

## WELCOME TO THE 2024-2025 MASTER'S TRAINING PROGRAM BROCHURE

### LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Western Carolina University campus is situated within the ancestral homelands of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. At WCU our work seeks to embrace and connect to this Cherokee landscape as we work to reinforce our mission at WCU. We will work to actively engage our community with the extraordinary indigenous identity and culture of this special place that was once known as Two Sparrows Place.

### INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in Western Carolina University's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Master's Training Program. Our training programs are rooted in the values of trauma-informed care and decolonization principles. Our training focuses on developing skills in individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, outreach, and inter-disciplinary consultation.

### DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CAPS MASTER'S TRAINING PROGRAM

- Learning the nuances of providing mental health care in a rural university counseling center setting in the beautiful mountains of western North Carolina located on Cullowhee's campus.
- Working within a trauma-informed environment.
- A team-oriented, collaborative approach including integrated care coordination with WCU's Health Services and Campus Recreation & Wellness.
- Master's trainees will learn about the historical context and indigenous perspectives around mental health and social justice issues of the land and communities where they will live and work.
- Our provision of supervision is something we take seriously. We give lots of growth-oriented feedback.
- Communal learning, lots of laughter, and potlucks.
- Getting to "choose your own adventure". We focus on equity for trainees. You will be able to individualize your training experience within the parameters set forth by training program requirements.

**The most distinguishing feature:  
getting to work with US!**



*Photo of 2023-2024 CAPS team in silly poses.  
They are standing on a grassy hill with trees in the background.*

### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS FOR POTENTIAL APPLICANTS

- Applicants who are accepted into the master's training program cannot receive CAPS counseling services once they begin their training experience at CAPS. CAPS can provide community referral information in these situations. If you are currently receiving services at CAPS and intend to apply to the master's training program, you should discuss this with your counselor to avoid potential conflict of interest.
- As a graduate student at WCU, purchasing a pass is required to park on campus. There is limited parking available close to our office. The closest commuter lot to our office is located near the Liston B. Ramsey Reginal Activity Center and is 0.8 miles away. A CatTran is available for transfer from this lot.
- We require master's trainees to carry professional (student) liability insurance.
- You will not be expected to work with students over university breaks (e.g., Spring break) but may use some of this time to catch up on administrative tasks.
- In addition to your university program evaluations, CAPS evaluations take place twice per semester.

# ABOUT CAPS

The mission of Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is to empower students to engage in and be successful in a full range of academic, social, and cultural opportunities through fostering psychological wellness.



Photo of the 2023-2024 CAPS team standing outside on a grassy hill with trees in the background. Everyone is wearing gold, black, white, and purple.

The CAPS CODE reflects our department's values and is encompassed by the graphic below:

**C**ONNECTION **O**PENNESS **D**IVERSITY **E**QUITY



## TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE AND DECOLONIZATION PRINCIPLES & PRACTICES

In the 2020 - 2021 academic year, CAPS committed to creating and maintaining a culture that emphasizes trauma informed care principles. We have also committed to reviewing our practices through a decolonization lens. These principles have become a very important part of our value system at CAPS.

We are committed to collaborating with you in this practice.

**Six Principles of Trauma-Informed Care**

- SAFETY**  
Ensuring physical and emotional safety
- CHOICE**  
Providing choice and control
- COLLABORATION**  
Making decisions together
- TRUSTWORTHINESS**  
Being clear and consistent
- EMPOWERMENT**  
Prioritizing building on strengths
- CULTURAL, HISTORICAL AND GENDER CONTEXTS**  
Understanding of cultural contexts and leveraging individual and community healing practices

225 Bird Building  
1 University Drive

Western Carolina University | Counseling and Psychological Services

828.227.7469  
caps.wcu.edu

### **SIX PRINCIPLES OF TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE**

**Safety:** ensuring physical and emotional safety

**Choice:** providing choice and control

**Collaboration:** making decisions together

**Trustworthiness:** being clear and consistent

**Empowerment:** prioritizing building on strengths

**Cultural, historical, and gender contexts:** understanding of cultural contexts and leveraging individual and community healing practices





*Photo of WCU campus from an aerial view. There are mountains in the background.*

## **CAPS TRAINING PROGRAM MISSION**

The training program at CAPS promotes the development of clinical skills and identity for the next generation of mental health professionals. This mission is accomplished through the provision of didactic training, clinical supervision, and direct practice experiences within an interdisciplinary, supportive, and collaborative team environment.

