

***Study Guidelines When Preparing for the
Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE)
And Integration Examination***

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GENERAL PREPARATORY INSTRUCTIONS

All Clinical Mental Health Counseling students must satisfactorily pass the comprehensive examination as a requirement for graduation. The purpose of this exam is to test both the student's knowledge of the core courses and general knowledge of counseling. This exam also prepares students for state licensure by providing them with an examination that mirrors the content as well and format of the National Counselor Exam (NCE), a multiple-choice, timed exam used for licensure by many state licensure boards.

The Comprehensive examination is administered three times per year, on the third Saturday of February, July, and October. Students need to register with the Comprehensive Examination Coordinator at least four weeks prior to the date of the examination. Additionally this exam may be offered at the end of COUN 667 Intensives scheduled throughout the year. Please contact the Comprehensive Exam Coordinator to confirm the date and register. The most current information can be found online on the Comprehensive Exam webpage.

The Center for Counseling and Family Studies utilizes two separate exams to fulfill the comprehensive examination requirement. To test students' knowledge of the eight core curricular areas, students will take the 160 item Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination® (CPCE®), published by the Center for Credentialing and Education, an affiliate of the National Board for Certified Counselors, (NBCC®), for the majority of the examination. Students will also take the 20 item *CCFS Integration Examination* to test their knowledge of integrating faith and spirituality into counseling in an ethically competent manner.

The CPCE® covers the eight core competencies (20 items per area) 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 (CMHC 502).
- **Social and Cultural Foundations** – studies that provide an understanding of issues and trends in a multicultural and diverse society (CMHC 504).
- **Helping Relationships** – studies that provide an understanding of counseling and consultation processes (CMHC 505).
- **Group Work** – studies that provide an understanding of group development, dynamics, counseling theories, group counseling methods and skills, and other group work approaches (CMHC 512).
- **Career and Lifestyle Development** – studies that provide an understanding of career development and related life factors (CMHC 522).

- **Appraisal** – studies that provide an understanding of individual and group approaches to assessment and evaluation (CMHC 521).
- **Research and Program Evaluation** – studies that provide an understanding of types of research methods, basic statistics, and ethical and legal considerations in research (CMHC 503).
- **Professional Orientation and Ethics** – studies that provide an understanding of all aspects of professional functioning including history, roles, organizational structures, ethics, standards, and credentialing (CMHC 500, CMHC 501).

In addition to eight core CACREP® competencies covered by the CPCE®, each Liberty University Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling student will be required to demonstrate competency in a ninth core area:

- **Integration** – studies that provide an understanding of the integration of faith and spirituality into counseling where appropriate in an ethically competent manner (CMHC 506)

Students must complete at least 39 hours of graduate coursework, including the core areas (CMHC 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 510, 512, 521, 522) and CMHC 667, and must have an overall GPA of 3.0 before attempting to take the comprehensive examination. Once these requirements are met Students will email the Comprehensive Examination Coordinator at counselingcompexam@liberty.edu when they are ready to sign up for the exams.

Students must be aware that it takes about four hours to complete the CPCE® portion of the comprehensive examination. The CCFS Integration Examination portion of the comprehensive will be taken online using Blackboard. . To take the comprehensive examination, students will be registered for CMHC 670 (CPCE®) and/or CMHC 671 (Integration) courses. There will be a class fee in the amount of \$50.00 charged to their student account. The fee covers the CPCE® examination, grading, and postage

Additional information:

1. A student must pass both the CPCE® and the integration section in order to meet this requirement for graduation.
2. You may only take the Comprehensives 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 the Master's degree.
3. Students who have failed the CPCE® twice are required to complete a CPCE® Third Attempt Plan (CTAP) form and prepare for an additional minimum of one semester before registering for their final attempt.
4. You should notify the Comprehensive Examination Coordinator at least four weeks prior to the day you wish to take the exam. You may schedule the exam for the third Saturday of February, July or October. Additionally this exam maybe offered at the end of COUN 667 Intensives scheduled throughout the year. Please contact the Comprehensive Exam Coordinator at counselingcompexam@liberty.edu to confirm the date and register.

5. The best way to prepare for the comprehensive examination is to develop a study schedule (such as three months) that allows you to spend some time preparing in each of the different areas of study. Divide your study time so that you spend roughly equivalent time preparing for each area. Study consistently. Do something relaxing and get a good night's rest the night before the examination.
6. 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.

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 to help you study 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

Note: Those books were required for your CMHC 506 course and most questions will be drawn from it. In addition, a study guide is available on the CMHC 671 Blackboard site for the course. For more information on the Integration Examination, please contact the Comprehensive Exam Coordinator at counselingcompexam@liberty.edu.