Counseling, M.A.

Degree Offered

- Master of Arts

Nature of the Program

The Department of Counseling and Learning Sciences in the College of Education and Human Services offers a master’s program in counseling. The counseling M.A. program is fully accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). Variations of the curriculum allow emphasis in school counseling and clinical mental health counseling. All applicants must comply with university, the College of Education and Human Services, and departmental requirements.

A degree in counseling provides a broad opportunity to work with children (PreK to Adult) in a variety of settings including schools, and all ages at the community level. The degree prepares school counselors to become certified/licensed educators and mental health specialists who improve student success for all students by implementing a comprehensive school counseling program that includes individual counseling, small group counseling, and classroom interventions. Clinical mental health counselors work with a diverse population across a wide scope of ages and backgrounds in various community settings such as correctional facilities, treatment centers, mental health agencies, etc. The program prepares graduates in both individual and group counseling.

Students are encouraged to pursue their studies on a full-time basis; however, part-time students are accepted. Part-time admission is meant only for those who plan to take one or two courses a semester. If admitted with part-time status, students will NOT automatically be able to move into the full-time program. There are no summer practicum or internship placements.

For additional information, please email cls@mail.wvu.edu, or refer to our department website: https://counselingandlearningsci.wvu.edu/

FACULTY

ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

- Ed Jacobs - Ph.D. (Florida State University)
- Monica Leppma - Ph.D. (University of Central Florida)
- Christine Schimmel - Ed.D. (Marshall University)

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

- Rawn Boulden - Ph.D. (Old Dominion University)

SERVICE ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

- Frankie Tack - MS (Western Carolina University)

TEACHING INSTRUCTOR

- Heidi O'Toole - MS (West Virginia University)

Admissions

APPLICATION

Applications for admission to the counseling program should be made to WVU’s Office of Admissions. In addition to the admission requirements of the university and the College of Education and Human Services, the Department of Counseling and Learning Sciences has the following admission requirements:

- A baccalaureate degree with coursework in appropriate areas
- A minimum undergraduate grade point average of 2.8, based on a 4.0 system
- Resume
- Personal Statement
- Three letters of reference
- Completed WVU Graduate School Application

ADMISSION

The West Virginia University counseling program’s admission process is two-step:
Step 1 is a review of paper credentials including references, department application (relevant major, general quality of application), work experience, GRE scores, and GPA. The initial screening decision is based upon this information. Successful applicants are then interviewed by program faculty.

Step 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.

Application deadline for fall admission is February 15 with review of completed applications beginning February 1. The program admits students only one time each year.

Major Code: 4507

**Major Requirements**

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

A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 is required

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COUN 501</td>
<td>Counseling Theory and Techniques 1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUN 505</td>
<td>Theory and Practice of Human Appraisal</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUN 536</td>
<td>Theories of Human Development</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUN 606</td>
<td>Counseling Theory and Techniques 2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUN 609</td>
<td>Group Counseling Theory and Techniques</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>COUN 620</td>
<td>Lifespan Career Counseling</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUN 630</td>
<td>Children/Adolescents/Parents</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>COUN 634</td>
<td>Cultural Issues</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>COUN 640</td>
<td>Addictions Counseling</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUN 645</td>
<td>Couples and Family Counseling</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUN 664</td>
<td>Ethical Issues in Counseling</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>COUN 665</td>
<td>Diagnosis and Treatment Planning</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>COUN 668</td>
<td>Crisis Trauma Grief Counseling</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>COUN 684</td>
<td>Supervision Models/Counseling</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDP 512</td>
<td>Research and Evaluation in Counseling</td>
<td>3</td>
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**Required Area of Emphasis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Emphasis</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Mental Health</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counseling</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total Hours 60

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**

A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COUN 622</td>
<td>Introduction to Clinical Mental Health</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUN 685</td>
<td>Practicum (Student must take a section of this course that is related to Clinical Mental Health.)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUN 686</td>
<td>Counseling Internship (Student must take a section of this course that is related to Clinical Mental Health.)</td>
<td>9</td>
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</table>

Total Hours 15
SCHOOL COUNSELING AREA OF EMPHASIS

A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COUN 608</td>
<td>School Counseling Services</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>COUN 685</td>
<td>Practicum (Student must take a section of this course that is related to School Counseling.)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUN 686</td>
<td>Counseling Internship (Student must take a section of this course that is related to School Counseling.)</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Total Hours</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
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Note: Students enrolled in the School Counseling Area of Emphasis without prior teaching certification will also need to complete COUN 660 and C&I 603.

Major Learning Outcomes

COUNSELING

The objectives of our program in School and Clinical Mental Health Counseling are linked to our mission statement. Specifically, they are to provide:

- An environment that fosters the personal growth and development of each student.
- Educational experiences for every student that fosters individual and group counseling skill development.
- Learning opportunities to support students' interests in diverse populations and cultures.
- Training in schools and clinical mental health settings that give students an opportunity to practice and integrate the skills learned in the classroom.

COUN 501. Counseling Theory and Techniques 1. 3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Development and application of basic counseling skills including interviewing, clinical observations, and a general orientation to counseling theory and settings. Evaluation will be based on strengths and deficits in intra- and interpersonal skills and on demonstration of counseling skills in checkout situations. In-setting laboratory experience required.

COUN 505. Theory and Practice of Human Appraisal. 3 Hours.
An overview of standardized evaluation methods commonly utilized in educational and rehabilitation settings. Experience is provided in selection, administration, ethical standards, and interpretation of selected instruments.

COUN 536. Theories of Human Development. 3 Hours.
Theory and research on emotional, social, and intellectual development over the life span. Emphasis on application of developmental theories within educational and therapeutic settings.

