinical 1 and 2) are prerequisites to CMH 6755 and 6765.
  + It is highly recommended that students take CMH 6885/Clinical Counseling Theories before enrolling in CMH 6865/Career and Lifestyle Development.

**Degree Conferral**

In order for the M.S. to be conferred, all grades must be entered and the student must have:

* A minimum of 63 to 66 credits with a Grade Point Average (GPA) of "B" or better (3.0 on a 4.0 scale)
* No more than 12 graduate credits transferred from another accredited college or university (subject to program approval)
* Completion of 100 hours of Practicum plus an approved 600 to 900 hours of internship experience, graded Satisfactory, and
* *Submit an Application for Graduation* in accordance with the timeline established by the Registrar’s Office.  Students missing these deadlines must have their graduation request approved by the School or Graduate Dean.

PCMH follows VTSU grading and other academic policies, as outlined below.

Graduate Academic Policies: <https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=143>

Graduate Grading Policy:

<https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=143#graduate-grading>

#### Graduate Grading

**Grades.** All grading is at the discretion of the instructor. At the graduate level, the highest grade possible is an “A”. Any Grade below a “C+” is a Failing grade. Other Grades (for which no quality points are assigned, see Graduate Catalogue for more):

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| I | Incomplete (See [Incompletes](http://catalog.jsc.edu/content.php?catoid=8&navoid=280&hl=grading&returnto=search#Incompletes) below) |  |
| P or NP | Pass/No Pass |  |
| NG | No grade indicates that no grade has yet been submitted. The grade will be recorded upon course completion. |  |
| TR | Transfer credit |  |
| CR | Credit granted (non-course work) |  |
| W | Withdrawn\* |  |
| AU | Audit |  |

\*Withdrawals are recorded by the Registrar’s Office only after receipt of an authorized course withdrawal.

In general, faculty grades are due 48 hours after the end of the term.

Students in graduate courses are graded on a continuum from A through F. Graduate credit is granted when grades of A through C+ are earned; however, courses with grades of C+ do not meet program or graduation requirements.  Performance at the C through F level is graded as F (unsatisfactory) and earns no credit. A Pass/No Pass option is available for some courses.

Matriculated graduate students must maintain a GPA of 3.0.  A student with a lower program GPA may be placed on probation status.  Some programs have specific grading policies to meet the requirements of their accrediting agency.

Students access their grades through Self Service in the VTSU Portal.

### Incompletes. <https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=143#incompletes>

An instructor may assign a grade of Incomplete (I) if the student is unable to complete the work of the course for reasons beyond their control, provided the student’s work in the course to-date is of satisfactory quality.  An Incomplete grade should only be considered when the student has completed a substantial portion of the work for the course.  The instructor issuing the Incomplete, in consultation with the student, shall specify the length of time for completing the supplemental work, not exceeding the end of the seventh week of the following semester (excluding summer).  The grade of ”I” will not be used in calculating the GPAs.  The final grade for the course is determined by the quality of the original work and the supplemental work.  If the student fails to complete the supplemental work, the instructor will determine a final grade based on the original work.  If the instructor does not specify a final grade, the grade may default to F when the Incomplete grade expires.  Students who are not in good academic standing, or who are requesting more than two Incomplete grades for the semester require additional approval from the program director.

When a grade of Incomplete is replaced by another grade, the previously recorded grade of “I” is removed on the transcript and replaced with the final grade

## 

## **Repeat Course Option and Missed Courses.**

<https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=143#incompletes>

Some courses are designated as repeatable for additional credit as indicated in the Course Descriptions section of the catalog.  Students may repeat a course that is not designated as repeatable two times for an improved grade, except Independent Study, Special Topics, or other new, piloted courses.

When an undesignated course has been repeated for an improved grade, the initial grade remains on the transcript, however quality points and credits awarded are removed from the student’s GPA calculations.  The most recent grade will be computed in the student’s cumulative and program GPA.  Credit for repeating an undesignated course may be earned only once.  If the credit value of the course has changed, the student earns the credits of the repeated section.

Specific to the MS in CMH, students who fail to successfully complete any CMH courses, or who miss a course when it is offered for the cohort as a whole, have several options, depending on the situation in their local area:

 It may be possible to take the course the following year at the student's current site, if a new cohort of students is enrolled at that site.

 The student may complete that course at another PCMH site or remotely with another cohort, with program permission.

* The student may be able to take an equivalent course with the MA in counseling

offered on campus in Johnson, for courses allowing remote access.

 In exceptional cases, in which a student has missed a substantial part of a course, the student may be allowed to re-take the course through a tutorial or independent study. Such requests should be directed to the Academic Advisor. A student must also apply to the Program Director to complete course work through a tutorial. Such applications will be approved depending on the circumstances and on the availability of faculty to serve in that capacity.

 In cases in which students intend to take courses in the following year, there are no guarantees that state-specific financial aid or scholarships will be available at that future time

Grade Appeals: <https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=143#grade-appeals>

A student with questions or concerns about a grade should discuss the issue with the instructor and as needed the program director. A student who wishes to appeal a recorded grade may submit a petition to the program director and sponsoring academic unit.  Further appeals may be submitted to the Graduate Standing Committee through the Office of Graduate Studies and the School or Graduate Division Dean.  An alteration will only be considered with clear and substantiated evidence to demonstrate problems with the original grade.

