



**College of Professional Advancement
Department of Counseling
COUN920 3W5: Dissertation
Credit Hours: 1 - 3**

Instructor:	Dr. Karen D. Rowland
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Office Hours:	<i>Monday 10 – 2PM, Tuesday 11 – 5PM, and by appointment only</i>
Class Meeting Time:	Independent Study
Semester:	Fall 2023
Course Website	http://drkdr counselingcourses.weebly.com/

Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to develop, complete, and/or defend an independent research project. Topics for research are to be negotiated between the dissertation advisor and the student. Goal directed behaviors and individual self-discipline are essential to the completion of the dissertation.

Student Learning Outcomes:

The student will:

1. Progress in developing the dissertation abstract, Human Subjects Committee forms, Prospectus, Defense, and Final Document.
2. Complete each chapter in the dissertation (Chapters 1- 5), and submit each chapter to the dissertation chair and committee before being approved for a Defense (Prospectus – Chapters 1-3), or (Dissertation – Chapters 1-5).
3. Defend the Dissertation Prospectus (Chapters 1-3), or Dissertation (Chapters 1-5).
4. Submit final copy of Dissertation to the Graduate School for approval.

Assessment:

The dissertation instructor and the student will complete a contract which outlines expectations for a passing grade for each semester of enrollment in dissertation.

Course Pre-Requisites:

Admission to the PhD program, and successful completion of comprehensive exams.

CACREP Domain	Program Objectives	Key Performance Indicator/SLO (As measured by 1-5 scale on corresponding Rubric question, where passing = 4 or	Assessment Points (Time 1 & Time 2)	Assignment Artifact
1. Counseling	To prepare students to demonstrate advanced expertise in the application of theories and conceptual models of counselor education, supervision practice and	Students will be able to integrate and apply counseling theory and practice at an advanced level, and consider a contextualized background for psychotherapeutic work.	1. COUN 702 Advanced Counseling Theory	1. Case Study Paper and Defense
			2. Comprehensive Written Exam	2. Comprehensive Exam Question #1
2. Supervision	To prepare students for the role of counselor supervisor and gatekeeper in the profession	Students will demonstrate knowledge and skills of foundations of clinical supervision, including: (a) an overview of supervision theories and models, (b) an orientation to the supervisory relationship, (c) modes and methods of supervision intervention, (d) the evaluation of supervisees and supervisors, (e) legal and ethical considerations in the provision of clinical supervision, and (f)	1. COUN 802 Counselor Supervision	1. "Personal Approach to Supervision" Paper
			2. COUN 803 Internship in Supervision	2. "Supervision Case Conceptualization" Paper
3. Teaching	To prepare students to be teachers and evaluators of graduate-level students in counselor education programs	Students will investigate and apply theories and techniques of instruction and evaluation which meet the developmental needs of graduate-level students. Students will formulate a personal pedagogical theory and teaching style.	1. COUN 801 Leadership and Consultation	1. "Final Teaching Philosophy" Paper
			2. COUN 910 Doctoral Internship	2. Teaching Demonstration
4. Research and Scholarship	To prepare students in developing their identities as scholars and in becoming producers, consumers, and evaluators of research in the field	Students will be able to develop research questions and hypotheses appropriate for research in the field and articulate and utilize various research designs and methodologies for critical analysis involved in the production of original research, including a dissertation prospectus	1. COUN 901 Prospectus	1. Prospectus Chapters 1-3 Draft
			2. Comprehensive Written Exam	2. Comprehensive Exam Question #2
5. Leadership and Advocacy	To prepare students to become leaders and advocates within the profession such as at their universities, places of employment, and at the local, state, national and	Students will enhance and apply their understanding of theories and components of multicultural competency as it pertains to working with diverse populations. Students will also learn and articulate models of effective leadership in the counseling field.	1. COUN 706 Advanced Issues of Diversity and Social Justice	1. Advocacy Research Presentation
			2. COUN 801 Leadership and Consultation	2. Teaching Module on Leadership and Advocacy

Attendance and Participation

Course meetings will be by appointment with instructor. The student is expected to schedule time to meet with the instructor on a regular timetable that is outlined in the semester contract for the course. All other work is to be completed independently.