COUN 593. Special Topics. 1-6 Hours.
A study of contemporary topics selected from recent developments in the field.

COUN 606. Counseling Theory and Techniques 2. 3 Hours.

COUN 608. School Counseling Services. 3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Applications of counseling theories and techniques appropriate to the school counseling setting will be explored. Students will develop needs assessments, review legal and ethical issues related to schools, and develop a professional school counseling portfolio.

COUN 609. Group Counseling Theory and Techniques. 3 Hours.
PR: COUN 606 and consent. Theories of group counseling and demonstrations of specific group techniques. Ethical standards. Evaluation will be based on expertise in group facilitation.

COUN 620. Lifespan Career Counseling. 3 Hours.
PR: COUN 505. Principles and methods involved in career counseling with diverse populations. Emphasis on theories of career development and lifestyle planning, career choices, and lifelong work adjustment.

COUN 622. Introduction to Clinical Mental Health. 3 Hours.
PR or CONC: COUN 501 or consent. Role and function of the clinical mental health counselor; DSM categories and ethical standards, cognitive skills and practical experience necessary to understand client populations served by community agencies.

COUN 630. Children/Adolescents/Parents. 3 Hours.
PR: COUN 501. Practical application of the principles of counseling children, adolescents, and parents.

COUN 634. Cultural Issues. 3 Hours.
PR: Program major or consent. The impact of cultural differences on the counseling process including gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and counseling styles will be discussed. Racial identity development models will be discussed. Group and experiential activities are required.

COUN 640. Addictions Counseling. 3 Hours.
PR: COUN 501 and PR or CONC: COUN 606 or Consent. Specific techniques and models that apply to counseling the addicted client will be explored. Chemical addictions, food addictions, relationship addictions, sexual addictions, and ethics will be addressed. Demonstration of counseling clients with various addictions is required.
COUN 645. Couples and Family Counseling. 3 Hours.
PR: COUN 501, COUN 606 or Consent. Techniques and methods of couples and family counseling. Emphasis on ethics, diversity, theory and practice of couples and family counseling. Demonstration of counseling skills for couples and families is required.

COUN 660. Field Experience in School Counseling. 3 Hours.
PR: COUN 606 and COUN 630 and COUN 632 and PR or CONC: COUN 685 and consent and course enrollment in the Alternate School Counseling Program. Classroom-based field experience for school counseling majors enrolled in alternative certification programs. A review of classroom curriculum for elementary and secondary grades. Course will be graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis.

COUN 663. Counseling with Sexual Orientation. 1 Hour.
PR: Graduate standing. An overview of psychological, sociological and political aspects of sexual orientation as they impact counseling. Particular attention will be given to awareness and sensitivity toward gay and lesbian clients and effective intervention and education. Course will be graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis.

COUN 664. Ethical Issues in Counseling. 3 Hours.
PR: COUN 501 and COUN 606. Surveys the legal and ethical issues and professional ethics codes in the counseling profession. Ethical principles applied to schools, agencies, and private practice. Meets ethics content requirement for the LPC.

COUN 665. Diagnosis and Treatment Planning. 3 Hours.
PR: COUN 536 and COUN 606. Framework for exploring the range of personality and behavioral disorders as described in the DSM. Focus on: descriptive criteria, etiology, assessment, diagnosis, multicultural considerations, psychotropic treatments of, and understanding of the major diagnostic categories.

COUN 668. Crisis Trauma Grief Counseling. 3 Hours.
PR: COUN 501. Application of theories and techniques related to crisis, trauma, suicide, childhood trauma, disaster mental health issues, and all aspects of grief counseling will be explored.

COUN 684. Supervision Models/Counseling. 3 Hours.
PR: COUN 606. The current models of supervision that are commonly utilized by supervisors in the field and the techniques associated with the different models will be investigated.

COUN 685. Practicum. 1-12 Hours.
PR: Preregistration; liability insurance; cleared for internship at close of semester, or a M.A. degree, and consent of department practicum evaluation committee. An intensive supervised practical experience in public schools or agencies, in counseling with individual critique and appropriate small-group experiences. Demonstration of high professional standards, counseling skills, and personal characteristics appropriate to the counseling relationship are essential. (Due to the limited number of summer sites, there can be no guarantee of summer practicum placement.) (Practicum is a prerequisite for internship placement. Internship is a one-semester, minimum four-day per week field experience following practicum. This two-semester sequence replaces the previous one-semester practicum.)

COUN 686. Counseling Internship. 1-12 Hours.
PR: Preregistration, completion of COUN 685 Practicum and consent of department field work coordinator. A full-time supervised field experience. Demonstration of counseling program management skills and ethical conduct is required. ACA Ethical Behavior Standards will be used to determine appropriate professional conduct.

COUN 691. Advanced Topics. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. Investigation of advanced topics not covered in regularly scheduled courses.

COUN 693. Special Topics. 1-6 Hours.
A study of contemporary topics selected from recent developments in the field.

COUN 695. Independent Study. 1-9 Hours.
Faculty supervised study of topics not available through regular course offerings.

COUN 697. Research. 1-9 Hours.
PR: Consent. Research activities leading to thesis, problem report, research paper or equivalent scholarly project, or a dissertation. (Grading may be S/U.)

COUN 900. Professional Development. 1-6 Hours.
Professional development courses provide skill renewal or enhancement in a professional field or content area (e.g., education, community health, geology.) The continuing education courses are graded on a pass/fail grading scale and do not apply as graduate credit toward a degree program.

COUN 930. Professional Development. 1-6 Hours.
Professional development courses provide skill renewal or enhancement in a professional field or content area (e.g., education, community health, geology.) These tuition-waived continuing education courses are graded on a satisfactory or unsatisfactory grading scale and do not apply as graduate credit toward a degree program.