

Michael Sickels, Ph.D., LPC, NCC

Clinical Assistant Professor
Department of Counselor Education and School Psychology
Duquesne University, 102 Canevin Hall
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EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.), Counselor Education and Supervision Aug. 2022
Duquesne University
Graduate Research Assistant. Aug. 2018 – Aug. 2019
Dissertation: *"I hear you": Exploring the lived experience of counselors' empathic response to clients when conducting telephonic counseling during COVID-19* [Doctoral dissertation, Duquesne University]
ProQuest Dissertations Publishing. <https://dsc.duq.edu/etd/2092>

Master of Science in Education (M.S.Ed.), Clinical Mental Health Counseling Aug. 2018
Duquesne University
Graduate Research Assistant. Nov. 2017 – Jan. 2018

Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Middle Level Education: English Language Arts and Mathematics May 2013
Waynesburg University

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Duquesne University. Department of Counselor Education and School Psychology.
Pittsburgh, PA.
Clinical Assistant Professor. Counselor Education Program. Aug. 2023 – Present
Visiting Assistant Professor. Counselor Education Program. Aug. 2022 – Aug. 2023

INSTRUCTIONAL EXPERIENCE

Duquesne University. Pittsburgh, PA.

Doctoral-Level Instruction

Counseling Supervision: Theories & Practice	Sp25, 26
Counselor Education Internship I	Sp25, 26
Counseling Supervision Seminar & Practicum	F24, 25, 26
Doctoral Practicum	F24
Counselor Education Internship II	Su24; F25
Advanced Counseling and Consultation Theory	Su23; Sp22, 26
Professional Writing in Counselor Education and Supervision	F22, 23, 24, 26

Master's-Level Instruction

Introduction to Clinical Counseling and Ethical Practices	F25, 26
Fieldwork Orientation for School Counseling Students	F24, 25; Sp25, 26
Fieldwork Orientation	F24, 25; Sp25, 26
Counseling and Consultation Theory	F23
Child and Adolescent Counseling	Su23
Career Development in Counseling	Su23, 24
Introduction to Addictions Counseling	Sp23
Psychotherapeutic Aspects of Human Sexuality	Sp23, 24
Multicultural Issues and Strategies in Counseling	F22, 23
Therapeutic Techniques in Individual Counseling (TA)	Sp21
High Incidence: Behavior (Micro-Teaching Assignment)	F18

Clinical Facilitation

Marriage, Couples, & Family Counseling Internship I	Sp25, 26; F26
Marriage, Couples, & Family Counseling Internship II	Sp25, 26; Su25, 26
Counseling Internship: Secondary School	Sp25; F25, 26, Su26
Counseling Internship: Elementary School	Sp25, 26; F25, 26
Clinical Mental Health Counseling Internship I	Sp25, 26; Su25, 26; F25
Clinical Mental Health Counseling Internship II	F24, 25, 26; Sp25, 26; Su 25, 26
Clinical Mental Health Counseling Practicum	F24, 25; Sp25, 26
Marriage, Couples, and Family Counseling Practicum	F24, 25; Sp26
School Counseling Practicum	F24, 25; Sp25, 26

Doctoral Dissertation Committee Service

Chair

E.S. *Exploring the lived experience of premature counseling termination from clients' perspectives.* (Nov. 2025 – Present).

S.L. *Exploring the confidence of master's-level counseling students in diagnosing ADHD in women: A quantitative study.* (Sept. 2025 – Present).

A.R. *Examining the lived experiences of parents of black gifted students: A phenomenological approach.* (July 2024 – Present).

Committee Member

A.P. *Holding space after loss: The impact of personal grief on counselors' capacity for empathy.* (June 2026 – Present).

R.J. *Exploring students' preparedness to work with suicidality in CACREP-accredited programs.* (May 2026 – Present).

E.M. *Speak my culture, hear my story: The art of cultivating diversity in counseling.* (Feb. 2026 – Present).

D.D. *Primary obstacles among families in urban settings in accessing grief support services from prospective therapists.* (Dec. 2025 – Present).

E.S. *Family functioning and adolescent outcomes in wilderness therapy: A quantitative analysis of*

change and predictive relationships. (May 2025 – Oct. 2025).

A.N. *Exploring the lived experiences of counselors working with kinky clients. (Aug. 2025 – Present).*

N.M. *Examining strategies for increasing the effectiveness of school counseling supervision. (June 2025 – Present).*

S.K. *A qualitative study on counselor trainees with serious mental illness. (March 2025 – Present).*

N.S. *Building relationships: Does perceived counselor cultural humility improve client satisfaction of mental health services within therapeutic dyads of dissimilar identities? (Nov. 2024 – Oct. 2025).*

M.W. *Exploring the impact of imposter syndrome on Counselor Education and Supervision doctoral students. (Sept. 2024 – Present).*

M.T. *Gatekeeping the gatekeepers: A phenomenological study on the experiences and development of meta-gatekeepers in counselor education. (Aug. 2024 – Present).*