Assignment

Students will complete *at least one chapter* of their dissertation and submit on or before the last day of the semester. Specific chapter/s will be assigned on an individual basis.

Once the student has completed the first 3 chapters, a presentation (***Dissertation Prospectus Defense***), will also be required. Once the student has completed all 5 chapters, a presentation (***Dissertation Defense***), will be required.

Direct Instructional Hours: Total = 2250

Instruction	Time
Weekly Meetings with Instructor/Student	960 - 1260 minutes (60 - 90 minutes per week)
Assignments (including students' presentations)	990 minutes (198 minutes per chapter revisions)

Grading

A grade of **Satisfactory (S)** or **Unsatisfactory (U)** will be earned based on fulfillment of all course requirements as specified in the contract between the course instructor and the student.

Grading scale:

S 80-100% good to mastery of the content/concepts

U <80%

Receiving a “satisfactory” grade requires a standard of achievement equivalent to that usually awarded the grade of B or better. Hours earned with a “*satisfactory*” grade will be added to the total required for graduation, but will not affect a student’s cumulative grade point average; an “*unsatisfactory*” grade will result in **no hours earned** and in no penalty to the cumulative grade point average.

Formatting for Written Work

All written work must be typed using the formatting style outlined in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (latest edition).

Policies:

Academic Integrity

Mercer University strives to be a Community of Respect that includes respect for academic integrity. Students operate under an honor system and will exhibit the values of honesty, trustworthiness, and fairness regarding all academic matters. Students, faculty, and staff are expected to report any violations in the forms of, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and academic dishonesty to the honor council appropriate for their campus and program.

Procedures related to Honor Systems and Academic Integrity are outlined in the specific handbooks for each campus and can be found on the Provost website at <http://provost.mercer.edu/handbooks>.

Community of Respect

Mercer University strives to be a *Community of Respect* where everyone is held in mutual high regard. Because every human being is created in the image of God, each person deserves to be treated with respect and civility. Standards of conduct are based on the values of mutual respect:

Respect for Academic Integrity

We value the worth of every individual in the community and we respect the dignity of each member in the community. We take responsibility for the consideration of the rights of others.

Respect for the University Community

We value showing respect for the rights and property of others. We take responsibility to act to maintain University property.

Respect for Community Authority

We acknowledge and value our privileges and rights as members of the University community. We take responsibility for acting to uphold community standards.

Diversity

Mercer University and the College of Continuing and Professional Studies are committed to social justice and respect for all individuals. The Community Counseling Program seeks to create a culture of community that actively supports all who live, work, and serve in a diverse nation and world. Attaining justice and respect involves all members of the community in recognizing the multi-dimensional diversity that contributes to the learning environment and the community in which we live. An essential part of our program is to create an environment that supports exploration, learning, and work free from bias and harassment, thereby improving growth and development of each member of our community.

Mercer University ACCESS and Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2009 (ADAAA), “otherwise qualified” students with disabilities are protected from discrimination and may be entitled to “reasonable accommodations” intended to ensure equal access to all courses, programs and services without a change of curriculum. Examples of accommodations include testing accommodations, providing alternative format textbooks and tests, note-taking support, and modifications of policies or procedures. Equal Access may require moving a class or event to a physically accessible room, making websites accessible to screen readers, providing sign language interpreters and captioning videos. All students requesting to be recognized as a student with a disability or requiring accommodations must first self-identify by registering with the designated ACCESS Coordinator for their campus or program by providing appropriate medical documentation that supports the need for the requested accommodations.

Students in need of accommodation due to a disability should contact the Access and Accommodation Office to complete the verification process to become approved for services. In order to receive accommodations, each term, students will request accommodation and faculty notification forms through the Access Office online system *Accommodate*. Students are strongly encouraged to schedule a meeting with each professor in a timely manner to discuss arrangements. Accommodations are not retroactive in nature. **Note - Disability accommodations or status are not reflected on academic transcripts.** Students with a history of a disability, perceived as having a disability or with a current disability who do not wish to use academic accommodations are also strongly encouraged to complete the verification process with the Access Office.