**Academic Integrity:**

[**https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=143#academic-integrity**](https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=143#academic-integrity)

Vermont State University upholds high standards of academic integrity from all community members.  Academic integrity encompasses honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and the courage to act on these fundamental values (International Center for Academic Integrity [ICAI], 2021; The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity, 3rd ed.).  A student who fails to uphold these values may experience academic consequences including a grade of F, indicating no credit, for assignments or courses, or dismissal from the University.  Examples of failure to uphold academic integrity may include using unauthorized aids to complete or enhance academic work, copying another person’s work on exams, quizzes, or assignments, or engaging in other forms of plagiarism.  To plagiarize is to use someone else’s words or ideas without full and proper citation and to present them as one’s own.  The sharing of VTSU password and login credentials to misrepresent oneself in online learning is a violation of academic integrity.  Violations need not be intentional in nature.  All members of the VTSU community are expected to investigate and understand their responsibility to act with integrity, and to seek assistance when uncertain.

## **Good Academic Standing.**

## [**https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=143#good-standing**](https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=143#good-standing)

#### Good Standing

Good Standing is a category for matriculated graduate students with current enrollment, a program GPA of 3.0, and academic progress in accordance with their Plan of Study.  Programs may implement other specific requirements for Good Standing including completion of other indicators such as program prerequisites, midway benchmark assessments, and fieldwork or licensure obligations.

#### Probation

Academic probation is a category identifying students who may benefit from additional assistance, an altered Plan of Study, or a reconsideration of their academic goals.  Probation will be enacted for a student whose cumulative program GPA falls below 3.0 Academic probation will block registration and may impact scholarship eligibility, graduate assistantship arrangements, and financial aid.  Students will be notified of probation status.

#### Dismissal

Upon two consecutive semesters without Good Standing in their program and progress on an improvement plan, a student may be subject to academic dismissal from a program or the University.  At the end of a student’s first semester in regular program courses or degree-approved electives, a student without a program GPA of 2.3 or above, or other criteria for Good Standing, may be subject to Early Dismissal from the program and the University.

Students who have been dismissed may submit an appeal to their program director through the Office of Graduate Studies.

Some graduate programs have criteria that exceed the requirements of the University.  In such cases, students may be dismissed from their degree programs even when they are otherwise in good academic standing.

Students who have been dismissed from a program may apply to a different program.  Students who have been dismissed from a program and wish to reapply to that program should consult the program director and the School or Graduate Dean.  Students who have been dismissed from the University may reapply to Vermont State University after at least one semester away.

## **Adding, Dropping & Withdrawing from Courses.**

## [**https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=143#adding\_dropping\_and-withdrawing**](https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=143#adding_dropping_and-withdrawing)

**The policies in the paragraphs below apply for full-semester courses.**

Students may add full-semester courses through the first week of the semester without instructor permission; matriculated students may do so through Self-Service, non-matriculated students may do so through the non-matriculated registration procedures outlined on the Graduate Studies section of the website.  Students who add a course during the add period are encouraged to contact the instructor immediately.  After the add period, students may use the Graduate Registration Adjustment form to add a course upon obtaining the instructor’s permission.  After the second week of a full-semester course, the instructor and program director for the course must approve a late add.

Students who drop a full-semester course within the first two weeks will have the course removed from their transcript.  Students are encouraged to contact their advisor and the Office of Financial Aid regarding the ramifications of dropping courses.

Students seeking to withdraw from a full-semester course after the drop period, but before the 60% point of the semester (usually the 9th week in a 15-week semester), must submit a request using the Graduate Registration Adjustment Form.  Withdraws will be assigned a grade of “W” on the official transcript. A “W” will not impact a student’s grade point average.  After the 60% point, the student may not drop or withdraw from a course and will receive the grade earned at the end of the semester.

However, students compelled to drop or withdraw from courses outside of standard timelines due to circumstances beyond their control may petition the program director for an exception to this policy.

**The policies in the paragraphs below apply for courses that do not meet for the standard term duration.**

Course duration is the number of calendar days between the start and end date of the section.   
The add period is 6% of course duration.  Students may add the courses through Self-Service during the add period. The Graduate Registration Adjustment form and instructor’s permission is required to add after the 6% mark. The program director must approve a late add after 13% of the course duration.

Students may drop a course within the first 13% of the course. The withdraw period is between 13% and 60% of course duration. Withdraws require the Graduate Registration Adjustment form.  A grade of “W” is assigned.  After the 60% point, students are not permitted to drop or withdraw unless they petition for a late drop or late withdraw due to exigent circumstances.  Petitions should be submitted through the Office of Graduate Studies to the program director.  Late drop or late withdraw petitions will be reviewed by the Graduate Standing Committee.  Decisions may be appealed to the School or Graduate Dean.

## **Non-matriculated Students.** Students who have a bachelor’s degree but are not matriculated in one of the college’s graduate programs may enroll in open graduate courses after the designated registration for matriculated graduate students and with program permission.

## **Auditing Courses.** [**https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=143#auditing**](https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=143#auditing)

If space is available, matriculated or non-matriculated students with a bachelor’s degree may audit a graduate course with the approval of the course instructor.  Those auditing a course are not required to take examinations or prepare assignments, and no grade or credit is conferred.  Select the audit option when registering.  After the add period, no change will be made either to allow credit for a course audited, or to change a course to the status of an audited course.  For the tuition rates of auditing, see [Tuition and Fees](https://vermontstate.acalogadmin.com/preview/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=136#audited-courses).

## **Exits & Leaves of Absence:**

<https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=143#leave-of-absence>

Leave of Absence Matriculated graduate students are expected to demonstrate steady progress through their Plan of Study with consistent enrollment.

