

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

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MASTER OF SCIENCE (MS) IN COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

I: Steps to becoming a licensed mental health counselor

- Apply to the program. Admissions
- Complete course work in the program with grades of B or better.
- Complete satisfactorily a practicum course consisting of a minimum of 100 hours.
- Complete satisfactorily an internship course consisting of a minimum of 600 hours.
- Take and pass comprehensive examinations administered by the School of Graduate Studies.
- After graduation, complete Post-Master's Supervised clinical work (full-time, two years).
- Take and pass the licensing exam.
- Apply for Licensure to the Board of Allied Mental Health and Human Service Professionals.

II: Basic information and description of sub-specializations

This program is made up of three sub-programs: Mental Health Counseling, Marriage and Family, and Industrial/Organizational. No matter which specialization a student chooses, they will be eligible for licensure as a Mental Health Counselor. In addition, students in Marriage and Family are eligible for licensure as Marriage and Family Therapists.

Licensed Mental Health Counselor

The Licensed Mental Health Counselor renders professional services to individuals or groups in a variety of settings. They apply the principles, methods and theories of counseling and psychotherapy to define goals and develop treatment plans aimed toward the prevention, treatment and resolution of mental and emotional dysfunction and intra or interpersonal disorders in a variety of clients, utilizing supervision when appropriate, and making referrals to other psychiatric, psychological or medical resources when appropriate.

Marriage and Family Therapist

The Marriage and Family Therapist renders similar professional services to the Mental Health Counselor but specializes in working with couples and families rather than individuals, or when working with individuals attempts to understand their dilemmas from a family systems perspective or other perspective that describes and explains individuals' behavior as related to their relationships with the significant individuals in their lives.

Industrial/Organizational Counselor

The Industrial/Organizational Counselor obtains training in basic counseling and psychotherapy techniques, as do the other sub specializations, and also takes specialized courses relevant to working within organizations.

III: Required Courses

Each sub-specialization contains a set of core courses in common with the other sub-specializations, and some courses that are unique to that sub-specialization.

Core Courses

Course Number	Course Name	Semester Offered	Credits
• PSY700	Research Methods in Psychology	S	3
• PSY731	Counseling Theory and Practice I	F, S, Su 1 or 2	3
• PSY732	Counseling Theory and Practice II	F, S, Su 1 or 2	3
• PSY734N	Community Counseling in a Multicultural and Diverse Society	S	3
• PSY740	Differential Diagnosis	F, S, Su 1 or 2	3
• PSY741	Group Counseling	F, S, Su 1 or 2	3
• PSY777R	Legal & Ethical Issues in the Human Services Profession	F, S, Su 1 or 2	3
• PSY930N	Practicum	F, S, Su 1 or 2	4
• PSY931R	Internship (two semesters)	F, S	4 + 4

Abnormal/Psychopathology for all programs (select one of the following)

• PSY730N	Advanced Study of Abnormal Psychology	Once or twice/year	3
• PSY739	Developmental Psychopathology	Once or twice/year	3

Total Number of Common Credits 36

Mental Health Counseling (additional courses required in the Mental Health specialization)

• EDU735N	Career Education & Development: Information, Planning & Placement		3
• PSY705	Human Development Across the Lifespan		3
• PSY720	Theories of Personality		3
• PSY733	Principles of Psychological Testing		3
• PSY735	Philosophical Foundations of Psychology		3
	OR		
• PSY820	Theory & Treatment of Substance Abuse Disorders		3
• PSY736N	Behavioral and Cognitive Behavioral Therapies		3
• PSY877	Psychopharmacology		3
• ELECTIVE	(Selected from list of electives and in consultation with the program coordinator)		3

Total Number of Credits for Mental Health Program 60

Marriage and Family Counseling (additional courses required in Marriage and Family Counseling specialization)

- PSY757N Marital/Couples and Family Counseling 3
- PSY758B Marital/Couples and Family Psychotherapy 3
- SOC715 Sociology of the American Family 3
- PSY743 Contemporary Families 3
- PSY744 Interpersonal Relationships 3
- PSY733 Principles of Psychological Testing 3

Select an additional three of the following courses

- PSY701 Perspectives on Adulthood & Old Age 3
- PSY702 Gerontology - Social Adjustment 3
- PSY737 Nature of Adolescence 3
- PSY738 Child Development and Public Policy 3
- EDU735N Career Education and Development:
Information, Planning and Placement 3

Total Number of Credits for Marriage and Family Program 63

Industrial/Organizational Psychology (other required courses for Industrial/Organizational Counseling specialization)

- EDU735N Career Education and Development:
Information, Planning and Placement 3
- PSY780N Industrial/Organizational Psychology 3
- PSY781 Personnel Selection and Placement 3
- PSY782 Work Motivation, Job Satisfaction & Task Design 3
- PSY783 Training and Development in Organization 3
- PSY784 Measurement & Appraisal of Work Behavior 3
- ELECTIVE (Selected from list of electives and in consultation with
the program coordinator) 3

Developmental courses (select one of the following)

- PSY702 Gerontology, Social Adjustment Once or twice/year 3
- PSY737 Nature of Adolescence Once or twice/year 3
- PSY738 Child Development & Public Policy Once or twice/year 3

Total Number of Credits in Industrial/Organizational Counseling 60

IV: Signing up for the practicum course

A student planning to enroll in PSY930 must see the coordinator of the M.S. in Counseling and Psychological Services program IN ADVANCE of the semester in which they plan to register for the course. ONLY those students who have permission to register and forms signed by the coordinator will be allowed to register.

