



Information on the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Comprehensive Examination

All counseling students are required to demonstrate knowledge of counseling information viewed as important by counselor preparation programs. The comprehensive examination used within the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program is the **Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE)** and successful completion of the examination is a requirement for graduation.

The CPCE is a knowledge-based examination that reflects the eight core curriculum areas¹ approved by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The CPCE consists of 160 questions and students are allowed four (4) hours to complete the exam. All counseling students must pass the exam to be eligible for graduation. The Comprehensive Examination is offered twice per year (July and January) and students are eligible to sit for the exam following the completion of the second year of the cohort.

The cost for the CPCE is \$50 and the **registration deadline** is May 1st (for July exam date) and November 1st (for January exam date). Specific information on examination dates and how to register is available through the Administrative Assistant to the Associate Dean for Counseling Programs. The examination fee is due at the time of registration.

Although there is technically no study guide for the CPCE beyond the textbooks, class materials, and student notes & assignments from the cohort classes, a listing of textbooks that may be of further help to students is available for download (*CPCE Textbook List*).

¹CACREP's Eight Core Curriculum Areas:

1. **Human Growth and Development**—studies that provide an understanding of the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental levels.

Sample Question—Erikson described independence as an important issue in the second year of life and identified this stage of development as:

- a. *autonomy versus shame and doubt.*
- b. *concrete operations versus object permanence.*
- c. *motor versus mind development.*
- d. *self versus other differentiation.*

2. **Social and Cultural Foundations**—studies that provide an understanding of issues and trends in a multicultural and diverse society.

Sample Question—Cultural identity development models typically start with the _____ stage.

- a. *dissonance.*
- b. *immersion.*
- c. *conformity.*
- d. *introspective.*

3. **Helping Relationships**—studies that provide an understanding of counseling and consultation processes.

Sample Question—According to Rogers, accurate empathy is most appropriately defined as

- a. *objective reflection to help identify the client's feelings.*
- b. *non-judgmental acceptance of the client's reality.*
- c. *recognition of the client's most prominent emotions.*
- d. *subjective understanding of the client in the here-and-now.*

4. **Group Work**—studies that provide an understanding of group development, dynamics, counseling theories, group counseling methods and skills, and other group work approaches.

Sample Question—A group leader can best enhance a group member's participation by

- a. *encouraging social interactions between members outside of group times.*
- b. *requiring a commitment that group members not drop out.*
- c. *stressing that substantial self-disclosure is expected.*
- d. *modeling appropriate behaviors for the group.*

5. **Career and Lifestyle Development**—studies that provide an understanding of career development and other related life factors.

Sample Question—A basic assumption of the trait-and-factor approach to vocational counseling is that

- a. *career decisions should be based on evident needs.*
- b. *familial factors influence vocational choice.*
- c. *developmental constructs are of paramount importance.*
- d. *there is one best career goal for everyone.*

6. **Appraisal**—studies that provide an understanding of individual and group approaches to assessment and evaluation.

Sample Question—A primary benefit of converting raw scores to standard scores is that it facilitates

- a. *simplicity in interpretation of test results.*
- b. *interpretation of the results relative to a normal distribution.*
- c. *summarizing and organizing other qualitative data.*
- d. *statistical analyses having greater quantitative accuracy.*

7. **Research and Program Evaluation**—studies that provide an understanding of types of research methods, basic statistics, and ethical and legal considerations in research.

Sample Question—The research design which manipulates the independent variable and a between-conditions comparison with no random assignment of subjects to conditions is known as

- a. *quasi-experimental.*
- b. *single-subject.*
- c. *time-series.*
- d. *true experimental.*

8. **Professional Orientation and Ethics**—studies that provide an understanding of all aspects of professional functioning including history, roles, organizational structures, ethics, standards, and credentialing.

Sample Question—During the late 1970s and early 1980s, members of the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA) became aware that the words personnel and guidance did not accurately define or reflect their work. Therefore, in 1983 APGA changed its name to the

- a. *Association for Counselor Education and Supervision.*
- b. *American Association for Counseling and Development.*
- c. *American Mental Health Counselors Association.*
- d. *Association of Counseling and Related Educational Professions.*