

CERTIFIED SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNSELOR (CSAC)

What is a Certified Substance Abuse Counselor?

According to the § 54.1-3507.1. Code of Virginia under “Scope of practice, supervision, and qualifications of certified substance abuse counselors” certified substance abuse counselors are qualified to:

- (i) Perform, under appropriate supervision or direction, the substance abuse treatment functions of screening, intake, orientation, the administration of substance abuse assessment instruments, recovery and relapse prevention planning, substance abuse treatment, case management, substance abuse or dependence crisis intervention, client education, referral activities, record keeping, and consultation with other professionals
- (ii) Be responsible for client care of persons with a primary diagnosis of substance abuse or dependence; and
- (iii) Supervise, direct and instruct certified substance abuse counseling assistants. *Certified substance abuse counselors shall not engage in independent or autonomous practice.*

How Do I Become Certified as a Substance Abuse Counselor?

Pursuant to regulations adopted by the Board, an applicant for certification as a substance abuse counselor shall submit evidence satisfactory to the Board that the applicant has:

- A. **Completed 220 hours of didactic substance abuse education courses** in a program or programs recognized or approved by the Board and received a bachelor's degree from a college or university accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the Board; and
- B. **Accumulated 2,000 hours of experience** involving the practice of substance abuse treatment while supervised by a licensed substance abuse treatment practitioner, or by any other mental health professional licensed by the Department, or by a certified substance abuse counselor who shall submit evidence satisfactory to the Board of clinical supervision qualifications pursuant to regulations adopted by the Board, such number of hours being greater than the number of hours required of a certified substance abuse counseling assistant.
- C. **The applicant shall also pass an examination as required by the Board.**

While you will be required to complete your residency and examination requirements after graduation, The Virginia Board of Psychology has APPROVED the following Old Dominion University substance abuse track to fulfill the didactic requirements of this credential:

HMSV 341: Introduction to Human Services- 3 cr
HMSV 444: Psychoeducational Groups- 3 cr
HMSV 447: Introduction to Substance Abuse- 3cr
HMSV 452: Substance Abuse Treatment and Research- 3 cr
HMSV 368: Field Observation in Human Services- 3 cr
HMSV 468: Internship in Human Services-12 cr

Didactic Course Descriptions and Prerequisites

HMSV 341. Introduction to Human Services. 3 Credits.

Students will learn about human services, the helping process, and the role and function of the human service worker. Students will be exposed to local and state human services facilities. A grade of C or better is required. Prerequisites: [ENGL 211C](#) or [ENGL 221C](#) or [ENGL 231C](#).

HMSV 444. Psycho-educational Groups. 3 Credits.

This course combines lectures and experiential learning about psycho-educational groups. Principles and practices for developing and leading psycho-educational groups are emphasized. Prerequisite: [HMSV 341](#) with a grade of C or higher and [HMSV 343W](#) with a grade of C or higher.

HMSV 447 Introduction to Substance Abuse 3 Credits

This course develops the professional identity of the student as a practitioner of substance abuse services while introducing the student to the signs and symptoms of substance abuse, the recovery process and relapse prevention methods.

Prerequisites: [HMSV 341](#) with a grade of C or better and [HMSV 343W](#) with a grade of C or better.

HMSV 452. Substance Abuse Treatment and Research. 3 Credits

This course explores effective substance abuse treatment planning and intervention strategies through lectures and experiential learning and examines research trends in the substance abuse field.

Prerequisites: [HMSV 447*](#) with a grade of C or better and [HMSV 343W](#) with a grade of C or better.

**Students must have taken HMSV 447 Introduction to Substance Abuse as a prerequisite to this course*

HMSV 368. Field Observation in Human Services. 3 credits

Students will visit and examine human services systems such as mental health, substance abuse, criminal justice, rehabilitation, and professional associations to facilitate decision-making in selecting an internship and to gain a complex understanding of the human services field.

A minimum grade of C is required; Prerequisites: 339, 341 and 343W

HMSV 468. Internship in Human Services. 12 Credits.

This course involves field placement in a human services setting. Approximately 400 hours are devoted to field placement, group seminars and individual supervision. A grade of "C" or better must be earned to complete the human services major. (qualifies as a CAP experience) Prerequisites: completion of all coursework including General Education requirements, core courses, major courses, and elective courses; a grade of C or better in [HMSV 341](#), [HMSV 343W](#), [HMSV 368](#), and [HMSV 440W](#); and program approval.

Comparison of CSAC Requirements to ODU Substance Abuse Track

CSAC Requirement	Can be fulfilled by	Number of Hours Received from ODU
Understanding the dynamics of human behavior	HMSV 341: Introduction to Human Services	22.5
Signs and symptoms of substance abuse	HMSV-447: Introduction to Substance Abuse	15
Treatment approaches	HMSV-452: Substance Abuse treatment and research	22.5
Continuum of care and case management skills	HMSV-368: Field Observation	22.5
Recovery process and relapse prevention methods	HMSV-447: Introduction to Substance Abuse	15
Ethics	HMSV 341: Introduction to Human Services	22.5
Professional identity in the provision of substance abuse services	HMSV-447: Introduction to Substance Abuse	15
Crisis intervention	HMSV-368: Field Observation	22.5
Substance abuse counseling treatment planning and substance abuse research	HMSV-452: Substance Abuse treatment and research	22.5 hours
Group counseling	HMSV-444-Psychoeducational Groups	45
Internship	HMSV 468: Internship in HMSV	400 hours (only need 180)
Totals		225 didactic hrs & 400 internship