

Quick Summary of Requirements for the Certificate Program in Mental Health Skills
(Revised 2/2/16)

The Certificate Program consists of 18 credits. These include 4 required core courses from the Psychology program in Assessment, Interviewing, Abnormal Psychology, and Counseling; and 2 electives from a list of approved courses outside Psychology.

To obtain the Certificate, you must also have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 for the 6 courses (above) and submit a portfolio for review and approval by one of the two faculty advisors (Aaron Carlstrom or Michael Gurtman).

For core courses taken before Fall 2004 (the introduction of the program), relevant portfolio items may be lacking and so will not be required (although, if still available, they should be included).

You should meet with a faculty advisor (either Aaron Carlstrom or Michael Gurtman) soon after filing your paperwork for entrance to the program (i.e., submitting a Plan of Study to the Psychology Department or Advising Center). As you go through the program, meet with your advisor on a regular basis to track your progress.

Certificate Program in Mental Health Skills

Introduction

Many students graduating with a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology will seek employment in a mental health setting such as a hospital inpatient psychiatric program, telephone hotline, group home, or shelter for victims of domestic violence. While area employers may appreciate the knowledge base of psychology, they may be more focused on the kinds of practical skills the potential employee will bring to the setting—including skills related to assessment and diagnosis, interviewing, counseling, and behavior change. The Certificate in Mental Health Skills has been developed, in part, to address these issues. Students completing the certificate will have coursework and experiences related to the kinds of clinical skills that employers seek in entry level positions. By fulfilling the required coursework, developing a portfolio to showcase their work, and attaining a minimum grade in the certificate courses, students will be in a position to demonstrate to prospective employers their potential competencies in these areas.

Those who work in mental health settings must often tailor their application of skills to particular populations. Thus, awareness of the varying backgrounds and needs of diverse populations is critical. In the certificate program, we broaden the awareness of differences associated with subcultures and diagnostic categories by requiring that students sample the perspectives of other academic disciplines.

Certificate Description

The Certificate in Mental Health Skills will require the successful completion of 18 credits (four required core courses and two elective courses) as listed below. Students must achieve a minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA in these courses to be eligible to receive the certificate.

REQUIRED CORE COURSES

COURSE	OFFERED	PREREQUISITE
PSYC 318 Psychological Assessment	Fall	PSYC 101, 250
PSYC 330 Interviewing	Spring	PSYC 205 or 210 or 220 or 260
PSYC 360 Abnormal Psychology	Spring	PSYC 205 or 210 or 220 or 260
PSYC 431 Counseling Psychology (or PSYC 331, taken prior to Fall 2013)	Fall	PSYC 330 or 362

PSYC 318. Psychological Assessment: This course provides an introduction to the methods and principles of psychological assessment, including tests of personality, intelligence, ability, and vocation. As part of the course, students are required to complete two group projects aimed at developing practical skills in analyzing test data and in constructing objective tests. The culmination is a paper involving a comprehensive, critical analysis of a selected psychological test.

PSYC 330. Interviewing: This course introduces interviewing as a foundational counseling skill with emphasis on counseling microskills such as the invitational and reflection skills. Students in the course participate in two recorded interviews. Each interview is critiqued by the student, a group of fellow students, and the professor.

PSYC 360. Abnormal Psychology: This course provides an overview of the field of abnormal psychology. Students learn about theoretical models, methods of study, diagnostic classification, and the various forms of mental disorder. The course follows and is organized around the current DSM diagnostic system, which is used by most mental professionals today. An important part of the course is a case study project in which students are presented with a case and required to perform an in-depth, diagnostic analysis. The result is a paper, which is returned at the end of the course with critical feedback.

PSYC 441. Counseling Psychology: This course introduces students to basic behavioral, cognitive and motivational principles and techniques of the behavior change process. Students in this course complete assignments that involve the application of these principles and techniques to a behavior change project. Each assignment is monitored on a weekly basis with feedback from the instructor to the student as an integral part of the course.

ELECTIVE COURSES (GROUP A)

Each student chooses one elective from the group of courses below. These courses expose students to issues of diversity as these issues are viewed by disciplines outside of psychology.

COURSE	OFFERED	PREREQUISITE
COMM 315 Communication and Gender	Spring	Core courses in COMM or consent of instructor
COMM363/ETHN 363 Communication and Ethnicity	Fall, Spring, Summer	COMM 107 or consent of instructor
COMM 365/ETHN 365 Intercultural Communication	Fall	COMM 107, 207, 208; or consent of instructor
PHIL 215 Contemporary Moral Problems	Yearly	None
POLS 203/WGSS 203 Women, Power and Politics	Occasionally	None
SOCA 206/ETHN 206 Race and Ethnic Relations in the U.S.	Fall	SOCA 100 or 101 or consent of instructor
SOCA 213/WGSS 213 Gender and Society	Fall, Spring, Summer	None
SOCA 343/ETHN 343 Latinas/os in the United States	Fall	SOCA 100, 101, or ETHN 201
SOCA 365/CRMJ 365 Race, Crime, Law	Fall, Spring	CRMJ 101 or SOCA 100 or 101; junior standing

ELECTIVE COURSES (GROUP B)

Each student will select one elective from the options below. These electives focus on some specific problem area or group that is commonly addressed by mental health professionals.

