



# COUNSELOR EDUCATION UPDATE

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE COUNSELOR EDUCATION PROGRAM AT WCSU



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## WELCOME TO THE 2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR!

Fall is an amazing time of year because it provides us with a beautiful reminder that change is ever-present in our lives. This fall brought some new and exciting changes to the WCSU family. The university community welcomed our new Interim President, Dr. Manohar Singh, and the Counselor Education program welcomed Dr. Jessi Gutheil as our new faculty member. We also had the opportunity to welcome 33 new students to our program. Great things are happening at WCSU!

As John Maxwell said, "Change is inevitable. Growth is optional." The Counselor Education program embraces the power of change and the many gifts that it can bestow upon us if we are willing to do our work (personal work and school work, of course) and be open to learning, growing, and improving. So this fall as the leaves change into magnificent colors, the air becomes chillier, and pumpkin spice appears everywhere, I hope that you will take a moment to reflect on how change can help you to grow as a person and as a professional.

The fall is also a time of thanksgiving and gratitude. A time to reflect on the many blessings in our lives and an opportunity to give thanks for all that we have. Personally, I am grateful for our students and their desire to help others. I know that they will make the world a better place. I am also extremely grateful for the amazing WCSU faculty and staff who are endlessly supportive and caring. Finally, I am so thankful to our alumni and community partners for their many contributions to the growth and development of our students and program. May you all have a fantastic fall and an amazing semester!

Dr. Lorrie-Anne Monte  
Counselor Education Program Coordinator  
CACREP Unit Leader  
Fieldwork Coordinator  
Director of the Behavioral Health Workforce Grant 2021-2025  
Assistant Professor in Counselor Education

# A Word From 3rd Year School Counseling Students

Lindsay Cavanaugh, Graduate Assistant, SC '24



**Shannon Muse:** Shannon is interning at Poughkeepsie Middle School. Shannon is also part of the Bridge program so she will be receiving her School Counseling degree with both New York and CT certification in 2024 and completing requirements for CMHC licensure.

**What has been the hardest part of this program?**

Definitely our group sessions for our Group Counseling class! It's hard being critiqued by classmates and our professor. We had some tough people in our sessions. It was also hard figuring out how to use DBT correctly and then executing it in the group.

**What advice do you offer to first-year students who are in the position you were in just two years ago?**

Don't be afraid to challenge yourself: ask questions, be the first to respond to questions, be the first to give your presentation. Key to growing and getting everything out to the group is trying to be bold and get out of your comfort zone. This program is the perfect time to do that.

**What have you loved about the program?**

Besides meeting all my wonderful cohort, this new journey into school counseling. Stepping out of the paraprofessional role and seeing it through the school counseling role.

## Jessica Soni:

Jessica is currently interning at Henry Abbott Tech High School in Danbury School.

She will be graduating with her School Counseling degree in May.

**How is balancing school/work/internship/personal life?**

Balancing is a struggle, I have two jobs and placement so it's really hard for me to make time. At the end of the day, you need to prioritize. What's more important: having two jobs or having a great experience at internship? Of course, internship is more important. I balance by taking stuff off my plate. For my personal life, I make time for my people through text and FaceTime.

**What advice do you offer to first year students who are in the position you were in just two years ago?**

I would say to not sleep on the material! Take it seriously- inhale it, color-code it, do whatever you can to absorb the material. This field is constantly changing, so you will need to grow and change with it. You're going to feel overwhelmed but make sure you connect the dots with all the things you are learning and what you learn/take from your internship. Remember ASCA standards as you will see those everywhere in counseling!! I wish I bought my textbooks instead of rented so I still had the resources/information on me.

**What have you loved about the program?**

My cohort! The amount of support they offer me is tremendous. They validate my feelings; they are my second family.



## Joe Woglom:

Joe is interning at Millard Driscoll School (K-2) in Wilton, CT. He will be graduating this May with his School Counseling degree.