Graduate students in good academic standing who wish to pause their enrollment for an extended period of time may submit a request to their program director. Leaves of a year or more are subject to review by a School or Graduate Dean. In special circumstances, a leave may be extended. Requesting a leave may affect the student’s Program Plan and catalog year, particularly if it extends beyond the time limit for the program.

Financial aid recipients considering taking a leave of absence should contact the Financial Aid Office to determine the impact of such action on their eligibility for financial aid.

#### University Exit

A student may withdraw from the University prior to the time limits for their program by completing an exit form.

Transcripts for students who exit the University will reflect courses and grades consistent with the course Add/Drop/Withdrawal Policy.  Students who exit the University after the 60% point of their term of enrollment will receive earned grades for their courses unless they appeal for late withdraws.  A student who stops attending classes after the drop period, and doesn’t inform the college, will receive earned grades for their courses.

Students who have voluntarily exited the University and have completed an exit form may petition the program director to return to the University under their original catalog year without re-apply through admissions with the following conditions:

* Student is returning to the same program.
* Student earned VTSU credits prior to exiting.
* Student was in good academic standing upon exiting.
* Student reactivates their matriculation status and re-enrolls within the time limit for the program.

### Appeal of Academic Policies.

Graduate students may appeal an academic regulation or decision to the instructor, program director, and Graduate Committee.  Further appeals may be made to the School or Graduate Dean and the Provost.  In all cases, the decision of the Provost will be final.  Information on procedures for submitting an appeal may be obtained from the Office of Graduate Studies.

### Most often, questions about courses or grades can be resolved through a conversation with the instructor. A student with a concern or complaint about an instructor or course should speak first to the instructor. If the student is not satisfied or cannot resolve the issue at that level, then they should speak to the Director of PCMH and then follow the policies above.

## **Time Limit to Complete a Graduate Degree.**

The standard time limit for matriculated graduate students to complete a program is five years from the date of acceptance.  Some programs maintain a longer program-specific time limit and some programs are open-ended to support continuous graduate professional learning.  See Standing for additional information. Federal financial aid has guidelines concerning acceptable time to degree completion and GPAs.  Student should contact financial aid office for details.

**Class Attendance; Class Cancellations/Schedule changes**

**Class Attendance**

[**https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=143#attendance**](https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=143#attendance)

Attendance and participation expectations are developed for each course and described on the course syllabus.  If a student experiences obstacles to full participation in a course, it is their responsibility to inform the instructor and to make satisfactory arrangements for completing coursework.  Students experiencing difficulties in attending multiple courses may also contact the Office of Graduate Studies or Disability Services.

**MS in CMH Attendance Policy:**

All students are expected to attend all scheduled classes. The responsibility of attendance rests on each student. The primary penalty for non-attendance lies in the student's lessened grasp of the subject matter of the course.

In the case of an extreme emergency, students can be excused by the instructor for the equivalent of no more than four contact hours. Missing class time is always up to the instructor’s discretion.

Anything beyond 4 hours requires a discussion with the student’s advisor.

Any student missing more class time will seriously jeopardize their ability to successfully complete the course requirements. It is the instructor's option whether to repeat any scheduled or unscheduled work, tests or quizzes that have taken place in a student's absence. Further, instructors may impose any additional requirements on the student that arise from missing any of the regularly scheduled contact hours with faculty.

Attendance is a particularly crucial issue in PCMH since each day of instruction constitutes 25% of the total face-to-face contact with a faculty member. Students who regularly miss classes may be dropped from the course or even the Program, based on the impact of those absences on academic performance.

**Tardiness.** Students are expected to be present for the full class weekend. The site liaison collects attendance, and the instructor signs off on the attendance. If a student shows a pattern of missed time, they will be asked to have a discussion with their advisor. If the students is consistently missing time every weekend, this may significantly affect their grades, and they may be requested to stop further enrollment until class participation is possible.

**Class Cancellation/Schedule adjustments by the University**

In the event that inclement weather or faculty emergency (or other cause) strongly suggests a need to move a class to a remote format (e.g., zoom) OR cancel class, the Program Director, Site Liaison and the faculty member will consult with each other, and the Program Director will make the final decision, in concert with VTSU. If contact is not possible with the Program Director, the instructor will make the final decision. Students should call the program or the Site Liaison if they have any questions about whether class will be canceled.

If the decision is made to offer a class remotely via zoom or to cancel class, the Program will send an e-mail notice to students VTSU e-mail and/or post a notice to Canvas for the cohort. Students are responsible for checking their VTSU e-mail for cancellation messages and for contacting the program or site liaison of they are unsure about a cancellation. Students serving as Site Liaison also maintain a telephone list through which students can be reached with any urgent information

If PCMH cancels class, the class will be rescheduled, either via zoom (the preferred method) or to meet the following weekend, or unless otherwise notified by the program.

**Honors**

No GPA-based honors are awarded in graduate programs.

**Student Records**

Records for students are maintained by the Vermont State University Registrar. Vermont State University retains transcripts and student records permanently.

[Registrar@VermontState.edu](mailto:Registrar@VermontState.edu)

**Transcript Requests**

Official transcripts are available by submitting an online request from this page:

<https://www.parchment.com/u/registration/32962/institution>

It is important to note that you must have fulfilled all your financial obligations to the University to successfully place a transcript request.

**Federal Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)**

Information for students related to FERPA is provided on this page, through the VTSU Website:

<https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=153&hl=%22FERPA%22&returnto=search#family-educational-rights-privacy-act>

The Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their educational records. The primary rights afforded to each student include but are not limited to the right to inspect and review their education records, the right to amend incorrect records and the right to limit disclosure of information from the records.

