

## LICENSURE INFORMATION

Licensure requirements are of ever increasing importance to graduates in counseling. Even as this is being written, laws governing licensure and certification requirements throughout Tennessee and much of the country are being revised. These changes have left voids in licensure knowledge and many unanswered questions. To begin providing students with pertinent information, the following section has been written. *However, the final word on the necessary requirements for licensure is with the state and the appropriate licensing bodies.* Students should refer to their state licensing boards and the most current laws as the ultimate sources of information. As the current laws are written, those who plan to work in community agencies, private practice, or the schools and who are not specifically excluded from licensure by the law (e.g. ministers), will be required to obtain licensure in at least one area.

### **Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) and LPC – Mental Health Service Provider (LPC-MHSP)**

This is the license that carries the word "Counselor" in the title and is, thus, created and maintained by counselors in the state. To attain LPC status you must pass three national written exams. This license is not required to be a professional school counselor.

To qualify as a LPC students must obtain a minimum of 60 graduate hours in counseling, which is what our program currently requires to complete additional courses to qualify for LPC. Many students choose to do so while already enrolled in the program; others choose to graduate and complete the hours post-degree. There are also general course work requirements, however, our program is generally designed around these standards and our graduates readily meet these requirements. LPC applicants also need a minimum of 500 clock hours in a supervised field experience (practicum or internship), of which at least 300 hours must be completed in a mental health or community agency setting. Our students exceed this amount and have a variety of settings from which to choose. In addition, applicants must have at least two years post master's supervised professional experience subsequent to being granted a license. However, LPC applicants who have completed all course work and who have passed the national exams can apply for a temporary LPC license while attaining their two years post-master's degree experience. The temporary license should grant virtually all of the status of the full license except the need for supervision.

There have been recent amendments to the LPC laws of Tennessee for those LPC's working in settings which require diagnosis and treatment of DSM mental disorders. LPC law now permits LPC's to diagnose and treat DSM mental disorders when course work includes 3 graduate courses that deal with assessment, diagnosis, & treatment of DSM-IV disorders. One of these courses must be a graduate psychopathology course (PSYC 5825 or SOWK 5430 or COUN 5825) and there must be evidence of training in DSM-IV diagnosis. Child Psychopathology (PSYC 5607) also meets this requirement. Other courses which meet these requirements include Psychological Assessment (COUN 5810) and Intro to Clinical Mental Health (COUN 5250). The designation for those acquiring these courses and being allowed to diagnose and treat DSM disorders is: LPC, MHSP (mental health service provider).

Marriage and Family Therapy option students who wish to seek LPC, MHSP licensure should note that the standards for what constitutes practicum/internship hours are different for LPC and LMFT. For LMFT, 300 **direct client contact** hours are required. For LPC, **500 hours of field experience** are required of which **240 hours are direct client contact**. Also note that of those hours, LPC requires 300 hours of internship in a community mental health setting.

To become a LPC one of the exams you must take is *National Counselor Examination* (NCE) which is administered by the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC). If you are in the Community Agency, Higher Education, or School Counseling concentrations, upon passing the exam and graduating, you will meet NBCC standards to become certified as a National Certified Counselor (NCC). ETSU is a special administration site for the NCE. With this designation, current students of the program are able to take the NCE before or immediately after graduation from ETSU. Those students wishing to take the NCE at ETSU should note announcements and emails about the administration of the NCE as you approach graduation.

Two other exams you must take to become a LPC, MHSP are *the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Exam* and the *Tennessee Jurisprudence exam*.

It is important to note that Tennessee state requirements for LPC are not fully aligned with the NBCC'S requirements for LPC. There are several course work requirement differences and possibly internship requirement differences between these two organizations. Check you licensure laws and with the NBCC for details

For information from the state on becoming a LPC write to/call/or visit their website:

Board for PC/MFT/CPT

Contact Licensure Board Administrator

Heritage Place Metro Center

227 French Landing, Suite 300

Nashville, TN 37423

615-532-5088

<https://www.tn.gov/health/topic/pcmft-board>

<https://www.tn.gov/health/article/pcmft-licensure>

<https://www.tn.gov/health/article/pcmft-applications>

For information about the NCE write to/call/or visit their website:

NBCC

3 Terrace Way

Greensboro, NC 27403

336-547-0607

[www.nbcc.org](http://www.nbcc.org)

<http://www.nbcc.org/Exam>