

*Study Guidelines When Preparing for the
M.A. Comprehensive Examination in Professional Counseling
Residential and LUO Students*

Revised 9/9/2011

GENERAL PREPARATORY INSTRUCTIONS

All counseling students (except for those in the 30-hour Human Services degree program) must pass a comprehensive examination before graduation. Students must have 30 hours completed in the program, have completed COUN 667, and hold a 3.0 GPA.

The comprehensive examination is administered the third Saturday of February, July, and October. Additionally, this exam may be offered at the end of COUN 667 Intensives scheduled throughout the year. Students need to register with the Comprehensive Examination Coordinator at least four weeks prior to the date of the examination. Please contact the Comprehensive Exam Coordinator at counselingcompexam@liberty.edu to confirm the dates the exam is being offered and to register.

1. Liberty University Graduate Department of Counseling is utilizing the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination® (CPCE®), published by the Center for Credentialing and Education, Inc., which is an affiliate of the National Board for Certified Counselors, Inc. (NBCC®), for the majority of the examination.

2. **Important:** Due to the limitations put on us by the CCE®, we are no longer able to mail out this exam to test proctors, and must offer the exam on campus here at Liberty University. Therefore, effective immediately students will be required to travel to Lynchburg to take this test. We understand this poses a great inconvenience to our students, and we offer an option to take the CPCE® exam at an accredited school in your state that offers this exam to their students. Since this exam is nationally recognized a number of graduate schools offer this exam.

3. The Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE) provides information for possible alternative testing locations to Liberty University students as a special favor, not as a requirement. Please be aware the Universities you contact may not be testing during your needed time frame and/or they may choose not to allow you to test with their students. Should either of these be the case, you will be required to test at Liberty University.

Additionally, the Universities establish their own test dates throughout the year and are only required to give CCE a 30-day notice. To find out what schools offer CPCE® in your state, please contact CCE representative Deena Perdicho at cce@cce-global.org Once you locate the school that is willing to administer the CPCE® to you please contact the Comprehensive Exam Coordinator at Liberty University via email (counselingcompexam@liberty.edu).

4. The CPCE® covers the eight common-core areas of the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP®) as defined by their Standards for Preparation:

- **Human Growth and Development** – studies that provide an understanding of the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental levels.
- **Social and Cultural Foundations** – studies that provide an understanding of issues and trends in a multicultural and diverse society.
- **Helping Relationships** – studies that provide an understanding of counseling and consultation processes.
- **Group Work** – studies that provide an understanding of group development, dynamics, counseling theories, group counseling methods and skills, and other group work approaches.
- **Career and Lifestyle Development** – studies that provide an understanding of career development and related life factors.
- **Appraisal** – studies that provide an understanding of individual and group approaches to assessment and evaluation.
- **Research and Program Evaluation** – studies that provide an understanding of types of research methods, basic statistics, and ethical and legal considerations in research.
- **Professional Orientation and Ethics** – studies that provide an understanding of all aspects of professional functioning including history, roles, organizational structures, ethics, standards, and credentialing.

5. The comprehensive examination given by Liberty University will include the CPCE®, consisting of 160 items. In addition, each Liberty University Master of Arts in Counseling student will be required to answer an additional ninth area:

- **Integration** – studies that provide an understanding of the integration of theology and psychology.

6. You must complete at least 30 hours in the program, including COUN 667, of graduate coursework before attempting to take the comprehensive examination. All course work in the **required areas of study** must be completed before taking the exam and students must also hold a 3.0 cumulative GPA.

7. Students must be aware that it takes up to four hours to complete the exam, which is made up of the CPCE® portion of the comprehensive examination and the integration content area.

8. Students will be registered for either COUN 670 or COUN 671 and will have a class fee in the amount of \$45 charged to their student account. The fee pays for the CPCE® examination, grading, and postage and handling. Students taking this exam at another location will need to contact the testing site for information regarding the fee.

9. A student must pass both the CPCE® and the Integration section in order to meet this requirement for graduation.

10. Students may take both the CPCE® and Integration section up to three times. If after three tries a student has not been able to pass the comprehensive examination, they will need to transfer into the 30 hour degree program to attain their Master's degree.

11. The best way to prepare for the comprehensive examination is to develop a study schedule that allows you to spend some time preparing in each of the different areas of study. Divide your study time so that you spend equal time preparing for each area. Study consistently. Do something relaxing and get a good night's rest the night before the examination.

12. Please allow two weeks for the exam results. Once these exams are processed, a notice will be sent to you immediately notifying you of the results.

Please contact the Comprehensive Examination Coordinator at counselingcompexam@liberty.edu to sign up for the examination. If you are testing at another location, please notify us of the location and the date of your administration.

The Integration part **will not** be offered when you sit for the CPCE exam off-site, therefore make sure to have a proctor administer Integration part to you within 2 weeks of taking the CPCE. Anyone at your church or work administration can become your proctor (ex. your clinical supervisor, testing center at a college) and there are no forms to be filled out. Please notify the Comprehensive Examination Coordinator about the mailing address of your proctor via email.

CPCE® Study Tips

There is no official study guide for the CPCE®. Since the CPCE® and the National Counselor Examination for Licensure and Certification (NCE®) are based on the same eight knowledge areas; *any study materials* developed for the NCE® should be useful for the CPCE®.

A good source to prepare for the CPCE part of the exam is a book called *Encyclopedia of Counseling* by Howard Rosenthal.

Study Questions for the Integration Part

As you prepare for the Integration part please refer to the following sources:

McMinn, M. R. (1996). *Psychology, theology, and spirituality in Christian counseling*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers. ISBN: 0-8423-5252-X.

Entwistle, D. N. (2004). *Integrative approaches to psychology and Christianity*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers. ISBN: 1-59244-799-6

These books were required for your COUN 506 course and most questions will be drawn from them.