

**THE NEW SCHOOL**  
**FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH**  
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY | **CONCENTRATION IN**  
**MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNSELING**

**CONCENTRATION IN MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNSELING (CMHSAC)**  
**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

NEW SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH  
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY  
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## INTRODUCTION

With the pressures of health care reform in general, and managed care in particular, there has been growing interest at the State and National levels in standardizing and raising the educational and training standards for providers of substance abuse services. The Master of Arts degree Concentration in Mental Health and Substance Abuse Counseling (CMHSAC) is a response to these developments and is intended to place students in an advantageous position for securing future employment throughout the substance abuse and mental healthcare systems.

In addition to providing a firm grounding in general psychology, the program offers students an opportunity to satisfy the academic eligibility requirements for the Certified Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor (CASAC) examination by completing all of the required and optional CASAC-relevant courses offered through the CMHSAC program. The CASAC certificate is a credential offered by the New York State through the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (NYS OASAS) to indicate that an individual has met the local and national standards for clinical practice in the substance abuse field. The certificate is granted on the basis of a combination of: educational/academic training, relevant clinical/work experience, and successful completion of the CASAC exam (Appendix I).

Certified individuals are currently accorded professional status in most states and it has become increasingly difficult to secure certain types of clinical positions in the field without the benefit of a CASAC certificate or a comparable type of credential.

Although only three of the six CASAC-relevant courses currently offered under the auspices of the CMHSAC are considered requirements for the completion the concentration, there is a significant benefit to taking all of the courses. One major advantage lies in the fact that NYS OASAS has recently created the "CASAC Trainee Certificate" (CASAC-T) as an intermediate level certification for those individuals who have completed a specific portion of the overall requirements for certification and intend to continue working towards full CASAC certification. The certificate will remain effective for a period of five years from the date that it is issued. During that time, CASAC trainees will be considered a "Quality Health Professional" (QHP) in terms of the mandated staffing mix of OASAS-licensed substance dependence programs, and thus immediately employable. One of the ways of becoming eligible for this designation is to complete the required 350 clock hours of academic training; something that can be accomplished by completing all of the required and optional CASAC-relevant courses offered through the CMHSAC program. In addition to CASAC-T eligibility, those who have completed the 350 hours of academic training will immediately be able to sit for the CASAC exam. Students will receive their scores and have up to five years to earn the required 2000 hours of work experience to obtain full CASAC certification.

## WHO SHOULD CONSIDER THE CMHSAC

The CMHSAC was created to meet a number of curricular and programmatic needs in the Psychology Department at the New School for Social Research (NSSR). Specifically, it is a program that was designed to be particularly attractive and beneficial to:

- 1) Those students who do not intend to continue on to doctoral study but would like to significantly enhance their marketability after graduation;

- 2) Students who currently work with substance abusing or dually-diagnosed populations and who would like to complement their practical experience with formal academic training and credentials;
- 3) Eugene Lang seniors and BA/MA students, NSSR MA and PhD students who intend to enter into a career in the substance abuse field.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

*Admission to Program:* There are no separate requirements for admission to the CMHSAC program. All students who have been admitted to the General MA Program in the Psychology Department are also eligible to enroll in the CMHSAC. However, students will not be considered enrolled in the program until they have completed an enrollment form and submitted it to the Assistant Director of the CMHSAC and/or the Psychology Student Advisors' office. Blank copies of the enrollment form can be obtained from the advisors' office or on the CMHSAC website. The CMHSAC enrollment form is located in Appendix II of this handbook. There is no deadline for enrolling, and students are free to take any number of the required courses before submitting a formal application. However, students should be aware that until a formal application is submitted, they will not be eligible for fieldwork placements or able to register for the Seminar on Ethics course.