In accordance with federal law and regulations issued by the Department of Education, the Vermont State Colleges System (“VSC”) has adopted policies and procedures for each of its Colleges. The Colleges within the VSC are: Vermont State University and the Community College of Vermont. The purpose of this VSC policy is to provide guidance on the rights of inspection and the prohibitions against unauthorized dissemination of educational information. See  VSC’s full [FERPA policy](https://www.vsc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Policy-312-FERPA-Compliance-revised-6-20-19.pdf) for additional details.  More information is also available from:

**Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave. SW  
Washington, DC20202-4605  
Email:**[**FERPA@ed.gov**](mailto:FERPA@ed.gov) **Telephone: (202) 260.3887  
Fax: (202) 260.9001**

**Faculty and Staff**

The MS in CMH (PCMH) draws from several sources to provide high quality, relevant instruction to students: (1) Full-time administrative staff/faculty, who are experienced in counselor education, mental health and substance use counseling and in graduate education for adult learners, in a weekend format program; (2 ) a core of “senior” part-time faculty, who are national leaders in the counseling and mental health fields and who teach for PCMH very regularly, and (3) local counselors and mental health practitioners hired as faculty on a course-by-course basis for their expertise in the topic and in behavioral health services in that state or site. This mix of respected practitioners and scholars in the field makes for a diverse, deep and broad group of experts from whom students may develop a comprehensive understanding of state-of-the-art practice.

Below is a snapshot of faculty who may be assigned to teach in Wisconsin, along with senior faculty who teach across sites:

Cross-site instructors:

* Damir Alisa, MS, NCC
* Laurie Berryman Ed.D
* Julian Cesner, MS
* John Chianelli, M.S., OTR, CTTP
* Annamarie Cioffari, Ph.D.
* Laura Clemmons Ed.D
* Michal Eakin, Ph.D., LCMHC and Licensed Psychologist-Doctorate
* Tracie Carlson, M.S., LCMHC
* Bethany Goss, M.S., LCMHC
* Mark Honigman, MA, MSW, CCSW
* Lindy Lewis, Ph.D., LCSW
* Susan Norton, M.S.
* Allison Poritz M.S.
* Alexandra Potter, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist – Doctorate
* Michelle Rauch M.S.
* Richard Reid, Ph.D., NASP certified
* Susanne Schmidt, MS, LCMHC, School Counselor, NBCC Certified
* Frank Simac, M.S., LPC, CSAC, CS-IT
* Susan Swindell, MA, Licensed Psychologist – Masters (VT)
* Brian Townsend, MS, LCPC
* Craig Volatile-Wood, M.S., LCMHC
* Catherine Waugh, Ph.D.
* Julie Welkowitz, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist – Doctorate
* Kelly (Bueschel) Williams, M.S., LPC
* Kristine Zelechowski M.S.

**Support Services**

**Access to the VTSU Portal**

Upon admission, students are assigned a student ID number and are provided with an email account and portal access, through which they may access information about academics, financial aid and billing, the library, support services, grade information, and other information.

**Academic Advising.** Once students have been accepted into the program, they are assigned to an academic advisor. Generally, students will meet their advisor in the Orientation or at their first class. The advisor is regularly available to students through e-mail, via zoom or by phone. The advisor is available to each student throughout their enrollment, to

* address any issues of concern or special needs that may arise due to personal and life circumstances,
* assess how the program is working for the student, and
* monitor student progress and identify any issues or concerns which may interfere with the student's ability to perform satisfactorily in the program.

Students are responsible for contacting their Academic Advisor when and if they have any questions or concerns about their progress or if circumstances arise that interfere with the student's ability to participate in the program.

**Disability Services. Link:** [Disability Services - Vermont State University](https://vermontstate.edu/academics/student-success/disability-services/)

The Office of Disability Services collaborates with Vermont State’s diverse community to ensure that all aspects of campus life — learning, working, and living — are inclusive and accessible. The office supports students with a range of disability accommodations, resources, education, and direct services so that people with disabilities have a greater opportunity to achieve their goals as independent and resilient learners.

It is the policy of Vermont State University to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and any other applicable federal and state laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. The university is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities so that no such student shall, by reason of disability, be excluded from participating in or be denied the benefits of services, programs, or activities at the university.

The following is included in every syllabus for students in the MS in CMH program:

“Students with documented disabilities may request specific accommodations. To arrange for this, students should contact, as soon as possible, the Vermont State University Disability Services. Pamela Billings is the contact for MS in CMH graduate students (Pamela.Billings@VermontState.edu).”

**Library and learning resources**

<https://vermontstate.edu/academics/libraries-studios-more/vermont-state-university-libraries/>

Our campus libraries are at the heart of learning, research, and the creation of new knowledge. We provide access to information that fuels intellectual growth and spaces that build community and foster the pursuit of understanding.

Vermont State’s library collections include a vast number of books, journals, films, special collections, and other resources across our five campuses and online, empowering exploration for students, faculty, staff, and members of the community.

The institution maintains and provides ready access to library and learning resources, virtual and/or physical, that are adequate and appropriate for student achievement of stated program goals and objectives.

Students have full online access to the resources at VTSU libraries, which include the following databases: Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection, PsychArticles, PsychInfo, PsychBooks and the Gale Resources.

Students also join either the American Counseling Association or the American Mental Health Counselors Association, which provide access to journals, literature, and other resources.