COURSE	OFFERED	PREREQUISITES
CRMJ 305 Family Violence	Occasionally	CRMJ 101 or consent of instructor
PHIL 328 Ethics in the Criminal Justice System	Alternate Years	One course in PHIL, CRMJ 101, or consent of instructor
SOCA 207 Marriage and Family	Fall, Spring, Summer	SOCA 100 or 101; or consent of instructor
SOCA 216 Social Issues in Substance Use and Abuse	Every third semester	3 credits in sociology
SOCA 234/CRMJ 234 Juvenile Delinquency/Juvenile Justice	Fall, Spring	SOCA 100 or 101 or CRMJ 101; or consent of instructor
SOCA 332 Sociology of Mental Illness	Every third semester	SOCA 100 or 101; junior standing
SOCA 319 Death and Dying	Spring	SOCA 101
SOCA 326 Social Gerontology	Fall	SOCA 100 or 101; junior standing or consent of instructor

PORTFOLIO

Purpose

The portfolio allows you to showcase your work in areas related to the core clinical skills emphasized in the certificate program. It is a tool that you can use when you are applying for a job or seeking admission to graduate level training. A well-crafted portfolio can help you stand out from the competition by providing relevant work samples.

What You Should Include in Your Portfolio

The portfolio should include the applied elements of the four core courses required for the Certificate in Mental Health Skills. The four courses and the relevant assignments and materials are as follows:

PSYC 318. Psychological Assessment. Students write a research paper that critically evaluates a psychological test of personality, mood, intelligence, aptitude, or vocational interest. The paper is structured and includes introductory section on the test's history, development, and format; practical applications and uses of the test; technical aspects related to reliability and validity, a critique of the test, a summary of a relevant research study involving the test, and a reference list of sources. The paper is written in the APA-style.

PSYC 330. Interviewing. Students complete an interview project. As part of the project students facilitate a 7-10-minute interview, transcribe the interview and then critique their interview. The interview project allows students to demonstrate some of the counseling microskills, especially those involved with the clinical interview. Students are expected to use the instructor graded interview transcript to make modifications. The improved interview transcript is to be included in the portfolio. Transcripts which include any identifying information of the "client" will not be accepted.

PSYC 331 or 431. Counseling Psychology. Students complete a behavior change project, and will complete write-ups for each session of the project. This project allows students to demonstrate their skills in using behavioral, cognitive and motivational principles and techniques to facilitate behavior change. Students will complete a Treatment Summary at the end of this project, and are expected to use the instructor graded Treatment Summary to make modifications. The improved Treatment Summary is to be included in the portfolio. Transcripts which include any identifying information of the "client" will not be accepted.

PSYC 360. Abnormal Psychology. The culminating project in this course is a case study—a structured analysis of a particular case (individual diagnosed with a mental disorder). Students choose one of two cases from an online learning site. They observe a diagnostic interview with that individual. For the paper, students write a case report, answering a variety of questions each under four main headings—Background Information, Observations, Diagnosis, and Therapeutic Intervention.

Format of Portfolio

The required assignments should be presented in a 3-ring binder.

New/clean copies of the assignments should be used. In essence, do not use the graded assignment with the instructor's comments, etc. written on it. Better yet, take any constructive feedback from instructors' comments, make enhancements and improvements to the assignment, and use the improved copy for the portfolio.

On the first page of the portfolio, you should briefly (1-2 paragraphs) introduce the portfolio, indicating what the assignments are, what courses they came from, and, in general, what you learned and what skills you gained from completing the certificate. This should not be long, but think about the portfolio being read by someone unfamiliar with the program—you want to convey what skills and knowledge you have acquired and how these are evident in the portfolio.

Then you should have 4 sections – one for each of the four core psychology courses: Interviewing, Counseling Psychology, Abnormal Psychology and Assessment. The first page of each section should consist of a brief (1-2 paragraph) description of the assignment – what you were required to do, what specific skill and knowledge you demonstrated. Then starting with the next page, include the assignment.

Submitting Your Portfolio for Review

When you have completed all of the required assignments, put them together neatly in a binder. Contact either Aaron Carlstrom or Michael Gurtman and schedule a meeting for a review. When the review is completed, the Registrar's office will be notified that the portfolio requirement has been met.

You will need to turn in the portfolio by the end of the semester – although you can turn it in much earlier in the semester if ready. It is helpful if you do not wait until the week of final exams.

Exceptions

If you transferred in any of the core courses, you may not have the specific materials listed above to include in the portfolio. Exceptions to the required materials will be made on a case-by-case basis.