The CMHSAC program currently offers all of the courses necessary for CASAC eligibility, and does so in a way that also satisfies many of the MA and PhD course requirements as well (see Appendix III for recommended course sequences). Based on the existing strengths of the psychology program, as well as the current and anticipated needs within the field over the next five to ten years, the CMHSAC curriculum has been designed to emphasize the areas of harm reduction, co-occurring disorders, assessment, motivational interviewing, mindfulness-based interventions, relapse prevention, and program evaluation.

*Advising and Registration:* It is extremely important that students confer with the student advisors prior to registering for any of the courses offered in the CMHSAC (see Appendix III).

*Course Requirements:* The CMHSAC degree requirements consist of a total of 30 Graduate credits, 9 of which are in the area of substance abuse. All of the courses are usually offered once a year during certain semesters. The three required courses for the CMHSAC are offered during the regular academic year.

## CMHSAC PROGRAM CURRICULUM

*\*Please visit [newschool.edu/nssr](http://newschool.edu/nssr) to view the New School for Social Research's course catalog for descriptions of course content. Students are strongly encouraged to complete the requirements for the degree within two years.*

### A) Basic Distribution Requirements:

- a. "A" Course Distribution Requirement : Three courses in General Psychology.
  - i. CMHSAC students must take Introduction to Cognitive Neuroscience as one of the three required "A" courses.

- ii. Students who intend to apply to the doctoral program may consider including History & Systems as an “A” course selection. (9 credits)
- b. *“B” Course Distribution Requirement : Adult Psychopathology and two other “B” courses in the area of either social, developmental or personality.*
  - i. Students who intend to apply to the doctoral program may consider including Assessment of Individual Differences as a “B” course selection.
  - ii. Students also on the clinical track may use Psychopathology III as their social “B” level courses (9 credits).

**B) Required Substance Abuse - Relevant Courses:**

- a. Psychopathology III: Bio-social and Cognitive Theories of Addiction. *This course may be used to fulfill the social “B” level course* (3 credits)
- b. Introduction to Substance Abuse Counseling (3 credits)
- c. Advanced Issues in Substance Abuse Counseling (3 credits)
- d. MHSAC Equivalency Externship- GEQV 6410 (0 credits): For students enrolled in optional externship placements, it is required that they attend supervision with Dr. Talley.

**C) Required Courses for Students Intending to Apply to Doctoral Program:**

- a. Assessment of Individual Differences (3 credits), if not taken as one of the “B” course distribution requirements
- b. History & Systems (3 credits), if not taken as one of the “A” course distribution requirements
- c. One M.A. level Research Methods course (3 credits)
- d. Introduction to Statistics & Research Design (3 credits)

**D) Effective Spring 2011, students who wish to satisfy the academic eligibility criteria for the CASAC trainee certificate and the CASAC exam will have to take the following additional courses:**

- a. Professional and Ethical Issues (1 credits)
  - i. This “E” course also satisfies the professional issues course requirement for PhD students in the clinical program.
- b. One free, 2-hour online training on Child Abuse Reporting provided by the New York State Office for Children and Family Services (OCFS). This training is completed during the Advanced Issues in Substance Abuse Counseling course and is offered through the following website: [nysmandatedreporter.org](http://nysmandatedreporter.org)

*CASAC-Relevant Courses Taken Elsewhere:* Students are free to supplement the CASAC-relevant courses of the CMHSAC program with CASAC-relevant courses offered at other institutions. Although courses from other institutions cannot be used to fulfill the requirements for the CMHSAC degree, they can be used in conjunction with any of the CASAC-relevant courses taken in the CMHSAC program to satisfy the CASAC Trainee certificate eligibility requirements. Since OASAS has strict guidelines regarding the content distribution of the CASAC curriculum, students who are considering the possibility of taking CASAC courses at another institution should consult with the student coordinator or a member of the CMHSAC faculty prior to doing so.

*Eligibility for admission to the Doctoral Program:* Electing to pursue a CMHSAC degree does not in any way preclude a student from applying for admission to the Doctoral Program. CMHSAC

students who wish to apply to the doctoral program are subject to the same admissions requirements that apply to those enrolled in the general MA. These requirements include: a satisfactory grade-point average; passing the comprehensive exam; successfully passing both a MA-level research methods course and the Assessment of Individual Differences course; and completing the elementary statistics requirement.