Deadlines: In order to enroll in the practicum course during a semester, the student must have met with the coordinator during the previous semester. It is suggested that the student meet with the coordinator as early as possible. Usually two-three meetings will be necessary. The deadlines, by which time a student should have met with the coordinator, are as follows:

Semester you plan to take PSY930N Meet with Coordinator by this date

Summer - March

Fall - April

There will be no exceptions to these rules and deadlines since they are based on the licensing requirements. Note that many practicum placements involve more than one meeting with the coordinator, so even if you are not yet sure about the practicum, it is useful to meet with the coordinator as early as possible. Please the School of Graduate Studies at 978.542.6323 schedule an appointment as soon as possible.

Courses required prior to the practicum: Students with incomplete grades in courses, or with an insufficient number of prepracticum courses will not be allowed to sign up for the practicum.

Prepracticum Courses

- Counseling Theory and Practice I & II
- Group Counseling
- Community Counseling
- Psychological Testing
- Abnormal Psych Or Developmental Psychopath
- Differential Diagnosis

For students in a specialized track

- Legal and Ethical Issues in the Human Services
- One or two courses (at least) in your specialty

Student Professional Liability Coverage Policy

Students enrolled in both PSY 930N (Practicum) and PSY931R (Internship) must obtain Individual Professional Liability Insurance coverage before beginning field placements. This is a requirement of the M.S. Program in Counseling and Psychological Services Program. The student professional liability policy covers only those activities that are done as a counseling student that are part of and required by PSY 930N and PSY 931R. It does not cover work done in any other setting or after graduation. Students must provide the Program Coordinator with a photocopy of their Certificate of Insurance before starting their fieldwork.

Students can get the required malpractice insurance through several different sources. The most direct route is through an insurer that provides this product directly to graduate counseling students. Organizations, such as the American Counseling Association (ACA) and the American Mental Health Counseling Association (AMHCA) provide student members with student malpractice insurance for a nominal fee, in addition to membership costs. However, the benefit of joining these organizations goes well beyond the availability of low-cost malpractice insurance. Membership generally includes professional development mechanisms such as a regular newsletter and/or journal, CEU credits at discounted rates, online courses for counselors, conference discounts, as well as providing advocacy for the profession. Here is information on three possible mechanisms for purchasing student malpractice insurance:

(1) Van Wagner Group provides students with two choices of malpractice insurance. For an application call 800-735-1588 or visit their website at www.vanwagnergroup.com An agency spokesperson indicated that policies are processed and certificates issued 2 to 13 days after the application is submitted. Their rates for policies are:

\$12 for 1 million/3 million liability insurance

\$15 for 2 million/4 million liability insurance

(2) You may obtain a student membership in the American Counseling Organization (ACA). For an application, call 800-3476647 or visit their website (www.counseling.org). Once you are a member, you can get student malpractice insurance by separate application, obtained by phoning ACA or through their website (www.acait.com).

Cost of insurance depends on the amount of coverage you want:

\$17 for \$200,000/200,000 liability insurance

\$19 for \$500,00/500,000 liability insurance

\$23 for \$1,000,000/3,000,000 liability insurance

\$35 for \$1,000,000/3,000,000 liability insurance

(3) American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMCHA) may be reached at 800-326-2642 for student membership. The state association of this organization is the Massachusetts Mental Health Counselors Association (MaMHCA). Both AMHCA and MaMHCA provide student malpractice insurance through the Van Wagner Group, depending on the package purchased (see #1 above.)

V: What is the practicum?

A distinctly defined, pre-internship, supervised curricular experience that totals a minimum of 100 clock hours. Most programs, including this one, require more than the minimum. The practicum hours must be obtained over the minimum of one semester. A practicum provides for the development of counseling and group work skills under supervision. A practicum may take place on the academic campus or in a field setting.

A practicum must include a minimum of

- 40 hours of direct service work with clientele appropriate to the program emphasis area; peer role-plays and laboratory experience in both individual and group interactions
- 10 hours of individual supervision (using audiotape, videotape and/or direct observation) by an approved supervisor, a program faculty member, or an individual with a master's degree in mental health counseling or a related field working under the direction of an approved supervisor
- 15 hours of group supervision with other students in similar practice by an approved supervisor, a program faculty member, or an individual with a master's degree in mental health counseling or a related field working under the direction of an approved supervisor
- evaluations of the student's performance throughout the practicum, including a formal evaluation at the completion of the practicum

VI: What is the internship?

