

Interprofessional Peer Education and Evidence for Recovery (I-PEER) ***Frequently Asked Questions***

Frequently asked questions specifically related to the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program can be found at the end of this document.

What does I-PEER mean?

Interprofessional Peer Education and Evidence for Recovery

What is the purpose of I-PEER?

The purpose of I-PEER is to train current and future behavioral health professionals in culturally- and developmentally-appropriate, integrated care for adolescents and young adults in West Michigan.

What will I learn as a participant in I-PEER?

I-PEER provides innovative training on culturally and linguistically responsive care, financial wellness, suicide prevention, [Goal Scaling Solutions](#), and assessment and treatment for substance use disorders and common mental health conditions among adolescents and young adults.

What can I expect as a student participant?

I-PEER students will participate in four training modules over the fall and spring semesters to develop their competencies in behavioral health. Each module emphasizes culturally- and developmentally-appropriate interdisciplinary, integrated care and consists of self-paced training(s) and virtual team-based meetings. Thus, participation in I-PEER is equivalent to the workload of approximately a one-credit course per year.

You will also receive a \$10,000 stipend for participating.

Who is eligible to apply for the I-PEER program?

You are eligible to apply if...

You are a Master of Social Work student starting your final placement in the fall (i.e., concentration placement)

OR

You are a final-year Clinical Mental Health Counseling student starting your internship in the fall (your internship must be for two semesters, fall and spring)

AND

Your placement

- Provides integrated, interdisciplinary training of at least two health disciplines using a team-based care approach (Continued below...)

- Provides behavioral health services for adolescents and/or young adults with or at risk for behavioral health conditions
- Prioritizes cultural and linguistic competency
- Is located in one of the following counties: Allegan, Barry, Benzie, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Great Traverse, Hillsdale, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Kent, Lake, Leelanau, Lenawee, Manistee, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Ottawa, St. Joseph, Van Buren, or Wexford

Where can I find information about currently eligible placement sites?

You can see a list of potentially eligible placement sites [here](#), or email swrk-ipeer@wmich.edu for access.

What is my placement site isn't on the currently list?

If you think your placement meets the eligibility criteria, please email us. In your email, include the name and location of your placement. If you are a social work student, please email swrk-ipeer@wmich.edu. If you are a clinical mental health counseling student, please email cecp-ipeer@wmich.edu.

We will work with you, your department (social work or clinical mental health counseling), and supervisor to see if your placement site is eligible.

Why are only those placements eligible?

The goal of I-PEER is to provide interdisciplinary workforce training to current and future providers to meet the evolving behavioral health needs in West Michigan. These placements are eligible because they are in counties considered high need, high demand areas in either mental health professional shortage areas or geographically rural areas.

How long will I be involved in the I-PEER project?

Participation in I-PEER spans approximately nine months, starting at the beginning of the fall semester and finishing at the end of the spring semester. Therefore, I-PEER participants are expected to be completing some field or practicum hours during the fall and spring semesters.

How do I apply?

Complete the application [here](#).

When are applications due?

Applications are due August 13. However, students are encouraged to apply early because we review applications on a rolling basis.

If you are unable to meet this due date because your placement has not been finalized, please email us to inquire if we are still accepting applications.

When will I learn about the status of my application?

You will be notified of your application status by the start of the fall semester.

How and when are stipends distributed?

Students must be enrolled full-time for the stipend to go through. Your stipend will be dispersed four times throughout the academic year, in the amount of \$2,500 each time. After you complete all of the items required for each of the four modules, we will coordinate for the distribution of a \$2,500 deposit into your student account. There are two modules each semester, therefore you can plan on receiving a total of \$5,000 each semester.

In addition, there will be a "cost of attendance" calculation that sits in the background of \$4,700. This cost of attendance encompasses all of the possible extra costs of participation in I-PEER, including additional travel costs to a field placement, costs of a new computer to access the I-PEER sessions, and costs of attendance at a national conference to share your work. You do not need to have all of those actual costs, but this calculation allows WMU to only report \$300 of your stipend each semester to recalculate federal financial aid eligibility.

When this stipend is added to your student account, it will first be used to pay any tuition and fees that are on your account. This includes any current and previous semester costs, regular fees, Sindecuse, and parking fees.

Any remaining balance in your account will be paid to you, either through direct deposit if you have a bank account connected, or by paper check. We recommend that you add bank account information to your WMU student account so that you receive any remaining balance as quickly as possible.

Students have the option of making payment plan arrangements, and paying a portion of their tuition, or to request they wait until their stipends are received before paying their tuition. Any stipend beyond their student account due will be returned via direct deposit or check by mail after the drop add period, around 10 days after the stipend is posted in your student account.

How will the stipend impact my financial aid?

An "additional cost of participation in I-PEER" is also added to financial aid calculations of \$4,700 (note this is not a cost you have to pay us, just potential costs of the program for purposes of financial aid) each semester. This additional cost of participation attempts to capture additional costs that students may bear, including travel to and from their field placement, additional computer equipment or software that may be used in graduate programs, and national conference participation student may choose to attend. As a result, I-PEER stipends have a *minimal* impact on the amount of financial aid students are eligible to receive because financial aid calculations will only add \$300 of what you make from this program to the status of your income in the financial aid system.

Is the I-PEER stipend taxable?

I-PEER students will receive a 1099-T (Tuition) form at the end of each calendar year of participation in I-PEER. This form will include the I-PEER stipend listed as a "scholarship," along

with the tuition and fees students paid to WMU during the year. Please consult with your tax professional to determine the impact of the stipend on your individual tax situation.

How is I-PEER funded?

I-PEER is funded through a grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (M01HP31394-05-00).

Where could I find more information on this grant?

You can read more about I-PEER on the WMU CHHS website:
<https://wmich.edu/hhs/about/interprofessional/ipeer>

You can also find us on the following social media sites:

Facebook Page: I-PEER Alumni - Western Michigan University
Instagram: @ipeeralumni

Who do I contact with questions?

- Social work students can send questions to swrk-ipeer@wmich.edu.
- Clinical mental health counseling students can send questions to cecp-ipeer@wmich.edu.
- Community members can send questions to swrk-ipeer@wmich.edu.

Who are the investigators for I-PEER?

The investigators are Drs. Bridget E. Weller (School of Social Work), Jennifer Harrison (School of Social Work), and Carla Adkison-Johnson (Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology).

Frequently Asked Questions Specifically for Clinical Mental Health Counseling Students

Can the modules or training we receive from I-PEER be used for elective credit?

No. They are modules for professional development as if you were attending a regional or national counseling conference.

Do I still attend the weekly group supervision class in the CECP department?

Yes. You will be required to attend group supervision in CECP each week in addition to attending all of the professional development trainings required by the I-PEER program.

Does my internship site associated with the I-PEER have to provide opportunities to tape counseling sessions with my client?

Yes. As stated in the application, your internship site must meet all of the requirements of a clinical mental health counseling CACREP accredited internship experience.

Can a counselor education faculty member/advisor or Counselor Education Unit approve my I-PEER Internship site?

No. Only Drs. Carla Adkison-Johnson, Bridget Weller, or Jennifer Harrison can approve an I-PEER Internship site after the Counselor Education Unit has approved your site supervisor and the site meets CACREP Standards.

Can I change degree programs during the internship experience?

No. Once you receive the I-PEER \$10,000.00 you cannot change degree programs. You must graduate from the clinical mental health counseling program.

What happens if I find a full-time job during the first semester of the internship. Can I quit the I-PEER program?

No. Once you accept the professional development training and the stipend you have committed to two semesters (Fall and Spring) of the internship experience. No exceptions.