**Books and materials**. Students are supplied with ISBN numbers for all required texts, on each syllabus. Students are not required to purchase books from the school. However, they do have access to the E-Campus Bookstore, should they choose to purchase there. Handouts or supplemental readings may be provided, through Canvas. Students are not required to purchase additional materials from the school.

**Employment Services.** The school does not offer employment services and does not guarantee employment for students or graduates of the program. The school does not contact employers for current job openings. Mental health and other agencies may occasionally ask the school to distribute a job posting to students or alumni. Job postings are not solicited by the program, and it is the student’s responsibility to contact any potential employer directly for information.

## **Technical Support.**

Students have access to the IT Helpdesk via <https://servicedesk.vsc.edu>. Self-help resources are found at <https://support.vsc.edu>. They may also [call the Helpdesk](https://support.vsc.edu/it-shared-services-home/get-help/) for assistance.

**Health, Wellness, Counseling:**

The Health and Wellness Center (contact details can be found on the VTSU Portal) and 24 hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK or at[suicidepreventionlifeline.org.](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/)

## **Title IX and Policies.**

**Sexual Misconduct or Discrimination - Title IX, Policies 311 & 311-A:**

<https://resolve.vsc.edu/relevant-policies/>

The Vermont State Colleges and its member Institutions (collectively the “VSC”) are committed to maintaining an educational and working environment free from discrimination, harassment and related unprofessional conduct. The VSC prohibits discrimination on the basis of a person’s race, color, ancestry, ethnicity, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, creed, religion, disability, age, veteran status, marital status, genetic information, positive HIV-related blood test results, or any other status protected by state or federal law (collectively “protected categories”). Sexual harassment, racial harassment, and harassment based upon a person’s status in a protected category are forms of discrimination and will not be tolerated. In addition, inappropriate sexual relationships between VSC employees and students, including those that may not otherwise rise to the level of sexual harassment, are prohibited.

<https://resolve.vsc.edu/relevant-policies/>

The VSC is committed to maintaining an educational and working environment free from all forms of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment as defined below. The VSC is also committed to maintaining an educational and working environment free from sexual exploitation, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Such misconduct will not be tolerated. These acts not only violate a person’s feelings of trust and safety but can also substantially interfere with a person’s education or employment.

The following statement (or an updated version) is included on all syllabi:

“Vermont State University is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and sexual harassment (sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, gender or sex-based harassment and stalking). If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or sexual harassment, know that help and support are available. Under both state and federal law, students are guaranteed the right to an education free and clear of any discrimination or harassment. If you feel that you’ve been discriminated against or harassed, please know that you can come to me or any other faculty/staff member regarding your concerns, BUT know that in many cases, my responsibility to your safety supersedes confidentiality. I will not share your concerns at large, but I am mandated to make reports to the appropriate people, should it rise to that level. While I am mandated to report, you are not mandated to meet with or talk with the Title IX office.

There are two policies in particular which detail your rights and protections:

1. [Policy 311](https://www.vsc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Policy-311-Revised-for-08-12-20-1-1.pdf) means that you are protected from discrimination or harassment on the basis of any protected identity, including but not limited to gender identity, sexual orientation, race, religion, disability status, veteran status, and more. This also includes sexual harassment on the basis of these classes.
2. [Policy 311-A](https://www.vsc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Policy-311-A-08-12-20-1-1.pdf) means that if you’ve experienced domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, sexual harassment, or sexual exploitation, you are protected from such behaviors under the policy, also known as Title IX.

If you, or someone you know, has experienced the above behaviors, you may make a report to Amy Daviarz in the Title IX office. She may be reached by email at [amy.daviarz@vsc.edu](mailto:amy.daviarz@vsc.edu) or by phone at 802-279-2808 (please note that this phone will not accept text messages). You may also reach out to the on-campus Wellness Center for additional therapeutic or advocacy assistance. If you do not wish to speak with someone at the school, there are community resources available.”

**FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

# Tuition and Fees 2024-25:

**Application Fee:** $50

(Due at time of application; typically waived for graduate applicants)

**Orientation Fee**: $946

(Due at time of orientation; one time tuition and fee for CMH 5005)

**Tuition September 2024 – August 2025:** $661 per credit

(Due at time of registration, at the start of each Term – Fall, Spring, Summer)

**Estimated Cost of Books and Readings:** $100 - $200 per course

(Varies by course and instructor syllabus; costs may be substantially

reduced by purchasing used books in good condition)

**Graduation Fee:** $TBD

(Plus the cost of an optional cap and gown)

## **Refund Policies**

## **Refund Policy.**

<https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=136&hl=%22Refund+Policy%22&returnto=search#refund-policies>

***For courses, such as those in the MS in CMH, that do not meet for the standard term duration, the following formula-based drop refund calculation is utilized:***

Course duration is the number of calendar days between the start and end date of the section. The drop refund period is considered 13% of the course duration. The student would then get 100% of their tuition and fees refunded as long as they are still enrolled. For non-standard term courses, this percentage-based approach is consistent with the academic drop policy and the section batch override process used by the registrar’s office to apply add/drop dates.

### Withdrawal Refund Policy

### Upon withdrawal (from a course) or complete withdrawal or dismissal from the Institution prior to the 60% point of the term, a student shall be credited tuition, room, and board charges on a prorated basis.  Upon complete withdrawal or dismissal on or after the 60% point of the semester no adjustment or credit shall be issued to the student’s account.

