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## **Diversity and Inclusion Policy – approved 3-20-2019**

### **Diversity Statement**

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program faculty and students abide by and support the Appalachian State diversity statement. The CMHC program faculty is committed to preparing students who value diversity, inclusion, and social justice in clinical practice and research and are able to work competently with clients, colleagues, faculty, and supervisors from diverse populations. We acknowledge contextual, historical, and current injustices. We strive to be responsive, reduce our role in perpetuating injustice, and work towards prevention. We are committed to creating a cultural climate where all people feel welcome, valued, and included. The CMHC Program is committed to recruiting and supporting students from underrepresented backgrounds.

### **Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

The American Counseling Association 2014 code of ethics defines discrimination as “the prejudicial treatment of an individual or group based on their actual or perceived membership in a particular group, class, or category.”

The code also reads as follows:

**A.4.b. Personal Values** Counselors are aware of—and avoid imposing—their own values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Counselors respect the diversity of clients, trainees, and research participants and seek training in areas in which they are at risk of imposing their values onto clients, especially when the counselor’s values are inconsistent with the client’s goals or are discriminatory in nature.

**A.11.b. Values Within Termination and Referral** Counselors refrain from referring prospective and current clients based solely on the counselor’s personally held values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Counselors respect the diversity of clients and seek training in areas in which they are at risk of imposing their values onto clients, especially when the counselor’s values are inconsistent with the client’s goals or are discriminatory in nature

**C.5. Nondiscrimination** Counselors do not condone or engage in discrimination against prospective or current clients, students, employees, supervisees, or research participants based on age, culture, disability, ethnicity, race, religion/spirituality, gender, gender

identity, sexual orientation, marital/ partnership status, language preference, socioeconomic status, immigration status, or any basis proscribed by law.

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program embraces the spirit and letter of these ethical principles. Therefore, the policies of the CMHC program are likewise committed to the following program policy on non-discrimination:

1. Student therapists will be trained to competently work with diverse clients and colleagues/classmates, faculty, and supervisors. Cultural and diversity competency training includes self-of-therapist engagement and use of respectful/appropriate language.
2. Students agree to recognize the diverse experiences and identities reflected in communities, which includes but is not limited to age, sexual orientation, gender identity, health/ability, racial and ethnic background, socioeconomic status, spirituality, religion, culture, family configuration, and nationality.
3. It is the student's responsibility to seek additional supervision, diversity/accountability training, and/or personal therapy should they feel uncomfortable learning about, seeing clients, or working with colleagues/classmates on the basis of any factor of diversity listed above.
4. It is the goal of this program to provide opportunities for students to learn about and effectively work with a wide range of clients and presenting problems. Students understand they are free to continue their personal religious and spiritual practice of choice, but cannot refer clients or engage in unethical practice (i.e. reparative therapy) on the basis of religious and/ or personal beliefs.

Diversion from these expectations may result in a required remediation plan.

**Sources:**

Hoa, N.N.; Grafsky, E.L., & Piercy, F.P. (2016). MFT program policies on referral of LGBT clients. *Contemporary Family Therapy, 38*, 307-317. DOI: 10.1007/s10591-016-9389-3

McGeorge, C.R. & Carlson, T.S. (2014). The state of lesbian, gay, and bisexual affirmative training: A survey of faculty from accredited couple and family therapy programs. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 42*, 153-167. doi: 10.1111/jmft.12106

I have read and understand the Diversity and Inclusion Policy as written and agree to abide and follow the ethical guidelines as described:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_