



The National Certified Counselor (NCC) certification requires a master's degree or higher with a major study in counseling from a regionally accredited university. The degree must have a minimum of 48 semester hours (72 quarter hours) of graduate-level credits covering the nine required counseling coursework content areas. Postgraduate, nondegree credits cannot be used to fulfill this requirement.

The descriptions below will help you determine which classes from your graduate program fulfill the coursework content areas required for the NCC. All courses except counseling field experience must carry at least two semester or three quarter hours of graduate-level credit. Counseling field experience, which includes your internship/practicum, must total at least six semester or 10 quarter hours of graduate-level credit. Please note that a single course cannot fulfill two content areas.

COURSEWORK CONTENT AREAS

1. Human Growth and Development Theories in Counseling

Studies in this area provide an understanding of the needs of individuals at all developmental levels. These include the following:

- a. Theories of individual and family development and transitions across the life span;
- b. Theories of learning and personality development;
- c. Human behavior, including an understanding of developmental crises, disability, addictive behavior, psychopathology and environmental factors as they affect both normal and abnormal behavior;
- d. Counseling strategies for facilitating development over the life span; and
- e. Ethical considerations.

2. Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling

Studies in this area provide an understanding of issues and trends in a diverse society including the following:

- a. Multicultural and pluralistic trends, including characteristics and concerns of counseling individuals from diverse groups;
- b. Attitudes and behavior based on factors such as age, race, religious preferences, physical disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity and culture, family patterns, gender, socioeconomic status, and intellectual ability;
- c. Individual, family and group counseling strategies with diverse populations; and
- d. Ethical considerations.

3. Helping Relationships in Counseling

Studies in this area provide an understanding of counseling and consultation processes, including the following:

- a. Counseling and consultation theories, including both individual and systems perspectives as well as coverage of relevant research and factors considered in applications;
- b. Basic interviewing, assessment and counseling skills;
- c. Counselor or consultant characteristics and behaviors that influence professional counseling relationships, including age, gender and ethnic differences; verbal and nonverbal behaviors; and personal characteristics, orientations and skills;
- d. Client or consultee characteristics and behaviors that influence professional counseling relationships, including age, gender and ethnic differences; verbal and nonverbal behaviors; and personal characteristics, orientations and skills; and
- e. Ethical considerations.

4. Group Counseling Theories and Processes

Studies in this area provide an understanding of group development, dynamics and counseling theories; group counseling methods and skills; and other group work approaches, including the following:

- a. Principles of group dynamics, including group counseling components, developmental stage theories, and group members' roles and behaviors;
- b. Group leadership styles and approaches, including characteristics of various types of group leaders and leadership styles;
- c. Theories of group counseling, including commonalities, distinguishing characteristics, and pertinent research and literature;
- d. Group counseling methods, including group counselor orientations and behaviors, ethical standards, appropriate selection criteria and methods of evaluation of effectiveness;
- e. Approaches used for other types of group work in counseling, including task groups, prevention groups, support groups and therapy groups; and
- f. Ethical considerations.

5. Career Counseling and Lifestyle Development

Studies in this area provide an understanding of career counseling, development and related life factors, including the following:

- a. Career-counseling theories and decision-making models;
- b. Career, avocational, educational and labor market information resources; visual and print media; and computer-based career information systems;
- c. Career-counseling program planning, organization, implementation, administration and evaluation;
- d. Interrelationships among work, family, and other life roles and factors, including multicultural and gender issues as related to career counseling;
- e. Career and educational placement counseling, follow-up and evaluation;
- f. Assessment instruments and techniques relevant to career counseling;
- g. Computer-based career-development applications and strategies, including computer-assisted career-counseling systems;
- h. Career-counseling processes, techniques and resources, including those applicable to specific populations; and
- i. Ethical considerations.

6. Assessment in Counseling

Studies in this area provide an understanding of individual and group approaches to assessment and evaluation in counseling practice, including the following:

- a. Theoretical and historical bases for assessment techniques in counseling;
- b. Validity, including evidence for establishing content, construct and empirical validity;
- c. Reliability, including methods of establishing stability, internal and equivalence reliability;
- d. Appraisal methods, including environmental assessment, performance assessment, individual and group test and inventory methods, behavioral observations, and computer-managed and computer-assisted methods;
- e. Psychometric statistics, including types of assessment scores, measures of central tendency, indices of variability, standard errors, and correlations;
- f. Age, gender, ethnicity, language, disability and cultural factors related to the use of assessment and evaluation in counseling services;
- g. Strategies for selecting, administering, interpreting and using assessment and evaluation instruments and techniques in counseling; and
- h. Ethical considerations.

7. Research and Program Evaluation

Studies in this area provide an understanding of types of research methods, basic statistics, and ethical and legal considerations in research, including the following:

- a. Basic types of research methods, including qualitative and quantitative research designs;
- b. Basic parametric and nonparametric statistics;
- c. Principles, practices and applications of needs assessment and program evaluation;
- d. Uses of computers for data management and analysis; and
- e. Ethical and legal considerations.

8. Professional Orientation to Counseling

Studies in this area provide an understanding of all aspects of professional functioning, including the following:

- a. History of the counseling profession, including significant factors and events;
- b. Professional roles and functions of counselors, including similarities to and differences from other types of professionals;
- c. Professional organizations (primarily ACA, its divisions, branches and affiliates), including membership benefits, activities, services to members and current emphases;
- d. Ethical standards of NBCC or ACA and related ethical and legal issues, and their applications to various professional activities (e.g., appraisal, group work);
- e. Professional counselor preparation standards, their evolution and current applications;
- f. Professional counselor credentialing, including counselor certification, licensure, and accreditation practices and standards, and the effects of public policy on these issues; and
- g. Public policy processes, including the role of the professional counselor in advocating on behalf of the profession and its clientele.

9. Counseling Field Experience (minimum six semester/10 quarter hours)

Studies in this area provide supervised counseling experience in an appropriate work setting.