A distinctly defined, postpracticum, supervised curricular experience that totals a minimum of 600 clock hours. An internship is intended to enable the individual to refine and enhance basic counseling skills, develop more advanced counseling skills, and integrate professional knowledge and skills appropriate to the individual's initial professional placement. An internship provides an opportunity for the individual to perform all the activities that a regularly employed staff member in the setting would be expected to perform.

The internship takes place over the course of two semesters, and includes a minimum of

- 240 hours of direct service work with clientele appropriate to the program emphasis area
- 15 hours of individual supervision by an approved supervisor, program faculty member, or an individual with a master's degree in mental health counseling or a master's degree in a related field working under the direction of an approved supervisor
- 30 hours of group supervision by an approved supervisor, program faculty member, or an individual with a master's degree in mental health counseling or a master's degree in a related field working under the direction of an approved supervisor
- evaluations of the student's performance throughout the practicum, including a formal evaluation at the completion of the practicum

Additional internship hours in excess of the minimum 600 hours must include the ratio of one hour of individual supervision for every 16 client contact hours.

An internship completed after the award of a qualifying graduate degree must include a clearly defined program and schedule of services and duties to be performed by the intern. Written evaluations of the performance of the interns, as well as an evaluation of the internship experience by the intern, must be included in post-graduate internships.

VII: Comprehensive Exams

At some point before graduation students must take the comprehensive examinations. The comprehensive exams are essay exams, which ask students to write about and show competence in three major areas of study in the program. These exams cannot be taken before the following courses have been completed:

1. Counseling Theory and Practice (I & II)
2. Community Counseling and one of the following:
 - 3a. Psychological Testing
 - 3b. Career Education and Development

The exams are administered three times per year, typically in March, July and November. See salemstate.edu/graduate/comps for registration information.

VIII: Post-Master's Requirements

There are two post-master's requirements that must also be completed for licensure. One is the licensure examination, and the other is post-master's counseling experience. Each is described below.

A. Licensure Examination

The examination for licensure as a mental health counselor is the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE). The licensure examination is administered four times per year in Massachusetts. For information on sites, dates of administration, and fees, contact the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC). The Massachusetts Mental Health Counselor Association (described below) gives workshops two–three times a year to help prepare for this test.

B. Post-Master's Clinical Experience

There is also a two-year post-master's degree clinical experience requirement. This experience can only be obtained after the completion of 60 graduate semester hours, and MUST satisfy other requirements of the licensing law as to exact number of hours, location, type of supervision and nature of supervision (see the law for further information).

IX: Other Requirements for Counselors in Training From All Programs

While a student, and at all subsequent points during their career as a counselor, individuals are required to familiarize themselves with the licensing law and other laws governing the practice of (the different kinds of) counseling. In order to become and remain as a licensed counselor, all individuals must continue to follow all requirements, including those for continuing education (see the law for further information).

X: Board of Allied Mental Health and Other Important Addresses

1. Board of Allied Mental Health
Division of Professional Licensure
239 Causeway Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02114
Phone: (617)727-3074; Fax: (617)727-2197
<http://www.state.ma.us/reg/boards/mh/default.htm>

The law governing Master's level counselors is posted at:

<http://www.state.ma.us/reg/boards/mh/cmr.htm>

The whole law, or sections of it, can be printed out directly from this web site.

2. Professional Organizations

Students are strongly urged to join one or more professional organizations, both while they are still students and after graduation. The benefits of this include a ready source of professional updates and information, additional certification opportunities, and social support. Here are the names and websites of some organizations:

- A. American Mental Health Counselors Assoc.
801 N. Fairfax Street, Suite 304
Alexandria, VA 22314
800.326.2642 or 703.548.6002
FAX: 703.548.4775
<http://www.amhca.org/>

- B. Mass. Mental Health Counselors Assoc. (MaMHCA)
17 Cohasset Street
Foxborough, MA 02035
508-689-0010
<http://www.mamhca.org/>

MaMHCA is the Massachusetts chapter of AMHCA. They run workshops on many topics and serve as a local clearinghouse for useful information for counselors and those interested in becoming counselors.

- C. National Board for Certified Counselors
<http://www.nbcc.org/>
This board will “certify” counselors on a national basis. They also administer the licensing exam taken in Massachusetts. Their web site is a good resource for information about credentialing, examinations and other topics.

- D. American Counseling Association
<http://www.counseling.org/>

3. Other Informative Websites

- A. The American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
www.aamft.org

- B. Mental Health Net
<http://mentalhelp.net/>

XI: Notes

The School of Graduate Studies reserves the right to make changes in program and course requirements, policies and regulations as circumstances dictate. There is no guarantee that any listed course will be offered in any given semester. Therefore, you should meet regularly with your program coordinator to discuss your progress and revise your plan of study as needed.

Effective April 2011