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Governors State Premieres Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision

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Governors State Premieres Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision



[Governors State University's College of Education](#) is premiering the university's first ever Ph.D. The [Doctor of Education in Counselor Education and Supervision](#) (Ed.D.) will be converted to the Doctor of Counselor Education and Supervision (Ph.D.), a decision made to offer Governors State students the opportunity to expand research and contribute to the knowledge base.

Traditionally, doctorate programs were Ph.D.s that focused on research and philosophical ideas. The Ed.D. was created to get more advanced training in applied fields. However, in many professions the two degrees have lost this distinction. For example, all accredited counselor education and supervision programs must have advanced training in counseling, teaching, supervision, research, leadership and advocacy which include aspects of applied knowledge, theory, and research. The

College of Education had already been delivering the Counselor Ed.D. program as a mixture of applied and research, reported Dean of the college Shannon Dermer.

“Not making the change would leave students at a disadvantage in a field that is becoming mostly Ph.D. driven,” said Dr. Dermer. “We’re keeping our students competitive in the field, by transitioning the program that was already congruent to a Ph.D.”

With accreditation from the prestigious Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the university’s program has been strong since its creation, making the conversion to a Ph.D. a seamless process. Nevertheless, there have been changes. The program will feature more content on theory in every course including how to think about counseling, research about counseling, and models of counseling. In addition, a qualitative research course was added in recent years to bolster students’ training in both quantitative and qualitative research.



Students who wish to go into clinical work and supervisory positions will still be able to do so, and the Ph.D. will now make students more likely to be hired at universities, which Dermer estimates about 50% of counseling students wish to do.

As a regional university with the mission to serve underserved communities, Dermer states the change was of paramount importance.

“GSU has prided itself in giving people opportunity, and we wanted to make sure our students had every opportunity to succeed.”

COE will be admitting Ph.D. students for fall 2022.