Doctoral Comprehensive Examination

 Applies to students who began fall 2011 and 2012:

 The comprehensive examination evaluates the student’s ability to integrate knowledge of counseling or marriage and family therapy, display critical and independent thinking and research skills, and demonstrate mastery of the field (teaching and supervision). The results of the examination provide evidence of independent thinking, appropriate organization, writing competency, critical analysis, and accuracy of documentation. The purpose of the comprehensive exam is to encourage students who are nearing graduation to engage in a systematic review of their coursework. The exam also provides faculty with one form of evidence to make determinations regarding the student’s readiness for graduation.

 The comprehensive exam will be given in two parts: written and oral. Only those students in the last semester of their coursework will be allowed to attempt the comprehensive exam. The written portion of the exam will be composed of four questions and will be completed in four one and a half hour segments of time. The four questions will involve the following courses: 1) Research, Statistics, and Group, 2) Counseling or Marriage and Family Cognate courses (this question will involve a case scenario), 3) Theories – Cognitive-Behavioral, Postmodern, and Psychodynamic (this question will involve comparing and contrasting models), and 4) Teaching strategies and Supervision Models. All questions may cover some aspects from all courses except for those offered during the semester the comprehensive exam will be taken. The comprehensive exam will be offered every summer semester and on a case-by-case basis during the fall or spring semesters. The oral exam will generally follow within two weeks of the written examination and will provide the student an opportunity to explain, defend, and elaborate on his/her written answers in response to a committee of faculty members from the doctoral program.

 Three possible grades may be assigned to the written and oral examination: pass with distinction, pass, or fail. Students who do not successfully complete the comprehensive exam will have a remediation plan developed and enacted before scheduling a second attempt. In some cases the retake may include all four questions; in other cases, the retake may be limited to select questions. If the second attempt is failed, the student will be dismissed from the program.