*However, please consider the following caveats:*

- 1) Given the possibility that some students will feel disadvantaged in their ability to take some of the so-called “comps -relevant” courses as electives, students are strongly encouraged to audit as many comps-relevant courses as their schedule allows.
- 2) The one-credit Ethics course and the online, two-hour Child Abuse Reporting training are NOT requirements for the CMHSAC, but are necessary for fulfilling the academic requirements for CASAC eligibility.
  - a. Consequently, those students who wish to complete all of the academic requirements for the CASAC will need to take the Ethics course, thus increasing their total credits to 31, along with the free, 2-hour online training on Child Abuse Reporting.
- 3) Students who wish to apply for admission to the clinical PhD program will also have to take the Research Methods, Intro to Stats & Research Design, and History & Systems courses. Thus, they will not take elective courses but instead will complete one additional “A” level course.
- 4) The Adult Psychopathology course is not part of the required CMHSAC curriculum but is required for CASAC eligibility and is also part of the Clinical MA track.

## CLINICAL PLACEMENTS

Supervised clinical placements at facilities in the community are available to eligible students in the program. Although participation in such placements is not a requirement for the degree, hands-on clinical exposure, either through opportunities at the student’s place of employment or at community-based agencies is strongly encouraged.

*Goals and Objectives of Fieldwork Placements:*

- A) Introduce and orient students to professional work in varied substance abuse treatment and research settings with multidisciplinary treatment teams.
  - a. Clinical experiences may include observing and co-leading groups, conducting psychosocial intakes, writing treatment plans, case management, discharge planning/referrals, providing individual psychotherapy depending on the site.
- B) Provide supervised practical experiences and promote the development of students’ clinical skills.
- C) Encourage the integration of academic work with practical experience.
- D) Gain experience participating in clinical supervision and discussion of clinical cases.
- E) Students are encouraged to commit to a minimum of 2 days per week (up to 8 hours/day) for at least 3 months at an approved field placement site (see below). If a student wants to pursue a placement at another site, please consult with Dr. Talley.

Students are not eligible for placements until they receive formal approval by the Assistant Director of the program. It should also be understood that there are limits to the number of students who can be accommodated at placement sites at any given time. Consequently, there will

be times when there will be more applicants than there are slots available at a particular site. Every effort will be made to ensure that all eligible candidates are accommodated.

*Application process:* This consists of two elements. First, all applicants for placement must be NSSR MA level students who have completed Psychopathology III with a grade of B or higher and must be enrolled in or have taken one or both of the substance abuse counseling courses when doing fieldwork. Second, the enrollment form must be completed and returned to the student advisors' office. The information contained in the enrollment form, in conjunction with the student's performance during the required courses, serves as the basis for placement decisions.

*Student malpractice insurance:* All students participating in fieldwork must obtain APA Student Malpractice Insurance and provide Dr. Talley with a copy for her records. For more information, please visit: [apait.org/apait/products/studentliability](http://apait.org/apait/products/studentliability) or speak with Dr. Talley.

*Possible Fieldwork Sites:*

- The Center- LGBT Community Center, Chelsea, NYC, [gaycenter.org](http://gaycenter.org)
- Realization Center, Union Square, NYC, [realizationcenternyc.com](http://realizationcenternyc.com)
- SuCasa at Lower Eastside Service Center, LES, NYC, [lesc.org](http://lesc.org)
- Greenhope Services for Women, East Harlem, NYC, [greenhope.org](http://greenhope.org)
- Lower Eastside Harm Reduction Center, LES, NYC, [leshrc.org](http://leshrc.org)
- New York Harm Reduction Educators, Bronx and Harlem, NYC, [nyhre.org](http://nyhre.org)
- Addiction Institute Roosevelt Hospital, Columbus Circle, NYC, [addictioninstituteny.org](http://addictioninstituteny.org)

