

Counseling

Program Description

The M.A. in counseling is designed to prepare individuals for a career in professional mental health counseling, marriage and family counseling, school guidance and counseling, and community counseling, depending on the specific Webster University campus. The curriculum is designed to provide students with the necessary theory and skills for working with individuals, couples, and families in a variety of mental health settings.

Learning Goals

The student learning outcomes for counseling majors are those established by the American Counseling Association and CACREP for graduate education in counseling. The learning outcomes are broadly divided into eight main categories, which are as follows:

- Upon completion of the program, students should:
- Understand the goals and objectives of professional organizations, codes of ethics, legal considerations, standards of preparation, certification, licensing, role identity of counselors and other personnel services specialists, and fee structure and the impact of fees on the counseling relationship. (Professional Identity)
- Understand the impact on counseling of social change, ethnic groups, subcultures, changing roles of women, sexism, urban and rural societies, population patterns, cultural mores, use of leisure time, and differing life patterns. (Social and Cultural Diversity)
- Understand the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental levels, including human behavior (normal and abnormal), personality development and learning processes. (Human Growth and Development)
- Understand vocational choice theory, the relationship between career choice and lifestyle, sources of occupational and educational information, approaches to decision-making processes, and career development exploration techniques. (Career Development)
- Understand the philosophic basis of counseling and the helping relationship and consultation theory, practice and application; including development of counselor/client self-awareness. (Helping Relationships)
- Understand group counseling theory and the types of group therapy techniques. (Group Work)
- Understand the various frameworks for appraisal of the individual including methods of data gathering and interpretation, individual and group testing, case study approaches, and individual differences (ethnic, cultural, gender, and age factors). (Assessment)
- Understand the statistics, research design, the development of research/demonstration proposals, evaluation of research and the research information. (Research and Program Evaluation)
- Be able to apply the above criteria professionally. (Clinical Instruction)

Program Curriculum

Emphasis in Professional Mental Health Counseling

The degree emphasis requires satisfactory completion of 60 credit hours of coursework.

Required Core Subject Area Courses:

- COUN 5020 Foundations of Counseling: The Helping Relationship (Requisite Course)
- COUN 5050 Human Growth and Development
- COUN 5100 Social and Cultural Foundations of Counseling
- COUN 5140 Psychopharmacology
- COUN 5150 Psychopathology
- COUN 5200 Theories of Counseling
- COUN 5220 Assessment
- COUN 5230 Psychodiagnostics (3)
- COUN 5600 Techniques of Group Counseling
- COUN 5630 Substance Abuse Counseling
- COUN 5700 Lifestyle and Career Development
- COUN 5800 Professional Orientation and Ethics
- COUN 5850 Research and Evaluation
- COUN 6000 Counseling Learning Practicum (a minimum of 3 credit hours)
- COUN 6500 Internship (minimum of 9 credit hours)

In addition to the required 17 core subject area courses listed above, students select at least three electives from the counseling program curriculum to support the specific area of emphasis and fulfill the 20 courses needed for the degree.

Emphasis in Marriage and Family Counseling

The degree emphasis requires satisfactory completion of 60 credit hours of coursework.

Required Core Subject Area Courses:

- COUN 5020 Foundations of Counseling: The Helping Relationship (Requisite Course)
- COUN 5050 Human Growth and Development
- COUN 5100 Social and Cultural Foundations of Counseling
- COUN 5140 Psychopharmacology
- COUN 5150 Psychopathology
- COUN 5220 Assessment
- COUN 5230 Psychodiagnostics (3)
- COUN 5540 Family Systems Theory
- COUN 5545 Blended Family Therapy
- COUN 5640 Marriage and Family Counseling
- COUN 5645 Brief Strategic Family Therapy
- COUN 5650 Conjoint Counseling
- COUN 5660 Sexual Counseling (or COUN 5560 Human Sexuality)
- COUN 5800 Professional Orientation and Ethics
- COUN 5850 Research and Evaluation
- COUN 6000 Counseling Learning Practicum (a minimum of 3 credit hours)
- COUN 6500 Internship (minimum of 6 credit hours)

In addition to the required 18 core subject area courses listed above, students select electives from the counseling program curriculum to support the specific area of emphasis and fulfill the 20 courses needed for the degree.

Locations

Counseling courses are offered at the following locations:

Continental United States

- Albuquerque Metropolitan Campus, NM
- Brooks City-Base, TX
- Charleston Metropolitan Campus, SC
- Columbia Metropolitan Campus, SC
- Crystal Lake Metropolitan Campus, McHenry County, IL
- Fairchild AFB, WA
- Fort Bliss, TX
- Fort Bragg, NC
- Fort Sam Houston, TX
- Great Lakes Naval Base, IL
- Greenville Metropolitan Campus, SC
- Irvine Metropolitan Campus, CA
- Jacksonville Metropolitan Campus, FL
- Kansas City Metropolitan Campus, MO
- Lackland AFB, TX
- Lakeland & Brandon Metropolitan Campus, FL
- Marymount/Webster Program, CA
- Merritt Island Metropolitan Campus, FL
- Myrtle Beach Metropolitan Campus, SC
- North Orlando Metropolitan Campus, FL
- Ocala Metropolitan Campus, FL
- Palm Bay Campus, FL
- Pope AFB, NC
- Rolla Metropolitan Campus, MO
- Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Campus, FL
- South Orlando Metropolitan Campus, FL
- St. Louis, MO
- Home Campus
- Tampa Bay/St. Petersburg Metropolitan Campus, FL

International

- Geneva, Switzerland

Counseling

Emphasis in School Guidance and Counseling

The degree emphasis requires satisfactory completion of 48 credit hours of coursework.

