



**Dr. Donna Baptiste,  
Mental Health Professional, Educator**

Dr. Donna Baptiste is the Department Chair and Clinical Professor, Master of Arts in Counseling Program from The Family Institute, Northwestern University

*In an interview she stated, "I am honored to be a counselor, and I feel called to this profession that allows me to help individuals, couples, and families from all walks of life to heal and recover from difficult experiences. I also love being a counselor educator.*

*In the classroom, I come alive because I truly enjoy*

*student-clinicians. Practicing as a counselor enriches my teaching, and as I train the next generation to love our profession and to become effective therapists, it feels like I am coming full circle. A counselor helped me to recover from my own losses and suffering, and I know that our students will do the very same thing for so many people."*

Donna Baptiste leads the Master of Arts in Counseling Program at The Family Institute at Northwestern University. She is passionate about educating and training counselors-in-training to alleviate mental and emotional suffering in people from all walks of life. After experiencing difficult personal losses as a young adult. Dr. Baptiste says, *"Becoming a counselor/counselor educator has been among the most joyful and meaningful work of my life. I view these professional activities not just as part of my job but also as my life's mission and calling."*

Dr. Baptiste completed master's and doctoral degrees in counseling at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Illinois, and upon graduation joined the interdisciplinary faculty of the Institute for Juvenile Research, Department of Psychiatry, at the University of Illinois. There, she had a successful career as a mental health practitioner, educator, and researcher. For many years, Dr. Baptiste directed a family-based clinic for underserved youth and parents, and this clinic was a training arena for hundreds of graduate students seeking to become mental health practitioners. Dr. Baptiste's love for teaching and her dedication to students for more than 25 years have been honored by teaching awards and other accolades. As a researcher, Dr. Baptiste has co-sponsored studies in the United States and international locations funded by the National Institute of Mental Health. These studies, promoting healthy emotional and sexual adjustments in adolescents by strengthening family life, have produced several dozen journal articles and book chapters in which she serves as co-author. Currently, Dr. Baptiste teaches courses in counseling methods, child and adolescent development, and couple and family therapy in the Counseling Program at Northwestern. Dr. Baptiste also has vast

expertise in counseling women and girls based on her background as associate director of a center for research on women and gender. She serves on boards of social service organizations and research committees at the local, federal, and international levels.