

Mental Health Counseling – Clinical, MS

College of Education

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The Mental Health Counseling - Clinical program is a generalist program that is nationally accredited by the Council on the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). This designation indicates curricular experiences encompassing each of the eight core areas of professional counseling including Professional Identity, Social and Cultural Diversity, Human Growth and Development, Career Development, Helping Relationships, Group Work, Assessment, and Research and Program Evaluation. Other required coursework includes clinical assessment and substance abuse. This degree prepares graduates to work in a variety of capacities such as marriage and family counseling, substance abuse counseling, clinical mental health counseling, college counseling, non-profit work, business settings, and many other areas. The U.S. Department of Labor projects that counseling is growing faster than average with some areas of clinical mental health counseling seeing growth rates up to 34% by 2016.

Additional Admission Requirements

- Statement of purpose: Describe career goals, research interests and a list of publications, professional and volunteer experience relevant to intended program of study, academic honors and organizations.
- Three professional letters of recommendation from persons who know the applicant in either an academic or supervisory capacity. Letters from family members, acquaintances, and friends are not acceptable
- A current resume or curriculum vita
- Interview: After initial review of all applications, the applicants with greatest potential are also expected to participate in a pre-admission interview with the Counseling faculty. Pre-admission interviews can include: (a) individual interviews, (b) group interaction with observation, and (c) on-site writing sample.

Program Outcomes:

- Critical Thinking: Students will develop skills and attitudes of effective thinking that employ the use of thoughtful reflection and logical inquiry to draw evidence-based conclusions as they relate to community counseling.
- Oral Communication Skills: Students will demonstrate proficiency in communicating in individual dyads and small and large group settings and in appropriate use of grammar to communicate counseling findings, while avoiding sexist language, doublespeak and clichés. Evaluation occurs during the benchmarking process. Students must receive a satisfactory rating from the majority of faculty to earn a satisfactory rating. Faculty will evaluate 100% of the student population.
- Written Communication: Students will demonstrate proficiency in academic and scientific writing, which includes avoiding digressions, consistent tenses, using the active voice and citing sources as well as findings, professional documentation, and report writing: with emphasis on APA publishing guidelines.
- Cultural Self-Awareness and Sensitivity: Students will demonstrate awareness of self, including knowledge of macro, micro, and meso ecological systems.
- Cultural Competence: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the cultural context of relationships, issues, and trends in a multicultural society.
- Ethical Practice: Students will demonstrate understanding and application of relevant professional ethical standards.
- Professionalism: Students will demonstrate professional maturity, integrity, and discipline consistent with professional standards of practice.

- **Research and Design:** Graduate community counseling students will demonstrate proficiency in designing quantitative, qualitative, single case designs, action, and outcome-based research, as well as co-occurring and support software packages (e.g., SPSS). Students will understand ethics surrounding Human Subjects Social and Behavioral Science research procedures and Responsible Conduct in Research.
- **Research Evaluation:** Students will demonstrate proficiency in evaluating empirical and non-empirical research. Students will be able to review the professional literature and glean from the review relevant information for both research and practice. Students will be able evaluate research and its application to field experiences. Students will develop a research paper that reflects their knowledge of this content. The specifics of the research paper along with the grading rubric are presented in the achievement summary.
- **Statistics:** Students will demonstrate proficiency in basic statistics methods including scales of measurement, measures of central tendency, indices of variability, shapes and type of distributions, correlations, reliability and validity. Students will apply supportive software packages (e.g., MS Excel, SPSS).
- **Technological Competence:** Students will demonstrate proficiency in implementing best technology practices.