## **TRAINING VALUES**

CAPS upholds the following training values:

1. We provide training in counseling center work; our training focuses on services for an emerging adult population.
2. We train interns to be well-rounded generalists, including but not limited to the provision of individual and group counseling, consultation services, conducting assessment, and thoughtful and trauma informed diagnosis.
3. We take an approach of meeting interns where they are and seek to help them identify and further refine their skills.
4. Our training is both comprehensive and individualized. We broadly recommend what interns may need experience in, and at the same time we work in collaboration with them to help them advance in what they need and desire.
5. We strive for a balance between structured training and more flexible, individualized training.
6. We encourage interns to engage in their own learning by providing space for self-direction, independent thinking and judgment in their roles. And we provide consistent support as they do so. We work to help interns build confidence in their skills. This is done with the recognition that they will need direction and instruction to build knowledge and skills in the practices that are new to them.
7. We provide space and opportunity for interns to reflect on their own values and encourage them to be self-aware, and invested in lifelong learning.
8. We train in the practice of brief therapeutic interventions drawing from a variety of theoretical orientations.
9. We value building our interns' culturally responsive and reflective counseling skills.
10. We value intentional treatment. That is, we are thoughtful and directed in our approach to treatment and we encourage thinking through options and alternatives in therapy approaches.
11. We encourage interns to develop their own theoretical approach that is informed by research and practice.
12. We value an environment that is trauma-informed, respectful, supportive, collaborative, and fun.
13. We value knowledge of and engagement in ethical and legal behavior.
14. We value supervision. We believe that supervision involves observing the intern's work and giving feedback. We believe supervision involves a blend of focus between client care and developing the intern's identity as a practitioner.
15. We value a collaborative approach to learning and value the sharing of knowledge and experience of those working in our center.
16. We value individual and community wellness.
17. We value attention to practice and connection within the larger systems in which we exist including the Division of Student Affairs, Western Carolina University, and the off-campus community as a whole.

# TRAINING PROGRAM AIMS & COMPETENCIES

The CAPS master's training program is designed to fulfill the requirements of WCU's Psychology, Social Work, and Clinical Mental Health Counseling programs and provide you with a high-quality supervision and training experience. See descriptions of the activities master's trainees participate in during field placement at CAPS (divided by program of study) below. In addition to these requirements, there are other opportunities available to master's trainees such as co-leading groups and receiving training in specialized areas (e.g., Trauma-Informed Care and decolonization practices).



*Photo of CAPS doctoral interns and Master's trainees with Training Director Jay Manalo and Master's Training Coordinator Calista Colbert*

## REQUIREMENTS FOR CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY MASTER'S PRACTICUM

This unpaid practicum is a two-semester commitment for a minimum of 20 hours per week to assist in the pursuit of master's level licensure in North Carolina as a psychological associate.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING MASTER'S PRACTICUM & INTERNSHIP

This unpaid training experience consists of a fall semester practicum commitment of 20 hours per week with a minimum of 2 days a week onsite (16 hours) and 4 hours of flexed time for paperwork. This is designed to meet the Counseling Program's standards of a minimum 150-hour practicum (at least 40 hours of which are direct service per CACREP standards) followed by a spring semester internship commitment of up to 40 hours per week depending upon class schedule (designed to meet the CACREP standards of a 600-hour internship, 240 hours of which are direct service).