## FIELDWORK SUPERVISION

CMHSAC students participating in fieldwork receive on-site clinical supervision as well as supervision by CMHSAC faculty. On-site supervision must be provided by Qualified Health Professionals (QHPs), which includes: Certified Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselors (CASAC's), Social Workers, Psychologists, and/or psychiatrists, depending on the nature of the fieldwork placement and the students' activities. Supervision with CMHSAC faculty takes place at The New School for Social Research. Students are required to sign up for MHSAC Equivalency Externship (GEQV 6410) credits while on externship, attend supervision, and maintain regular contact with CMHSAC Faculty regarding their externship. The primary contact in this regard is Dr. Jenifer Talley.

*Evaluations:* In addition to ongoing feedback provided during regularly scheduled supervision, fieldwork supervisors will formally evaluate students (see Appendix IV) at the end of their placements. This evaluation form will be returned to the CMHSAC Assistant Director once completed. Again, students are also encouraged to stay in regular contact with CMHSAC Faculty regarding their fieldwork experiences.

## DIRECTORY

The following is a listing of the names, titles and office locations of the various individuals who are associated with the CMHSAC program, either directly or indirectly, in the roles of teachers, supervisors, and administrators. Specific questions about the program should always be directed to the student advisors, the CMHSAC student coordinator, Ingmar Gorman, and/or to Dr. Talley.

### The New School for Social Research Faculty

#### **McWelling Todman, PhD**

Associate Professor of Clinical Practice  
Director, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Counseling Program  
New School for Social Research  
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#### **Jenifer Talley, PhD**

Assistant Director, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Concentration  
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### Student Program Coordinator

#### **Ingmar Gorman, MA**

phone: (646) 504-6595  
email: [MHSAC@newschool.edu](mailto:MHSAC@newschool.edu) or [gormi539@newschool.edu](mailto:gormi539@newschool.edu)

## Appendix I: Description of CASAC Requirements

In a recent and important development, the New York State Office of Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) has made it possible for CMHSAC graduates to sit for the CASAC exam immediately following completion of the program which provides the 350 hour Educational Requirements for CASAC eligibility (Intro & Advanced Substance Abuse courses, Path 3, Adult Path, Ethics and a 2-hour online Mandated Child Abuse Reporting training). A certificate documenting completion of the 350 hour CASAC program can be issued to CMHSAC graduates. Please note that as a result of this change, work experience may be acquired later.

Graduates from the CMHSAC may take the exam, receive their scores, but will not be granted full CASAC certification until they have completed the required 2000 hours of work experience. They will, however, be eligible upon graduation from the CMHSAC to apply for a CASAC-Trainee (CASAC-T) certificate. Please contact Student Coordinator for most recent description of CASAC requirements and if there are additional questions regarding the application process. Additional information is also provided through the OASAS website: [oasas.ny.gov/sqa/credentialing](http://oasas.ny.gov/sqa/credentialing)

In order to obtain the certificate for OASAS from the MHSAC, please provide a copy of your transcript that documents successful completion of the courses listed above, along with a mailing address to the Assistant Director, Dr. Jenifer Talley, who will issue the certificate.

**Please note that these certificates are not automatically generated and we are currently working on streamlining the system.**



## Appendix II: CMHSAC Enrollment form

### CMHSAC Enrollment Form

*[Please complete and return to the Student Advisors]*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Which of the following CMHSAC courses have you taken?

<u>At The New School for Social Research</u>	YR / Semester
Adult Psychopathology	[ ] ____/____
Psychopathology III	[ ] ____/____
Introduction to Substance Abuse Counseling	[ ] ____/____
Advanced Issues in Substance Abuse Counseling	[ ] ____/____

#### Please answer the following:

Do you wish to be considered for clinical placements? yes [ ] no [ ]

Do you have an MA from another institution? yes [ ] no [ ]

Do you intend to pursue a doctoral degree in psychology? yes [ ] no [ ]

Are you currently employed? FT [ ] PT [ ] Not employed [ ]

Are you employed at either a mental health or substance abuse facility? yes [ ] no [ ]

Briefly describe any prior research and/or clinical experience.

