

PSYCHOLOGY M.A. - COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY

Degree: Master of Arts

<https://www.towson.edu/cla/departments/psychology/grad/psychology/counseling/>

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Accredited by the Master's in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council (MPCAC), the Counseling Psychology concentration of the Master of Arts in Psychology trains students to become therapists and researchers focused on improving the mental health of individuals, groups, families and communities. This concentration is intended for persons wishing to counsel clients with concerns in the personal, social, vocational or educational areas. A central focus of this concentration is developing a culturally-responsive and socially just perspective.

Graduates of the Counseling Psychology concentration may find employment in a variety of settings, such as community mental health centers, private practices, hospitals, group homes, rehabilitation centers and substance abuse programs. Graduates may also choose to pursue doctoral training in Counseling Psychology.

Students are encouraged to attend full time to meet the program requirements in two years. However, we offer the opportunity to complete the program on a part-time basis as dictated by student need. *Further, while the Counseling Psychology concentration requires 48 units for graduation with a MA degree, many students opt to take up to 60 units to fulfill requirements for licensure as a professional counselor.* Elective courses are offered in the summer and winter sessions to help students fulfill these requirements. Students should expect to take at least two calendar years (August 1-July 31) to complete the degree with 60 units.

Requirements

Admission Requirements

Application deadlines and a full listing of materials required for admission can be found on the website.

Prerequisites for Admission

Students must have taken the following prerequisites (all of which must be completed with a "C" or better):

- General Psychology (3)
- Behavioral Statistics (3)
- Research Methods (3)
- Psychopathology or Abnormal Psychology (3)

Degree Requirements

Students must complete prerequisite courses. Students should be prepared to take at least two years to complete the program.

The Counseling Psychology concentration of the Master of Arts in Psychology offers a practitioner option and a research option from which degree candidates can choose.

The research option provides students with the experience, knowledge and skills required for successful admission to a doctoral program.

Students in this option receive intensive training and mentorship in research and complete a thesis.

Students in the practitioner option are trained to work as counselors and therapists at the master's level. Graduates of the practitioner option may choose to continue their education or pursue licensure at the master's level.

The practitioner option requires a minimum of 48 units for the degree while the research option requires a minimum of 51 units for the degree. However, students are permitted to take up to 60 course units in their degree program for the purposes of meeting state licensing requirements to practice as a professional counselor. Elective courses are offered in the summer and winter sessions to help students meet these requirements.

Required Courses

Code	Title	Units
PSYC 605	COUNSELING TECHNIQUES	3
PSYC 606	CAREER DEVELOPMENT	3
PSYC 607	APPLIED THEORIES OF COUNSELING	3
PSYC 609	ADVANCED COUNSELING TECHNIQUES	3
PSYC 611	DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY	3
PSYC 647	INDIVIDUAL APPRAISAL	3
PSYC 631	ADVANCED ADULT PSYCHOPATHOLOGY	3
PSYC 679	SPECIAL TOPICS SEMINAR (Counseling Psychology in Context)	3
PSYC 721	GROUP COUNSELING	3
PSYC 722	ADVANCED MULTICULTURAL COUNSELING	3
PSYC 745	PRACTICUM IN COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY	3
PSYC 790	ETHICAL, LEGAL AND PROFESSIONAL ISSUES IN PSYCHOLOGY	3
PSYC 793	INTERNSHIP IN COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY	3
Practitioner or Research Option Coursework (see below)		9-12
Total Units		48-51

Practitioner Option Courses

Code	Title	Units
PSYC 615	INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH METHODS IN COUNSELING	3
Electives		6
Total Units		9

Research Option Courses

Code	Title	Units
PSYC 687	ADVANCED EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN I	3
PSYC 688	ADVANCED EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN II	3
PSYC 897	PSYCHOLOGY THESIS	6
or PSYC 898	PSYCHOLOGY THESIS	
Total Units		12

Field Experiences

This program includes field experiences in the form of practicum and internship. These clinical experiences are part of the requirements necessary for certification or licensure in the state of Maryland.

Practicum: During the second year of the program, concurrent with other coursework, students enroll in a semester long practicum course during the fall semester. The course involves 300 clock hours (minimum 20-24 hours a week) of placement in a setting where students provide counseling under the supervision of a licensed mental health professional. Practicum also involves attendance and participation in a required weekly class on campus. Students select and apply for their practicum placements during January of their first year of the program, in consultation with their Counseling Psychology faculty advisers. During the practicum, students engage in clinical experiences appropriate for their level of professional training. To meet the number of direct service hours required for practicum, students are required to continue to see clients during the minimester term (i.e. the first three weeks in January).

Internship: Following successful completion of the practicum, students complete a supervised 300 hour internship in a clinical setting. Students are on site at their internships a minimum of 20-24 hours per week for the spring semester of their second year. Internships are supervised on site by a licensed mental health professional and include a weekly class meeting with a faculty member.

Examinations

When students are nearing degree completion, they participate in a formal evaluation process to assess their cumulative knowledge of completed course work and skills in counseling psychology. This formal evaluation includes a thesis defense for students on the research option, and a comprehensive exam for students on the practitioner option. The purpose of the comprehensive exam is to assess students' knowledge in counseling psychology and readiness for the National Counselor Exam. The exam assesses competency across the following knowledge areas: 1. Human Growth and Development, 2. Social and Cultural Diversity, 3. Counseling and Helping Relationships, 4. Group Counseling and Group Work, 5. Career Counseling, 6. Assessment and Testing, 7. Research and Program Evaluation, and 8. Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethics. Each of these 8 areas is covered on the National Counselor Exam and represents a culmination of information learned in courses across the Counseling Psychology curriculum. Students are responsible for the cost associated with this exam, which is produced by a national organization.

Learning Outcomes

- a. Employ research methods appropriate to the discipline;
- b. Demonstrate basic discipline-specific skills and competencies;
- c. Demonstrate competency in acquiring and processing information in the search for understanding.