Students must request accommodations in a timely manner to receive accommodations in a timely manner.

Atlanta, Douglas & Henry, for additional information

Contact Cindy Strowbridge (STROWBRIDGE_CL@mercer.edu), at (678) 547-6018

Mental Health and Wellness

Mercer University faculty and staff recognize that mental health concerns can impact academic performance and interfere with daily life activities. Because stress is a normal part of the college experience, learning to manage stress effectively is crucial to your well-being and overall success. Please notify your faculty member or academic advisor for academic assistance, as needed. CAPS can also provide support if you’re feeling anxious, overwhelmed, depressed, lost or are struggling with personal issues. Please call or visit the [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\) website](#) for more information. These services are free and confidential, and support non-traditional, graduate, and undergraduate students. Students may access CAPS at the location of their academic program:

MACON – Counseling Center (formerly the Honors House), 478-301-2862;

ATLANTA – 215 Sheffield Student Center, 678-547-6060.

Students at **Regional Academic Center** and other locations may obtain assistance in finding local services by contacting the CAPS Office nearest them.

We also encourage students to call or **text 988 to reach the National Suicide & Crisis Line** if needed.

The **Academic Resource Center (ARC)** provides several different services designed specifically to help Mercer's Atlanta campus, Regional Academic Center, and distance-learning students improve performance and accomplish their academic goals. These services include in-person math and writing tutoring, online tutoring ([Online Writing Lab](#), [Online Math Lab](#), and [Online Science Lab](#)), study skills resources, and online workshops.

Students can visit the ARC's website to view tutoring for their specific location, assess their study skills, explore study skills resources, learn more about ARC services, and watch online presentations on various topics: <https://arc.mercer.edu>. Students can contact the ARC to schedule an online consultation or to get additional information by emailing arc@mercer.edu.

Student Academic Grievance

Policy

Students have the right to bring grievances against a faculty member or an administrator concerning academic matters. Such matters may include, but are not limited to failure to abide by requirements described in the course syllabus, arbitrary awarding of grades, discrimination based on age, gender, religion, race, marital status, national origin, or disability.

Time Frame

For grievances of any kind, students are required to initiate appeals with the appropriate faculty member no later than 30 days from the completion of the term in which the course was offered. Appeals received after this period will not be honored.

Informal Resolution Procedure

Student grievance procedures encourage each student to handle complaints as close to the source as possible. If a student has a complaint against a faculty member, the student should first attempt to resolve the complaint by an informal meeting with the faculty member involved. If this is not satisfactory, or if the student believes that he or she cannot discuss the complaint with the instructor, the student may follow the Formal Resolution Process.

Formal Resolution Procedure

The following protocol should be followed:

1. The student should meet with the appropriate department chair or program director after submitting to this person a formal written account of the grievance. This narrative must be submitted no later than 30 days from the date on which the student was formally notified of the instructor's decision.
2. If the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved by the department chair or program director, the student should meet with the associate dean after submitting to the associate dean a formal written account of the grievance. This narrative must be submitted no later than 30 days from the date on which the student was formally notified of the department chair's or program director's decision.

3. If the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved by the associate dean, the student should meet with the provost after submitting to the provost a formal written account of the grievance. This narrative must be submitted no later than 30 days from the date on which the student was formally notified of the associate dean's decision.

If the student has a complaint against a dean, he or she should schedule an appointment with that dean in an attempt to resolve the matter. If the matter is not resolved or if the student believes that he or she cannot discuss the complaint with that dean, the student may appeal to the provost. In all grievance procedures, the decision of the provost is final.

Student Nonacademic Grievance

Policy

Mercer University recognizes the importance of providing an efficient procedure for a timely and fair resolution of a nonacademic grievance. Students are encouraged to use the process to resolve allegations concerning (1) a University employee, (2) administrative policies or procedures, and/or (3) a University program, service, or activity.

