

Counseling, M.S.

Degree Offered

- Master of Science

Nature of the Program

The master's program in counseling, with an emphasis on either clinical mental health or school counseling at West Virginia University advances the land grant mission of the University in a rural state by providing a strong practitioner training program focused on the unique needs of the Appalachian region and other diverse communities. As a CACREP-accredited program we are committed to preparing entry-level clinical mental health and school counselors to work competently and ethically within a pluralistic society. Our central organizing approach to counseling rests in understanding the cultural and human development needs of individuals, couples, families, families, groups, and those experiencing disability or social inequality across the lifespan.

West Virginia University is proud to offer the sole CACREP-accredited in-person Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree in the state of West Virginia. The emphasis in clinical mental health is offered as either an in-person or online program. The school counseling emphasis is offered online. Our 60-credit curriculum meets the licensure standards in most states, including West Virginia, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and many others.

Our program objectives reflect the knowledge, skills, and dispositions we aim to cultivate in every student:

1. **Sociocultural and Developmental Competence:** We foster a culturally inclusive learning environment that promotes the multicultural competency necessary to work with clients across the lifespan.
2. **Excellence in Professional Practice:** Our students gain a strong foundation of knowledge and skills necessary to competently serve and advocate for clients in a wide variety of counseling settings.
3. **Ethical and Professional Dispositions:** We prepare students to demonstrate professional dispositions as evidenced by ethical decision-making, appropriate interpersonal skills, commitment to learning and professional growth, and application of constructive feedback, in line with the current ACA Code of Ethics.
4. **Research-Informed Practice:** Students are equipped to demonstrate the importance of research and evaluation in advancing the counseling profession, including how to critique research to inform professional practice.

Admissions for 2027-2028

APPLICATION

Applications for admission to the counseling program should be made to WVU Graduate Admissions. In addition to the admission requirements of the university and the College of Applied Human Sciences, the School of Counseling and Well-being has the following admission requirements:

- A baccalaureate degree with coursework in appropriate areas
- A minimum undergraduate grade point average of 2.75, based on a 4.0 system (a 3.0 or higher is typically necessary to be a competitive candidate)
- Resume
- Personal statement
- Three letters of reference
- Completed WVU Graduate Admissions application

ADMISSION

The West Virginia University counseling program's admission process is two-step:

Step one (1) is a review of paper credentials including references, department application (relevant major, general quality of application), personal references, and GPA. In addition to your interest, aptitude, and career goals related to counseling, the personal statement and recommendation letters should include your perspectives, respect for, and/or skills for working with individuals from different backgrounds. The initial screening decision is based upon this information. Successful applicants are then invited to participate in department interviews.

Step two (2) is the department interview, which considers interpersonal style relevant to working as a counselor, communication skills, capacity for empathic understanding and communication, ability to articulate professional goals, goals congruent with department focus, knowledge, understanding of counseling, and assessment of applicant's capacity to complete the counseling curriculum successfully.

The priority application deadline for the in-person program Clinical Mental Health is January 25th. The final application deadline is February 15th. The in-person program admits students only one time each year. Applications submitted after January 25th but before February 15th may be reviewed if there is still space remaining in the cohort.

The online Clinical Mental Health and School Counseling programs admit students twice a year. The fall application deadline is February 15th. The spring application deadline is October 1st.

Applications that are incomplete or are submitted after the deadline may be reviewed if openings remain.

On-Campus Major Code: 5517

Online Major Code: 5548

Major Requirements

All students who are candidates for a master's in counseling are required to take the following core courses:

Code	Title	Hours
A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 is required in all graduate coursework and for the major.		
A minimum grade of B- is required in all major coursework.		
COUN 501	Counseling Theory and Techniques 1	3
COUN 505	Theory and Practice of Human Appraisal	3
COUN 536	Theories of Human Development	3
COUN 606	Counseling Theory and Techniques 2	3
COUN 609	Group Counseling Theory and Techniques	3
COUN 620	Career Development & Job Placement	3
COUN 630	Children/Adolescents/Parents	3
COUN 634	Cultural Issues	3
COUN 640	Addictions Counseling	3
COUN 645	Couples and Family Counseling	3
COUN 664	Ethical Issues in Counseling	3
COUN 665	Diagnosis and Treatment Planning	3
COUN 668	Crisis Trauma Grief Counseling	3
COUN 512	Research & Evaluation in Counseling	3
Complete one of the following Area of Emphasis *		18
Clinical Mental Health		
School Counseling		
Total Hours		60

***Note:** School Counseling AoE is only available for students enrolled in the on campus Counseling major.

In addition to completing all coursework and the practicum and internship satisfactorily, the candidate must demonstrate the ability to assume the responsibility required of a professional counselor and the personal characteristics and ethical standards essential to effective working relationships with others.

These personal characteristics are assessed throughout the entire program with special emphasis during the clinical coursework components of the program and during the field experience. Students who do not meet professional and clinical standards in these areas are provided feedback, and resources for remediation are recommended. In these cases, successful remediation is required as a prerequisite for successful program completion. Students who violate ACA ethical standards will be evaluated for possible dismissal from the program.

Areas of Emphasis

- Clinical Mental Health
- School Counseling

CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH AREA OF EMPHASIS

Code	Title	Hours
A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required.		
A minimum grade of B- is required in all coursework.		
COUN 622	Introduction to Clinical Mental Health	3
COUN 684	Supervision Models/Counseling	3
COUN 685	Practicum (Student must take a section of this course that is related to Clinical Mental Health.)	3

COUN 686	Counseling Internship (Student must take a section of this course that is related to Clinical Mental Health.)	9
Total Hours		18

SCHOOL COUNSELING AREA OF EMPHASIS

Code	Title	Hours
A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required.		
A minimum grade of B- is required in all coursework.		
COUN 610	School Counseling Services 1	3
COUN 611	School Counseling Services 2	3
COUN 685	Practicum (Student must take a section of this course that is related to School Counseling.)	3
COUN 686	Counseling Internship (Student must take a section of this course that is related to School Counseling.)	9
Total Hours		18

Degree Progress

The School of Education and Counseling requires the following milestones for all students. According to the graduate catalog, students will receive a yearly evaluation. Students who are either not making adequate degree progress or who are failing to uphold professional standards may receive notice of probation, suspension or dismissal. Students may be notified of academic consequences outside of routine evaluation processes if an issue must be addressed immediately.

Each year, no later than the first day of classes of the Fall semester, the department will distribute an updated version of the CAHS Graduate Student Handbook (<https://rise.articulate.com/share/EbN3cQXBpt-uMvv5jc3A5QwaUundXN95/#/>), which includes links to program-specific handbooks.

SATISFACTORY PROGRES

To earn a Master of Science in Counseling students must:

- Earn a grade of B or higher in all coursework.
- Receive a score of meets expectations or better on the assignments identified as Key Performance Indicators that exist across the curriculum. Please note Key Performance Indicators are student learning outcomes required by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs. More information is provided in the counseling student handbook related to evaluation, expectations, and specific programmatic policies.
- Demonstrate counseling basic skill proficiency as well as utilization of faculty feedback by successfully completing COUN 501: Counseling Theories and Techniques I and COUN 606: Counseling Theories and Techniques II.
- Successful completion of COUN 685: Practicum and COUN 686: Internship as evidenced by supervisor evaluations and course participation.
- Demonstrate a professional disposition as measured by the requirements detailed in the student handbook.