For WI students: These policies comply with the WI Chapter SPS 408 REFUND STANDARDS: <https://dsps.wi.gov/Documents/EA408.pdf>

VTSU does not require an Enrollment agreement. Newly accepted students submit a Graduate Decision form. No charges are applied to their student account until they register for courses for the upcoming term. Once a course begins, students have a minimum of 7 days (or 13% of a course) to drop with a full refund. This meets the WI Enrollment policy: Chapter SPS 406: <https://dsps.wi.gov/Documents/EA406.pdf>

**Financial Aid:**

**Financial Aid main page:** [**https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=203**](https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=203)

[Academic Standing for Financial Aid Purposes](https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=203#academic-standing-for-financial-aid-purposes)

[Adjustments to Financial Aid Awards](https://catalog.vermontstate.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=203#adjustments-to-financial-aid-awards)

The Financial Aid Office at Vermont State University administers a comprehensive financial aid program to help students afford a university education. The financial aid program at Vermont State University primarily consists of federal funds (primarily loans, at the graduate level) with secondary funds coming from applicable state organizations and/or private loans or scholarships.

Students must complete a FAFSA to be considered for federal aid. The FAFSA is made available on October 1st for the following year and must be submitted each year to be considered for federal aid. Students may apply for financial aid online at [www.Studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov/).

The Financial Aid Office may request additional information to determine your eligibility. Notification of financial aid eligibility will be emailed to all students advising them to go to the VTSU portal to review their financial aid offer. The student should respond to any request for additional information as soon as they are able. Failure to do so may result in loss or delay of financial aid. Financial Aid offers are packaged for accepted new students and to registered returning students. Returning students must be registered or intend to register for the period of time for which they are requesting aid.

## **Adjustments to Financial Aid Awards.** Financial aid awards may need to be adjusted if a student exits the college during a semester. Federal regulations govern the return of Title IV funds for students eligible for federal financial aid. The University is guided by those regulations. Other aid, such as state grants and outside scholarships, will be returned as specified by the grantor. If a student stops attending all classes and does not complete an Exit Notification and/or Leave of Absence Form at that time, their Title IV funds may be adjusted or canceled, and the student will then be personally responsible for their bill. If Title IV funds need to be returned, they will be returned in the following sequence:

* Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan
* Federal Direct Subsidized Loan
* Federal Graduate Plus Loan

**APPENDICES**

* 1. **Course List by Specialization**
  2. **Course Descriptions**
  3. **Program Evaluation**
  4. **Higher Education Authorities by State**
  5. **Counseling Associations by State**
  6. **Licensing Boards by State**
  7. **Sample Course Schedule**

**Appendix A: Course List by Specialization**

**Students: See Course list in Canvas PCMH Student Site**

**(Included for WI EAB in Marketing & Recruitment Materials)**

**Appendix B: Course Descriptions**

**See Course Descriptions in Canvas PCMH Student Site**

**Appendix C: Program Evaluation**

**Current M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (PCMH) evaluation practices**

***Course Evaluations.*** Course evaluations are distributed at the end of every face-to-face class, and also at the end of each Term for those students in practicum or internship, and summarized by our clerical staff. The program has been using this method because there is a much higher response rate than for online evaluations. Annual results of student course evaluations are provided to faculty, in late summer or early Fall of each year. In the 2015-16 academic year, 0n a 4-point scale, with 4 equaling “Excellent”: the mean overall Instructor rating was 3.7; the mean overall Course Rating was 3.6.

***Student Satisfaction Survey****.* Student Satisfaction Surveys are administered at the time of program completion, for all cohorts.The Student Satisfaction Survey asks about the students overall satisfaction with the program and how well it met students’ expectations. It asks students to rate the instruction, field experiences, advising, administrative support, services, and the weekend format/cohort experience, as well as the balance of in class versus out-of-class work. Students have the opportunity to list the program’s greatest strengths and areas for improvement. Across states, overall, student satisfaction with the program is very high:

* 94% report that they are satisfied with the program
* 88% say “Very” to Extremely” Satisfied
* 90% report that the program met their expectations
* 85% say the program met their expectations “Very” to Extremely” well

The strengths cited most frequently are:

* the Faculty – their diversity, in both knowledge and in bringing information from all over the country, and in their expertise in clinical practice. Several PCMH staff and adjunct faculty were mentioned by name as excellent instructors (Dr. Waugh, Dr. Lewis, Dr. Eakin, Mark Honigman).
* The Weekend Format and Cohort model – with its flexibility and accessibility, and the benefits of forming a learning community and learning from peers
* The overall Curriculum, its balance of theory, practice and advocacy for systems change, and particular areas, such as: person-centered and strengths-based approaches, attention to stigma reduction and integrating the perspectives of people with mental health challenges; integrated approach (to health, mental health and addictions), and research/Masters Project.

The areas cited most frequently for improvement and changes implemented were:

* More use of Blackboard (this is now Canvas at VTSU).

In 2015-16, all instructors were required to use a Learning Management System for some assignments, and the program and director provided technical assistance and support.

* Better internship coordination and support. The internship instructors in Maine receive excellent feedback, In addition, the program implemented an online [pre-practicum and internship planning site](file:///C:\Users\a.cioffari\Documents\cioffaan\Section%20I%20Appendices\SNHU_PCMH%20Resources\Sample%20Student%20Blackboard%20page-06292016213724.pdf) that was well received.

***Alumni Survey.*** The Graduate Program in Clinical Mental Health Counseling also recently distributed an online [Alumni Survey](file:///C:\Users\a.cioffari\Documents\cioffaan\Section%20I%20Appendices\Evaluation\alumni%20survey.pdf), through our alumni list serves, to all alumni for whom we had e-mail addresses, across the 5 states in which the program is offered. The survey was distributed to 599 e-mail addresses, and 100 responses were received. This is approximately a 17% response rate. However, the list serves do not notify us when an e-mail is undeliverable. There is a good probability that less than 599 alumni were reached. Therefore, at least a 20% response rate is likely a very conservative, and more accurate, estimate.