L.N. *Use of mindfulness to promote the spiritual and religious competencies of master's level counseling students. (July 2024 – Feb. 2025).*

P.M. *On the experience of personal therapy help negation among mental health professionals. (July 2024 – Present).*

A.G. *Reframing silence: A phenomenological exploration of Black counseling supervisors' broaching strategies in race-related discussions during clinical supervision. (June 2024 – Present).*

J.M. *The connected life: Exploring parasocial relationships on Twitch.TV and the development of romantic couple relationship skills in young adults. (Sept. 2023 – Present).*

C.T. *The impact of impairment on the integration of counselor wellness competencies in CACREP-accredited programs. (June 2023 – Nov. 2024).*

School Age Instruction

Mars Area School District. Mars, PA
Substitute Teacher (K-12)

Sept. 2016 – May 2017

Summit Academy. Toledo, OH
Grade 6 Classroom Teacher

Aug. 2015 – June 2016

Imagine Hill Academy. Toledo, OH.
Title I Teacher

April 2014 – May 2015

SCHOLARSHIP

Peer-Reviewed Publications

Sickels, M. (2025). Counselor empathic response via telephonic counseling during the COVID-19 pandemic: A deductive content analysis. *Journal of Humanistic Counseling, 0*, 1–12.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/johc.12236>

Nice, M. L., Arsh, R. A. D., Faris, N. D., Albert, J. K., & **Sickels, M. B.** (2024). Counseling emerging adults: a phenomenological investigation of professional counselors' lived experiences. *The Professional Counselor, 14*(3), 288–303. <https://tpcjournal.nbcc.org/Journal/Vol14iss03/66/>

Sickels, M. (2023). Historical and contemporary use of distance counseling services: A brief summary. *Journal of the Pennsylvania Counseling Association, 24*(3), 29–34.
http://www.pacounseling.org/aws/PACA/asset_manager/get_file/886103?ver=0

Peer-Reviewed Conference Presentations

National Conferences

- Sickels, M.** & Blackwell, L. (2025, October 7–12). *Are we teaching our students how to conduct grief counseling?: Implications for CACREP-accredited counselor education programs* [Conference session]. ACES 2025 Conference, Philadelphia, PA, United States.
- Sickels, M.**, Williams, E., & Massucci, N. (2025, October 7–12). *Teaching for relevance: Perceptions and methodologies in specialty area courses taught in CACREP-accredited counselor education programs* [Conference session]. ACES 2025 Conference, Philadelphia, PA, United States.
- Sickels, M.** & Burcur, C. (2021, October 5–10). *Empathy as a basis for a relational leadership pedagogy* [Conference session]. ACES 2021 Conference, Atlanta, GA, United States.
- Dries, E. & **Sickels, M.** (2021, October 5–10). *Courageous compassion: Using interpersonal empathy in supervision to address burnout in supervisees* [Conference session]. ACES 2021 Conference, Atlanta, GA, United States.
- Sickels, M.** & Liu, Y. (2021, June 4–5). *A case study regarding existential supervision* [Conference session]. AHC 2021 Conference, Nashville, TN, United States.

Regional Conferences

- Sickels, M.** (2024, September 27–29). *A play therapy lab approach to teaching child and adolescent counseling*. [Conference session]. NARACES 2024 Conference. Atlantic City, NJ, United States.
- Dries, E. & **Sickels, M.** (2024, September 27–29) *Adulting with ADHD: New research in female ADHD and its impact on counseling and the classroom*. [Conference session]. NARACES 2024 Conference. Atlantic City, NJ, United States.
- Dries, E. & **Sickels, M.** (2020, November 5–8). *Combating chaos: A conversation surrounding burnout transfer within the supervisory relationship* [Conference session canceled due to COVID-19 pandemic]. NARACES 2020 Conference. Pittsburgh, PA, United States.

State Conferences

- Sickels, M.** & Dries, E. (2025, November 7–9). *Incorporating self-help literature into clinical supervision through the lens of the discrimination model: Benefits and cautions* [Conference session]. PCA 2025 Conference, Bethlehem, PA, United States.
- Blackwell, L. & **Sickels, M.** (2024, October 25–27) *The space between: A discussion on grief work over distance counseling*. [Conference session]. PCA 2024 Conference. Harrisburg, PA, United States.
- Sickels, M.** (2023, November 3–5). *“I hear you”: Exploring the lived experience of counselors’ empathic response to clients when conducting telephonic counseling during COVID-19*. [Conference session]. PCA 2023 Conference. Harrisburg, PA, United States.
- Albert, J., Nice, M., **Sickels, M.**, & Arsh, F. (2023, November 3–5). *Counselors’ view of emerging adults—A phenomenological approach to understanding how counselors work with emerging adults* [Conference session]. PCA 2023 Conference. Harrisburg, PA, United States.
- Sickels, M.** (2023, April 22). *Dissertation writing: When, where, and how?* [Conference session]. CSI 2023 Conference, Indiana, PA, United States.
- Sickels, M.**, & Dries, E. (2022, October 14–16). *Reworking workaholics: Using wellness models to address burnout and PTO anxiety in clinicians* [Conference session]. PCA 2022 Conference. Pittsburgh, PA, United States.
- Nice, M., Maga, J., **Sickels, M.**, & Dries, E. (2021, November 12–14). *Counseling*

emerging adults: Understanding the impact of the college experience [Conference session]. PCA 2021 Conference. King of Prussia, PA, United States.