**How is balancing school/work/internship/personal life?**

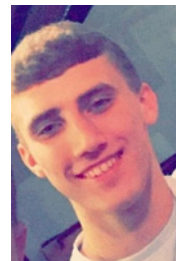
I am enjoying the work so it's not as hard as I thought it would be. Regular job is great, my co-workers have been so supportive of me pursuing this degree. I do 40 hours of work and 20 hours of internship every week and it hasn't been too tough. I'm also balancing having two kids with one on the way and I'm feeling grateful, especially knowing this isn't forever and there's an endgame.

**What advice do you offer first-year students who are in the position you were in just two years ago?**

Take a deep breath, it's going to be great. Ask for help when you need it, lean on your cohort whenever you can. We're all going through the same thing.

**What have you loved about the program?**

Everything, the staff, classes, cohort. Watching everyone grow and cheering everyone on as well; it's been great.



## Greg Carnevali:

Greg is currently at East Ridge Middle School in Ridgefield, CT and will be graduating this May with his School Counseling degree.

**What has been the hardest part about this program?**

Workload can be a lot, we're working fulltime and it's really hard to balance everything. It can be taxing, with homework, class, internship. Balance is about figuring out what's important and putting in hours and work for the end goal (graduating and getting a good job)! Difficult but all worth it.

**What advice do you offer to first year students who are in the position you were in just two years ago?**

I would say don't give up. It's going to be tough, keep your notes organized and keep grinding; it'll be over before you know it! Take advantage of your classmates & cohort, make group chats and form study sessions. We're all in this together.

**What have you loved about the program?**

Working with my cohort, they're good people and here to help us. If I didn't have them, I would be so lost.

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

# HRSA GRANT UPDATE

Dr. Lorrie-Anne Monte, Program Director

Each year, the Counselor Education program offers a professional development series of speakers. The presentations are via Zoom, which allows us to engage with students in related studies: the School of Nursing-Psych APRN and the Addiction Studies students. This gives various students interested in mental health issues a chance to enhance their learning opportunities.

Fall 2023 speakers included:

- September 27th, **Regional Trauma Coordinators from Regional Educational Service Centers (RESC) Alliance** presented *UPLIFT: A Trauma-Informed Care Training Program for Schools* to SC students. The second module concluded on October 25th.



- **Western CT Coalition** delivered training on MI (*Motivational Interviewing*) and SBIRT (*Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment*) on October 18th.



- November 7th, **The Center for Empowerment** discussed *Human Trafficking* with CMHC, SC and any interested related-studies students.



Spring 2024 speaker presentations will include

- TBA: Speakers who will discuss *EMDR & Trauma Resiliency*, *Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)*, and *Trauma-Informed Counseling in the Schools*.



Activities of the 2021-2025 HRSA grant are underway:

- The annual report was completed and submitted to HRSA on July 31st; the financial report was submitted at the end of October.
- 3rd year school and clinical mental health counseling students signed up to receive stipends during their fall semester internships.
- Speakers for the Fall Professional Development series gave presentations, and speakers are confirming availability and dates for the Spring 2024 series.
- The first Clinical Skills Lab of the fall semester was held on September 16th and switched to online (due to COVID). The second took place on October 21st when our Simulated Patients ("SP"), who are recruited from social work, nursing, psychology and theatre arts departments, portrayed patients/clients during sessions with counseling students to practice skills in a safe environment. The last Fall Clinical Skills Lab was on November 18 and brought the return of SPs along with Cohortsgiving.
- Spring Clinical Skills Labs dates are: **February 24, March 23, and April 20, 2024**. Please note these days if you are enrolled in participating courses.

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# INTRODUCING DR. JESSICA GUTHEIL

Interviewed by Serena Marro, Graduate Assistant, SC '25

Dr. Jessica Gutheil, PhD, NCC joins the Counselor Education program as an assistant professor. Her research interests include self-efficacy theory, immigration trauma, and acculturative stress.

Before coming to WCSU, she received her undergraduate degrees in Psychology and Hispanic Studies from Illinois Wesleyan University and her master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from DePaul University. She then received her Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision from the University of Nevada Reno in 2023. In Reno, Dr. Gutheil assisted in supervising the student-run clinic at the University and then took over for a time when the director left. This was a challenging and impactful experience that allowed her to learn and grow.