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Advisor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ date: \_\_\_\_\_

Director/Assistant Director's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ date: \_\_\_\_\_

### APPENDIX III: Recommended Course Sequences

30 credits total (31 credits with CASAC eligibility).

CMHSAC Track	CMHSAC & Clinical Track
<b>Year 1</b> <i>Fall Semester</i>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Proseminar</li> <li>2. Adult Psychopathology</li> <li>3. Psychopathology III</li> <li>4. Intro. to Sub. Abuse Counseling</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Proseminar</li> <li>2. Adult Psychopathology</li> <li>3. Psychopathology III</li> <li>4. Intro. to Sub. Abuse Counseling</li> </ol>
<i>Spring Semester</i>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Advanced Issues in Sub Abuse Counseling</li> <li>2. A-Level course (History &amp; Systems, Visual Perception, or Cognitive Psychology)</li> <li>3. A-Level course (can be taken in Yr. 2)</li> <li>4. Child Abuse Reporter Training (2hr free online session)</li> <li>5. Fieldwork (optional)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Advanced Issues in Sub Abuse Counseling</li> <li>2. History &amp; Systems</li> <li>3. A-Level course (can be taken in Year 2)</li> <li>4. Child Abuse Reporter Training (2hr free online session, CASAC only)</li> <li>5. Fieldwork (optional)</li> <li>6. MHSAC Equivalency Externship credit (optional)</li> </ol>
<b>Year 2</b> <i>Fall Semester</i>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Intro. to Cognitive Neuroscience</li> <li>2. Elective course (see advisor for options)</li> <li>3. Fieldwork (optional)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Intro. to Cognitive Neuroscience</li> <li>2. Intro. to Stats &amp; Research Design</li> <li>3. Fieldwork (optional)</li> <li>4. MHSAC Equivalency Externship credit (optional)</li> </ol>
<i>Spring Semester</i>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A-Level course</li> <li>2. B-Level course (Assessment of Individual Differences recommended)</li> <li>3. Ethics (1 credit, CASAC only)</li> <li>4. Fieldwork (optional)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Research Methods</li> <li>2. Assessment of Individual Differences</li> <li>3. Ethics (1 credit, CASAC only)</li> <li>4. Fieldwork (optional)</li> <li>5. MHSAC Equivalency Externship credit (optional)</li> </ol>

## APPENDIX IV: Externship Evaluation Form

### The New School for Social Research Concentration in Mental Health and Substance Abuse Counseling Externship Evaluation Form

**Student Extern Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Site Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Supervisor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dates of Placement:** Start Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

**Evaluation Completed on (date):** \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

*Please rate the extern's performance in comparison with that of other externs at the same externship level you have supervised, in each of the following areas:*

**1=** Needs Improvement; **2=** Adequate; **3=** Good; **4=** Very Good; **5=** Excellent

#### Therapeutic Skills

Clinical Diagnosis & Assessment	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Individual Interventions	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Group Interventions	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Reporting & Record Keeping	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Treatment Planning & Referrals	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Crisis Management	1	2	3	4	5	NA

#### Presentational Skills

Quality of oral reports	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Quality of written reports	1	2	3	4	5	NA

#### Professional Development

Ability to use supervision appropriately	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Relations with staff and other trainees	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Understanding of ethical standards	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Responsibility for timely work completion	1	2	3	4	5	NA

<b>OVERALL RATING</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
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**Narrative Summary**

Please describe the extern's strengths:

Please comment on the extern's weaknesses:

Suggestions for further preparation:

Comments by extern on evaluation:

Supervisor's signature\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_

Student's signature\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_