## REQUIREMENTS FOR SOCIAL WORK MASTER'S FIELD PRACTICUM

This unpaid field placement is a two-semester commitment for a minimum of 20 hours per week and is designed to meet the Social Work Department's minimum requirements of a 600-hour field placement experience over the course of the fall and spring semester combined. A CAPS Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) will serve as the field instructor although other opportunities for additional supervision from other appropriately licensed staff may be available as well.



*Photo of the 2022-2023 CAPS staff at the 80s prom themed end-of-year party to celebrate the Master's trainees*



# SAMPLE WEEKLY SCHEDULE

## FALL

Activity	Clinical Psychology	Social Work	CMHC
Therapeutic Intakes and Personal Counseling Sessions	5-9	7-8	6-8
Individual Supervision	2		
"Homeroom" Cohort Meeting	0.5		
Training Seminar	2		
Case Conference	0.5		
Prep Work/Paperwork/Other Meetings	5-7		6-8
<b>TOTAL HOURS ON SITE PER WEEK</b>	20-24	20	

## SPRING

Activity	Clinical Psychology	Social Work	CMHC
Therapeutic Intakes and Personal Counseling Sessions	5-9	7-8	14-17
Individual Supervision	2		
Initial Consultations	1	3	
"Homeroom" Cohort Meeting	0.5		
Group Therapy (when applicable)	1.5		
Supervision of Group Work (when applicable)	0.5		
Training Seminar	2		
Case Conference	0.5		
Prep Work/Paperwork/Other Meetings	5-7		12-16
<b>TOTAL HOURS ON SITE PER WEEK</b>	20-24	20	38-40

*Photo of the North Carolina mountains with Rhododendrons in the foreground*



## APPLICATION PROCESS & REQUIREMENTS

Application materials should be emailed to Calista Colbert, Master's Training Coordinator, at [ccolbert@wcu.edu](mailto:ccolbert@wcu.edu) and must include:

- Application Form
- CV

Applicants must also instruct 2 references to email their Reference Form to Calista Colbert, Master's Training Coordinator, at [ccolbert@wcu.edu](mailto:ccolbert@wcu.edu).

- 2 Reference Forms

\*References made not using the provided form will not be accepted.

### Important Dates

- Friday, **March 1st**: Application materials are due by 5pm
- Beginning **March 4th**: Applications will be reviewed by Selection Committee
- Friday, **March 8th**: Selected candidates will be notified via email regarding whether or not they have been accepted for an interview.
- Tuesday, **March 12th**: Accepted applicants will be invited to interview via Zoom video conferencing and should expect an approximately 30-minute interview with a group of CAPS staff members. The Zoom links and questions for this interview will be provided 24 hours ahead of time.
- Wednesday, **March 13th**: Selection Committee meets to select trainees for incoming Master's Training Program cohort and candidates are contacted by end of day
- Friday, **March 22nd**: Candidates contact Master's Training Coordinator to confirm acceptance by this date
- **August 14th-16th**: Tentative dates for Fall 2024 Master's Training Program Orientation (at CAPS on WCU's Cullowhee campus)

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

We hope that you will give strong consideration to submitting your application to our master's training program! Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

Calista Colbert, MA, LCMHCA, NCC  
Master's Training Coordinator  
Pronouns: she/her/hers

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)  
Western Carolina University  
225 Bird Building  
Cullowhee, NC 28723  
Office: 828-227-7469  
Fax: 828-227-7004  
Email: [ccolbert@wcu.edu](mailto:ccolbert@wcu.edu)  
Website: [Link to the CAPS website](#)

If you would like to learn more about our office, check out the videos linked below.

[Link to "Welcome to CAPS" video](#)



Photo of CAPS Master's trainees and doctoral interns with Training Director Jay Manalo and Master's Training Coordinator Calista Colbert in silly poses. They are standing outside on a grassy hill with trees in the background.