In addition, the response rate reflected the number of alumni in each location, except for a slightly higher response from our Vermont alumni. This may be due to a better network of alumni in Vermont, the state in which the program started, or simply be due to the percentage of correct e-mail addresses in each state. The number of surveys sent and response rate received is also consistent with the number of cohorts the program has had in each state.

As with the Student Satisfaction Survey, Alumni responses were very positive.

* **86% are currently working in the field** as a clinical mental health or addictions counselor, the majority as a clinician in a mental health organization, in private practice, or as an administrator/program director
* **85% are licensed or part-way through the process**:
  + 42 % are currently licensed as a Clinical Mental Health or Professional Counselor
  + Another 43% are in the process of pursuing licensure, having had their course work approved and/or passed the exam and are completing the post-master’s supervised practice.

The greatest strengths pf the program mentioned are:

* The Faculty (knowledgeable, experienced and current in the field). Both core and non-core faculty were mentioned by name. Some also mentioned the dedicated and supportive administration.
* The Delivery format (flexible, weekend – face-to-face, but accessible, cohort/learning community/peers)
* The Curriculum. Getting several mentions were: Strong foundations/mental health core, ethics, multicultural/diversity, strength-based/person-centered/recovery-oriented, integrated approach to mental health and co-occurring disorders/addictions, systems leadership/change/advocacy.

Alumni were asked to check all areas below that applied, in response to the question: **Did the program prepare you to work in the field as a Clinical Mental Health Counselor?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Answer Choices** | **Responses** |
| Relevant theoretical content | 79.00% |
| Relevant counseling skills | 73.00% |
| Decision making within an ethical context | 77.00% |
| Leadership and advocacy | 63.00% |
| Multicultural and diversity awareness: e.g., race, gender identity | 63.00% |
| Management and supervision | 36.00% |
| Integrated co-occurring treatment | 61.00% |
| Strengths based, client centered approach | 86.00% |
| **Total Respondents: 100** |  |

Areas for improvement were more individualized and diverse, in terms of response, although better coordination of internships and better internet access and use of technology, were echoed, as well as more on diagnosis and assessment, counseling theory and addictions information, and more challenging assignments. These are all areas that have been addressed, as previously discussed. Interestingly, some students who identified as LADCS when they entered the program felt that the addictions content could be further strengthened, particularly in the child specialization. This also has been addressed by increasing the addictions content in PCMH 635 and 636 (Child Clinical I and II), and making room in the curriculum for all students to take PCMH 676/Psychopharmacology.

***Site Supervisors and Employers*.** An online survey was distributed broadly, through our networks, to mental health organizations, other employers and internship site supervisors, across our 5 locations. The program is still collecting responses to these surveys. To date, 12 employers and 26 internship site supervisors have responded.

All site supervisors (100%) and 83% (10 out of 12) employers said they would recommend the program to others seeking a graduate degree in clinical mental health counseling. Of the two employers that responded in the negative, one said that he/she recommends social work programs, and one said that they would prefer a graduate of our program, but would also prefer a school psychology background.

*Site Supervisor Survey. Response to the following question: Please rate our students on the following areas as it relates to work readiness as a clinical mental health counselor:*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Strongly agree** | **Agree** | **Disagree** |
| PCMH students make decision within an ethical framework that puts the interest of the client first. | 76.92%  20 | 23.08%  6 | 0.00% |
| PCMH students exhibit strong leadership and advocacy within the field of clinical mental health counseling. | 50.00%  13 | 50.00%  0 | 0.00%  0 |
| PCMH students have a strength based knowledge of addiction and recovery. | 48.00%  12 | 48.00%  12 | 4.00%  1 |
| PCMH students have strong awareness of multicultural and diverse populations (e.g., race, gender identity, new Americans). | 48.00%  12 | 52.00%  13 | 0.00%  0 |
| PCMH students demonstrate good clinical mental health counseling skills and practice. | 64.00%  16 | 36.00%  9 | 0.00%  0 |
| PCMH students understand and implement best / evidence based practice/s. | 61.54%  16 | 38.46%  10 | 0.00%  0 |
| I would recommend / hire PCMH students for clinical mental health counselor positions. | 69.23%  18 | 30.77%  8 | 0.00%  0 |

*Site Supervisor Survey Responses: Comments:*

* I have found it to be a sound program and its structure meets the needs of working students.
* Appears to be strong program, with dedicated staff, well rounded program and flexible. Students appear strong and independent thinkers, and flexible as well.
* Student was prepared; program was available and accessible to trouble shoot.
* I’ve supervised students from other programs too and PCMH students are better prepared for internships. The internship supervisors follow up better with the sites.
* The program is just what Alaska needs to address mental health and substance abuse problems. Alaska’s unique environments allows students to address the festering problems unique to Alaska.
* The students I have worked with have excellent clinical skills and insight. Their follow through is great and they are passionate about their work.
* The students are mid-career for the most part and bring years of experience into the classroom. Class discussions are rich and diverse. The curriculum also well prepares students for a career in MH/SA counseling.
* We have been very impressed by the caliber of the students coming to our program as interns. We have hired one and offered a position to another.

