

# DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

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The vision of the Department of Counseling and Special Education is to advance knowledge, model effective practices, as well as promote advocacy both for our professions and for those whom we serve. We prepare professionals based on sound theory-guided and evidence-based practices to be socially responsible leaders who value the dignity and integrity of all people, particularly those who are historically under-served or under-represented.

The Department of Counseling and Special Education is a community of scholars who value the role of the practitioner in all roles of teaching, research and service. Faculty use student-focused methods to enhance engagement of future professionals in learning and applying their knowledge and skills in diverse settings. This commitment to theory-guided and evidence-based practices is also demonstrated through faculty's teaching, scholarship and service endeavors. We seek to foster Vincentian Personalism and provide opportunities for advancement through education.

The Department is comprised of two programs from distinct yet related fields. Each program has the following distinct foci and needs:

## Counseling Program

The Counseling Program provides individuals with theoretical frameworks and competencies that prepare them to offer counseling services. There are three degree specialty areas within the program: clinical mental health counseling, college counseling and student affairs, and school counseling. The specialty areas of clinical mental health counseling and school counseling integrate Illinois state requirements for licensure, and all specialty areas meet national standards for professional practice. School counseling and college counseling and student affairs programs are 72 credit hours, and the clinical mental health counseling program is 90 credit hours. All specialty areas include a 100 hour practicum and 600 hour internship. These clinical experiences are mandatory, and for the school counseling and clinical mental health counseling specialty areas, they are required by the state for licensure. A degree from the Counseling Program prepares students for career opportunities such as school counseling in elementary, middle, and high schools; counseling in community agencies; counseling in higher education; career counseling through the lifespan; counseling in hospitals or institutional-care settings; group counseling; couples and family counseling; or counseling in private practice, depending upon the chosen specialty area. All of the specialty areas emphasize and are designed to foster leadership, advocacy, and social justice.

## Special Education Program

The Special Education program currently offers three concentrations all leading to either an M.A or an M.Ed. The Special Education for Teachers program prepares currently licensed teachers to work in special education and results in a LBS1 license (K-12). Students in the Special Education for Teachers program may work in a variety of settings as special education teachers. Combining the disciplines of Learning Disabilities and Reading Education, the Reading and Learning Disabilities concentration leads to a Reading Specialist License (K-12) and prepares students to work as reading specialists within school as well as

professionals in clinics or private practice. A third concentration, the Special and Elementary Education (Licensure) in Elementary Education and Special Education, is for individuals with a Bachelor's Degree in an area other than education. This pre-service program leads to both a LBS1 and an Elementary Education license. Graduates of the Special and Elementary Education (License) program may teach in either general or special education settings. Please note that the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) may change the State licensure and endorsement requirements at any time and without prior notice.

The following graduate programs are offered at Lincoln Park:

- MA or MEd Counseling
- MA or MEd Reading Specialist
- MEd Special Education