Sickels, M., Dries, E., & Leonhard, E. (2019, November 8–10). *A will to wellness: Using trauma-informed role fulfillment to understand the need for self-care practices among counselors* [Conference session]. PCA 2019 Conference, State College, PA, United States.

Sickels, M. & Leonhard, E. (2019, April 27). *Conflicting roles: Using social identity theory to understand role spillover of police officers' professional identity into the family setting* [Conference session]. CSI 2019 Conference, Pittsburgh, PA, United States.

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Chi Sigma Iota Chapter Development Grant (\$400)

2026

SERVICE

Organizational Leadership

Duquesne University

Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Coordinator

Aug. 2025 – Present

Clinical Facilitator, Counselor Education program

Aug. 2024 – Present

Chapter Faculty Advisor for Chi Sigma Iota, Delta Upsilon Chapter.

May 2024 – Present

Institutional Review Board

Duquesne University

Full Board Member

July 2024 – Present

School of Education IRB Member

July 2024 – Present

Marketing and Recruitment

Duquesne University

Assisting with marketing, recruitment, enrollment, and admissions
in School of Education

May 2024 – August 2024

Commencement-Related Service

Duquesne University

Student Marshal

Spring 2025

Stage Captain

Spring 2026

Journal Review

Journal of the Pennsylvania Counseling Association

Associate Member

Jan. 2024 – Present

Conference-Related Service

Pennsylvania Counseling Association

2025 Conference Planning Committee

Spring – Fall 2025

Workshops

Sickels, M. (2023, April 18). *Common APA errors and outlining strategies* [Writing workshop].
2023 Counselor Education Scholarly Writing Workshop, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA, United States.

Invited Talks

Sickels, M. (2025, February 16). *A career as a licensed professional counselor*. [Careers in Psychology Speaker Series]. Fairmount State University. Fairmount, WV, United States.
Nice, M. & Sickels, M. (2024, September 28) *CSI chapter faculty advisors training*. [CFA training session]. NARACES 2024 Conference. Atlantic City, NJ, United States.
Sickels, M. (2022, October 16). *Ethical considerations in distance counseling* [Ethics session]. PCA 2022 Conference. Pittsburgh, PA, United States.

Guest Lectures

Intervention Techniques and Applications

Pursuing a career in counseling; **Fairmount State University** Oct. 2022; March 2023

Preparation for the Professoriate: Research in CES

Writing a qualitative dissertation; **Indiana University of Pennsylvania** Jan. 2022; Feb. 2023

Careers in Behavioral Sciences

Pursuing graduate education in counseling; **Fairmount State University** Jan. 2023

Counseling Supervision: Theory and Practice

Interpersonal process recall; **Duquesne University** March 2022; April 2021

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

BetterHelp; Mountain View, CA Jan. 2024 – Present

Therapist: Provide individual and couples therapy to clients of various ages, demographics, and diagnoses.

Family Counseling Center of Armstrong County; Kittanning, PA March 2019 – Sept. 2022

Outpatient Therapist: Provided individual, couples, and family outpatient psychotherapy to clients of various ages, demographics, and diagnoses.

Glade Run Lutheran Services; Zelienople, PA Sept. 2018 – March 2019

Mobile Therapist; Behavior Specialist Consultant: Provided individual, group, and family therapy sessions, in addition to behavioral consultation across home, school, and community settings.

Washington health System: Center for Recovery and Wellness; Waynesburg, PA Aug. 2017 – July 2018

Outpatient Therapist Intern: Interned as an outpatient therapist, leading intensive outpatient therapy group, conducting client intakes, and providing individual therapy sessions.

Family Behavioral Resources; Butler, PA May 2017 – Sept. 2018

Therapeutic Support Staff: Provided one-on-one interventions and tracking behavioral progress for clients with behavioral and autism diagnoses. Also worked as a mental health worker for Summer

Therapeutic Activities Program (STAP), helping to instill social skills in a group of 10-15-year-old children with high-functioning autism.

ACCREDITATION-RELATED EXPERIENCE

CACREP; Alexandria, VA

Dec. 2022 – July 2024

Academic Review Specialist

PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE

Licensed Professional Counselor (PA)

April 2021 - Present

License Number: PC013233

National Certified Counselor

Oct. 2018 – Present

Certificate Number: 1096466

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIPS

Association for Counselor Education and Supervision

July 2019 – Present

North Atlantic Region Association for Counselor Education and Supervision

July 2019 – Present

American Counseling Association

Aug. 2019 – Present

Pennsylvania Counseling Association

Nov. 2019 – Present

Chi Sigma Iota – Counseling International Honor Society

Nov. 2017 – Present

Association for Humanistic Counseling

July 2019 – Oct. 2023