*Employer Comments:*

* Interns have been well-educated and are interested in the mental health community.
* It is a well-rounded program looking at mental health, addiction, family involvement, community, etc.
* It is a sound alternative for a graduate degree in the state of Alaska. I have referred several of my students at WBU to your program for their Master’s degree.
* It’s local to our region & has a good reputation.
* Adaptability to working adult’s schedule.
* Because I am also an Alumni and I believe that this program is solid in its coursework regarding community mental health.
* We have an outstanding alumni working for our organization. She has set the bar high for others.
* Many of your instructors are active in the field, program offerings seem very applied, weekend training format works best for many of our staff, program is supportive in using workplace as internship site which really helps students and organization.
* As a faculty member and former Children’s Director at CSAC and School Psychologist at both ACSU and South Burlington School District, I have worked with many interns. Your interns are well educated about school age students, faculty and parents. Having worked with most other Clinical Programs, I have found the interns very educated, but not to the degree to those from (SNHU).

**Appendix D:**

**Higher Education Authorities by State**

**New Hampshire: New Hampshire Department of Education**

101 Pleasant Street | Concord, NH | 03301-3494  
Telephone: (603) 271-3494 | TDD Access: Relay NH 711

<https://www.education.nh.gov/pathways-education/higher-education-new-hampshire>

Alaska: State of Alaska/Alaska Commission On Postsecondary Education

Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education;

PO Box 110505; Juneau, AK 99811-0505

800-441-2962; 907-465-2962

Website: <http://acpe.alaska.gov>

[ACPE@Alaska.gov](mailto:EED.ACPE-IA@alaska.gov)

Maine: Maine Department of Education

Higher Education, Maine Department of Education;

23 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0023; (207) 624-6600

<https://www.maine.gov/doe/home>

Vermont: Postsecondary Education Services,

VT Agency of Education; 219 No. Main St., Suite 402,

Barre, VT 05641

(802) 479-1030

Email: [Aoe.edinfo@vermont.gov](mailto:Aoe.edinfo@vermont.gov)

<https://education.vermont.gov/>

Wisconsin: State of Wisconsin/Educational Approval Program

PO Box 8366

Madison, WI 53708

(608) 266-2112

Email: [DSPSEAP@wi.gov](mailto:DSPSEAP@wi.gov)

<https://dsps.wi.gov/Pages/Programs/EducationalApproval/Default.aspx>

Appendix E. Counseling Associations by State

**Counseling Associations**

**AMERICAN COUNSELING ASSOCIATION (ACA)**

6101 Stevenson Ave, Suite 600. Alexandria, VA 22304

800-347-6647 | 800-473-2329 (fax)

<https://www.counseling.org/>

**AMERICAN MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS ASSOCIATION**

107 S. West St., Ste 779, Alexandria, VA 22314  
Phone: 800-326-2642 or 703-548-6002 Fax

<http://www.amhca.org/>

**ALASKA**

Alaska Counseling Association, Alaska Counseling Association, 35555 Kenai Spur Hwy #139  
Soldotna, AK 99669 - [info@alaskacounseling.org](mailto:info@alaskacounseling.org) - <http://www.alaskacounseling.org/>

**MAINE**

Maine Counseling Association - <http://www.maineca.org/>

**NEW HAMPSHIRE**

New Hampshire Counseling Association - <http://www.nhmhca.org/>

**VERMONT**

Vermont Counseling Association - <http://www.vtmhca.org/>

**WISCONSIN**

Wisconsin Counseling Association - <https://wisconsincounselingassociation.com/>

**Appendix F: Licensing Boards by State**

**Alaska:** Board of Professional Counselors

Andy Khmelev, Occupational Licensing Examiner  
Phone: (907) 465-8444; Fax: (907) 465-2974  
Email: [ProfessionalCounselors@Alaska.Gov](mailto:professionalcounselors@alaska.gov)  
P.O. Box 110806  
Juneau, AK 99811-0806

<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/cbpl/ProfessionalLicensing/ProfessionalCounselors.aspx>

**Maine:** Board of Counseling Professionals Licensure  
Department of Professional & Financial Regulation  
Gardiner Annex; 76 Northern Ave.  
Gardiner, ME. 04345  
Email: [counsel.board@maine.gov](mailto:counsel.board@maine.gov)

<https://www.maine.gov/pfr/professionallicensing/professions/board-of-counseling-professionals-licensure/home/laws-rules>

**New Hampshire:** Board of Mental Health Practice

121 South Fruit Street; Philbrook Building Suite 303; Concord NH 03301-2412  
(603) 271-6761  
(603) 271-6702 (fax)  
Email: [OPLCLicensing9@oplc.nh.gov](mailto:OPLCLicensing9@oplc.nh.gov)

<https://www.oplc.nh.gov/board-mental-health-practice>

**Vermont:** Board of Allied Mental Health Practitioners  
89 Main St., 3rd Floor; Montpelier, VT 05620-3402

Diane LaFaille  
802-828-2390  
[diane.lafaille@sec.state.vt.us](mailto:diane.lafaille@sec.state.vt.us)  
[Vermont Secretary of State - Office of Professional Regulation Allied Mental Health Section](https://sos.vermont.gov/allied-mental-health/)

[Allied Mental Health Statutes, Rules & Resources (vermont.gov)](https://sos.vermont.gov/allied-mental-health/statutes-rules-resources/)

Wisconsin: **Examining Board of Marriage & Family Therapists, Professional Counselors and Social Workers**

<https://dsps.wi.gov/Pages/Professions/LPC/Default.aspx>

608/266-2112

**Appendix G: Sample Course Schedule**

**See Sample Course schedule in Canvas PCMH Student Site**