Degree Requirements:

Total credit hours: 60

- Core courses (18 credits): COUN 702, 713, 736, 740, 750, 770
- Practicum (COUN 784: 3 credits)
- Internship I (COUN 785: 3 credits)
- Internship II (COUN 786: 3 credits)
- Pass comprehensive exam
- Take 18 credits: COUN 707, 758, 759, 760, 763, 766
- Electives: Select 15 credit hours with approval of advisor

Practicum and Internships

Internships COUN 785 and 786 involve supervised professional experiences in settings appropriate to the student's vocational objectives. The internships will provide practical work in the student's area of specialization. Internships include 600 hours of field experience. Students must complete a minimum of 240 hours of direct services with clients. Each week, students receive one hour of individual supervision from their site supervisors and one and one-half hours group supervision from their university supervisors during seminar. Students in all field experience placements are required to create program-appropriate audio recordings and/or participate in live supervision of their interactions with clients for review by their University Supervisor

Double major (Mental Health Counseling – Clinical and Mental Health Counseling – Rehabilitation)

Regulations on pursuing double majors are presented elsewhere in the catalog and must be followed. The student will be required to complete requirements of both programs. The programs require the following unique (minimum 18 credit hour requirements):

Mental Health Counseling – Clinical:

COUN 707, 758, 759, 760, 763, 766, 784, 785, 786

Mental Health Counseling – Rehabilitation:

COUN 708, 709, 731, 738, 743, 764, 775, 784, 785, 786

Double major (Mental Health Counseling – Clinical and School Counseling)

Regulations on pursuing double majors are presented elsewhere in the catalog and must be followed. The student will be required to complete requirements of both programs. The programs require the following unique (minimum 18 credit hour requirements):

Mental Health Counseling – Clinical:
COUN 707, 758, 759, 784, 785, 786

School Counseling:
COUN 704, 710, 712, 714, 717, 784, 785, 786

Program Specific Academic Policies

Endorsement

The Department stipulates endorsement for employment or credentialing only in the program area in which a student received training.

Program Academic Eligibility

A student will be required to maintain semester GPA of at least 3.0 at the end of every semester irrespective of total attempted hours otherwise the student will be placed on probation for one semester. If the semester GPA and/or the cumulative GPA at the end of the probationary semester remains less than 3.0, the student will be dismissed.

A grade of “B” or higher is required in the following courses:
COUN 702, 707, 708, 710, 712, 713, 736, 740, 750, 760, 770, 784

Program Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards of Practice

As pre-professional counselors, graduate students abide by the code of ethics and standards of practice as described in the *Ethical Standards of the American Counseling Association (ACA)*, the *Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC)*, *The American Psychological Association*, the *Student Handbook*, the *Graduate Catalog*, and *Department of Human Development and Services Ethical Conduct Policy*.

Consequences of violation of the codes of conduct or ethical standards of practice include but are not limited to one or more of the following:

- Dismissal from the program
- Removal from the course or the field placement and a grade of “F” or “U”
- Referral to authorized campus authorities for further discipline.

Program Academic Progression and Retention Standards

The academic progression and retention standards for counselor education programs are in keeping with Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) standards, along with the standards set forth by the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE), the American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA), *Ethical Standards of the American Counseling Association (ACA)*, the *Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC)*, *The American Psychological Association*, the *Student Handbook*, the *Graduate Catalog*, and *Department of Human Development and Services Ethical Conduct Policy*.

The Benchmarking Review Process

Once each academic semester a benchmarking review of all enrolled students is conducted. The benchmarking committee is comprised of all full-time tenured and tenure-track counseling faculty and is chaired by a faculty member. Adjunct faculty members are also invited to attend the benchmarking review.

Reviews are conducted using the Benchmarking Assessment Rubric which focuses on academic performance, ethical behavior, and professional disposition. Each student will be notified in writing by the Department Chairperson regarding the outcome of the benchmarking review and a copy will be placed in the student's file. Students who receive an unsatisfactory evaluation will be placed on probation, provided with a remediation plan and given one semester to implement the remediation plan in order to improve their performance to a satisfactory level. A subsequent unsatisfactory evaluation after the probationary period will result in dismissal from the program.

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