Informal Resolution Procedure

Many grievances can get resolved via informal personal meetings, phone calls, or e-mails directly with the employee or office responsible for the grievance. Whenever possible, students are encouraged to exercise these avenues of communication first. However, should these avenues not rectify the grievance, or the student wishes to bypass the informal resolution process, then the formal grievance process below should be implemented.

Formal Resolution Procedure

When a student wishes to file a formal complaint that is nonacademic in nature and does not pertain to student conduct, he or she should follow this procedure:

1. The student should submit the complaint in writing to the University employee responsible for the action or event that forms the basis of the grievance. This statement should contain a brief statement of the grievance and the remedies sought. A copy of the statement must also be presented to the employee's supervisor and the Associate Vice President of Human Resources. The complaint should be submitted to the employee within ten (10) days of the action or event that forms the basis of the grievance.
2. The employee respondent will meet with the student along with their supervisor or the Associate Vice President of Human Resources to discuss the complaint within ten (10) days of receipt of the written grievance. The employee respondent will reply in writing to the student with the results of the discussion at the meeting and plans for further action, if any, within ten (10) days of the meeting. A copy of this reply will be provided to the Associate Vice President of Human Resources.
3. If a student is not satisfied with the results of the discussion and/or with the reply and wants the grievance to be considered further, the student may appeal in writing to the employee

respondent's supervisor. A copy of this appeal must be sent to the Associate Vice President of Human Resources. This appeal to the supervisor must begin within ten (10) days after the student receives the written reply from the employee responsible for the action or event that forms the basis of the grievance. A written reply indicating the results of the appeal including further action, if any, to be taken will be sent to the student by the employee's supervisor within ten (10) days of the meeting between the student and the employee's supervisor. A copy of this response will be sent to the Associate Vice President for Human Resources.

4. If the student is not satisfied with the results of the appeal to the supervisor and wants the grievance to be considered further, the student will have an opportunity for further appeal as follows:
 - a) In the case of complaints concerning employees, policies, procedures, or programs of a nonacademic nature *within a specific school or college*, the student may appeal to the Dean with responsibility for the employee's unit and request a meeting in order to seek a resolution. This appeal must begin within ten (10) days after the employee's supervisor has completed consideration of the grievance and responded in writing to the student. A written reply from the Dean indicating the results of the meeting and including further action, if any, to be taken will be sent to the student within ten (10) days after consideration of the grievance. A copy of the appeal and the response from the Dean must be provided to the Associate Vice President of Human Resources. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Dean, the student may appeal in writing to the Provost with responsibility for the school or college and request a meeting. The appeal must begin within ten (10) days of the date the Dean has completed consideration of the grievance and responded in writing to the student. A written reply by the Provost indicating the results of the meeting and including further action, if any, to be taken will be sent to the student within ten (10) days after consideration of the grievance. The decision of the Provost with responsibility for the employee's unit will be the final University decision on the grievance. A copy of the appeal to the Provost and the Provost response will be copied to the Associate Vice President of Human Resources.
 - b) In the case of complaints concerning employees, policies, procedures, or programs of a nonacademic nature *outside of the administrative organization of a specific school or college*, the student may appeal to the Vice President with responsibility for the employee's unit and request a meeting in order to seek a resolution. This appeal must begin within ten (10) days after the employee's supervisor has completed consideration of the grievance and responded in writing to the student. A written reply from the Vice President indicating the results of the meeting and including further action, if any, to be taken will be sent to the student within ten (10) days after consideration of the grievance. The decision of the Vice President with responsibility for the employee's unit will be the final University decision on the grievance. A copy of the complaint to the Vice President and their response will be submitted to the Associate Vice President of Human Resources. The dean of students or student affairs designee on each campus serves as a resource for students seeking assistance with grievance procedures.

Flexibility Clause

The aforementioned requirements, assignments, policies, evaluation procedures, etc. are subject to change. Students' experiences and needs, as well as emerging knowledge, will be considered in modifying this course syllabus.