Dr. Gutheil's research interests led to her dissertation on immigrant mental health. She was interested in understanding trauma experiences, acculturative stress, and self-efficacy of Latinex immigrants and how this impacted their mental health. Much of Dr. Gutheil's clinical work was with minority children and adolescents and their families, so she's seen how these issues impacted them firsthand. She hopes to continue to study immigrant mental health, especially the differences between children and adult immigration experiences.

Fun Facts: Dr. Gutheil speaks three languages, English, German, and Spanish, and is an immigrant to the U.S. herself. In her spare time, she enjoys baking, being active outdoors, and traveling when she gets the opportunity.



## PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING GROUPS

### **CT Counseling Association - [CCACounseling.com](http://CCACounseling.com)**

#### **CCA Events:**

Annual conference, professional networking and training opportunities  
See the website for more information

### **CT School Counselor Association - [CSCA.wildapricot.org](http://CSCA.wildapricot.org)**

#### **CSCA Events:**

Annual conference, professional networking and training opportunities  
See the website for more information

Awards Nominations open in December 2023 for:

*School Counselor of the Year* - - - *School Counselor Intern of the Year* - - - *SC Intern Supervisor of the Year*

### **American Counseling Association - [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org)**

### **American School Counselor Association - [www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org)**

# SC SITE SUPERVISOR SPOTLIGHT: Get to Know Kate Simmons

Interviewed by Lindsay Cavanaugh, Graduate Assistant, SC '24

I have the pleasure of working with Kate Simmons, a school counselor at Brewster High School, as her intern. Kate and I go way back, with her being my school counselor at Henry H. Wells Middle School, in Brewster, NY, when I was younger. She inspired me to want to become a school counselor. She loves to read and watch non-fiction.

**Lindsay: How long have you been a school counselor?**

Kate: This is my 15th year! This is my 10th year at Brewster High School.

**L: Where did you graduate from?**

K: I went to Siena College for my bachelor's degree in psychology and College of St. Rose for my master's degree in school counseling. I loved their program and had some wonderful and encouraging professors.

**L: What made you interested in school counseling?**

K: My mom was a school psychologist, and I was always interested in what she was doing. She would explain to me how her job worked: testing, reports; not as hands on as a school counselor. The role of the school psychologist is similar and different to a school counselor. I knew my strengths, knowing I wasn't the best with math and wouldn't like report writing. My friends turned to me for support, as I was considered the "counselor friend." I love working directly with kids.

**L: What do you love about being a school counselor?**

K: I love working with young people. What I really like about high school counseling is you can watch kids manifest their dreams. Your guidance and support help them navigate some of the worst years of their lives. They also are mature and able enough to professionally develop and can tell you that you've had an impact on them. I have four whole years to build a relationship with them and see them go from a child (13-14 years old) to a young adult (18 years old). *"Preparing them for the future and watching them grow is so fulfilling."* Middle school counseling dealt more with anxiety and bullying. As a counselor, you have the responsibility to shape youth and push them to be better people. *"I love watching people achieve their goals."* My school counselor didn't even know my name; no sense of connection. I am here because I love making connections.

**L: What do you not like about being a counselor?**

K: I don't like not being an expert on everything; I am learning how to cope and be okay with that. Everything is always changing and there are new requirements, it's hard to keep up in the high school world. Middle school is easier. We also have to individualize every schedule, making sure students reach all their requirements so they can graduate; it's a lot of pressure. People are always coming up to me and asking me questions, sometimes things that are unrelated to my job. I must figure out what's a priority. It can feel like a dumping ground, we carry a lot of work. There are some difficult and demanding students. We get a lot of questions we don't always know the answer to; no script on how to be prepared and we are always evolving. We must always be researching for scholarships and school requirements. Even outside of work, I am trying to enhance my skills. I don't feel like everything is handled. Your master's will not prepare you; you need to learn on the job. There's also a lot of pressure to have technical knowledge, which is hard in this ever-changing world.

