CAMPBELLSVILLE UNIVERSITY

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Admissions Essay | A Defining Moment of Growth

Becoming a professional counselor requires more than academic knowledge and clinical skills. It requires self-awareness, ethical judgment, cultural humility, and a willingness to examine how our personal experiences, values, and beliefs influence our relationships with others.

Essay Prompt

Describe a meaningful experience from your life in which you encountered an ethical dilemma, a difficult decision involving competing values, or a situation that challenged your understanding of someone whose cultural background, identity, beliefs, or life experiences differed from your own.

Your experience may come from your personal life, employment, education, volunteer service, community involvement, or another meaningful setting. Choose a specific experience that had a lasting impact on you.

In your essay, address the following:

1. **The Experience:** Tell the story. What happened, who was involved, and why was the situation meaningful or challenging for you?
2. **The Ethical Dilemma:** What values, responsibilities, or competing perspectives made the situation difficult? How did you decide what to do, and what influenced your decision?
3. **Multicultural Awareness:** How did differences in culture, race, ethnicity, religion, spirituality, socioeconomic circumstances, gender, sexual orientation, ability, or other aspects of identity influence the situation or your understanding of it?
4. **Personal Reflection:** Looking back, what did you learn about your assumptions, biases, strengths, or limitations? Would you approach the situation differently today? Why or why not?
5. **Professional Formation:** How might this experience influence the kind of counselor you hope to become, particularly when working with people whose values, beliefs, or experiences differ from your own?

Essay Requirements

- Length: 750–1,000 words
- Format: Double-spaced, 12-point font
- Write in the first person, using a clear and reflective narrative.
- Protect the privacy of others by changing names and omitting identifying details.
- No academic citations or prior knowledge of counseling theory are required.
- The essay should reflect your own thinking, experiences, and writing.

What the Admissions Committee Values

We are not evaluating whether you made the perfect decision or whether your beliefs match those of the faculty. We are interested in how you approach difficult situations, consider perspectives different from your own, examine your decisions, and demonstrate openness to continued personal and professional growth.

You are not required to disclose traumatic experiences, protected personal information, or deeply private circumstances. Choose an experience you are comfortable sharing with an admissions committee.