**L: You mentioned that you prefer middle school? Why is that?**

K: It was a lot easier in the middle school, not as much pressure. I like the middle school mentality and felt like there was more collaboration. I felt important there, as I was helping with social skills, career and their academic needs. I felt like I had structure there and more opportunities to meet with students regularly. Working in high school, you never know what you're going to deal with/what will happen that day.

**L: What advice do you offer to those interested in/pursuing a school counseling degree?**

K: For those studying: try to work in any capacity with children. I worked at Four Winds, a mental health hospital in Westchester County that provides inpatient and outpatient mental health treatment for children, adolescents, and adults. It was not a fun or comfortable job, but it got me out the door. Do things that are a resume builder and never stop learning. Continue to visit colleges, embrace your profession as a part of who you are. I'm not just a school counselor, everyone is looking for help. Try to get involved at any level (get a leg up), attend webinars and conferences; the more you expose yourself, the more tools you have in your toolbox.



*"I love making connections."*



As you may know, Chi Sigma Iota International Honor Society has deactivated our campus chapter, Zeta Omega Eta, effective September 2023, due to not having two approved faculty supervisors. Please know that Dr. Monte is actively working on trying to fix this issue.

Students already inducted into CSI can continue to be members of the society by paying their yearly dues. This will continue to give them access to all of the member benefits.

For more information about Chi Sigma Iota, please contact Dr. Gutheil.

### November 1:

- Graduation application deadline for May Commencement (**Feb 1** for August; **April 1** for December)
- School Counseling Practicum Agreements are due to Dr. Monte
- Registration opens for Spring classes

### Feb 24th, Mar 23rd, and Apr 20th:

- Spring 2024 Saturday clinical labs will run 10:00am-4:00pm. These are **required dates** on campus if you are enrolled in EPY 501 or EPY 606.

**April 1:** CMHC Practicum Agreements are due to Dr. Monte

### TBA:

- CECE Exam **April 2024**

## SPRING 2024 SCHEDULE OF COURSES\*

**NOTE: Three credit classes (other than supervision) are required to run 2.5 hours or more with a 10 minute break. Graduate online courses may build in an asynch space for independent theory and skill practice.**

CMH	Course	Special Instructions	School	Course	Special Instructions
1st Year	EPY 500 Human Growth & Development, <b>W 4:30-7:00 or W 7-9:30</b>  EPY 501 Counseling & Helping Relationships, <b>T 4:30-7, S*</b>	EPY 500: Register for either section  *EPY 501: Register for either section. <b>Saturday Lab Dates 2/24, 3/23, 4/20</b>	1st Year	EPY 500 Human Growth & Development, <b>W 4:30-7:00 or W 7-9:30</b>  ED 572 Career Ed & Dev <b>Async</b>  EPY 501 Counseling & Helping Relationships <b>T 4:30-7, S*</b>	EPY: 500, 501 & ED 572 Register for either section  *EPY 501: <b>Saturday Lab Dates 2/24, 3/23, 4/20</b>
2nd Year	EPY 606 Adv Group CMH, <b>W 4:30-7, S*</b>  EPY 630 Intro Psychopathology, <b>W 7-9:30</b>	*EPY 606: <b>Saturday Lab Dates 2/24, 3/23, 4/20</b>	2nd Year	EPY 606 Adv Group School, <b>W 4:30-7, S*</b>  EPY 610 Practicum, <b>M 7-8:30</b>	*EPY 606 <b>Saturday Lab Dates 2/24, 3/23, 4/20</b>  EPY 610 Register for either section
3rd Year	ED 572 Career Ed & Dev <b>Async</b> EPY 615 Internship, <b>T 5-6:30 or T 7-8:30</b>	ED 572 & EPY 615 Register for either section	3rd Year	EPY 613 Internship <b>T 5-6:30 OR T 7-8:30</b>	EPY 613 Register for either section
Electives WINTER & SPRING	PSY 581 Dev & Eval of SUD Intervent'n Programs <b>MR 4-7:30 synch online</b>  EPY 622 Counseling Women <b>M 4:30-7</b>	INTERSESSION  SPRING ELECTIVE	Electives (CMH) SUMMER 2024	PSY 585 Current Topics in SUD Assessment & Treatment <b>synch online</b>	SUMMER ELECTIVE