Required Core Subject Area Courses:

COUN 5020 Foundations of Counseling: The Helping Relationship (Requisite Course)
COUN 5050 Human Growth and Development
COUN 5100 Social and Cultural Foundations of Counseling
COUN 5200 Theories of Counseling
COUN 5220 Assessment
COUN 5600 Techniques of Group Counseling
COUN 5680 Counseling in the School Setting
COUN 5685 Program Development for School Counselors
COUN 5700 Lifestyle and Career Development
COUN 5800 Professional Orientation and Ethics
COUN 5820 Consultation and Supervision
COUN 5850 Research and Evaluation
COUN 6000 Counseling Learning Practicum (a minimum of 3 hours)
COUN 6500 Internship (a minimum of 6 hours)

In addition to the required 15 core subject area courses listed above, students select electives from the counseling program curriculum to support the specific area of emphasis and fulfill the 16 courses needed for the degree. [Suggested additional courses: COUN 5150 Psychopharmacology; COUN 5630 Techniques of Substance Abuse Counseling]

Emphasis in Community Counseling

Program description

This curriculum is designed to provide students with the necessary theory and skills for working in a variety of agency and/or community counseling settings.

This degree emphasis requires satisfactory completion of 48 credit hours of coursework.

Required Core Subject Area Courses:

COUN 5020 Foundations of Counseling: The Helping Relationship
COUN 5050 Human Growth and Development
COUN 5100 Social and Cultural Foundations of Counseling
COUN 5200 Theories of Counseling
COUN 5220 Assessment
COUN 5600 Techniques of Group Counseling
COUN 5700 Lifestyle and Career Development
COUN 5800 Professional Orientation and Ethics
COUN 5850 Research and Evaluation
COUN 6000 Counseling Learning Practicum (a minimum of 3 hours)
COUN 6500 Internship (a minimum of 6 hours)

In addition to the required core subject area courses listed above, students select four (4) electives from the counseling program curriculum for a total of 48 hours.

Certain state licensure laws require specific courses in addition to the above required core subject area courses, and the student should consult with the Counseling Faculty Coordinator/Academic Advisor before selecting elective courses. Also please note that certain state licensure laws do not allow for courses to be completed through Directed Studies or electronically. The student should consult with the Counseling Faculty Coordinator/Academic Advisor regarding this option.

General Requirements

The student is subject to the policies and procedures for graduate studies and the specific requirements of the counseling program. As stated in the academic policies and procedure guidelines, the counseling program is excluded from dual major and sequential degree options. Courses in the counseling program are available only to the following: those admitted to the COUN program or those fulfilling State Licensure or Continuing Education requirements. All non-degree students must meet program prerequisites.

Admissions

In addition to the general admission requirements for graduate students, the counseling program also requires a strong background in the behavioral and social sciences gained from an undergraduate degree program, from any other formal study program, or from other documented learning.

All applicants must have formal verification of competence in each of the following areas (or a content equivalent): human growth and development; psychology of learning and/or cognition; personality theory; abnormal psychology or psychopathology; and social psychology. In addition, it is recommended that the applicant have a working knowledge of statistical methods.

Individual applicants who do not have the above undergraduate courses or their equivalent will be evaluated as to their undergraduate/graduate experience by an admission advisor and the Counseling Faculty Advisory Committee. Additional coursework may be required to meet the admission requirements.

Transfer of graduate credit into the program must be approved by the Counseling Faculty Coordinator/Academic Advisor. Petitions for transfer of graduate credit must be evaluated at the time of admission. Please note that online credit and distance learning credit are not accepted in some states for licensure. If you have questions concerning this policy, please talk to your campus Counseling Faculty Coordinator or Academic Advisor.

Course Descriptions

COUN 5000 Theories of Personality (3)

This course examines the origins, development, and current status of major personality theories providing a framework for clinical application. Attention is given to the psychoanalytic theory, social learning theory, and field theory approaches.

COUN 5010 Comparative Psychotherapy (3)

This course is designed to provide the student with an understanding of the major theories of counseling. Dimensions of the course include a comparative survey of various theories and the use of these theories in the counseling situation, skill assessment, and practical applications of the various counseling techniques and modalities.

COUN 5020 Foundations of Counseling: The Helping Relationship (Requisite Course) (3)

This course examines the philosophic bases of counseling and the helping relationship focusing on the foundational concepts necessary for working with individuals, groups, and families. Attention is given to the development of professional identity and client relationships.

COUN 5050 Human Growth and Development (3)

The student examines the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental levels. Emphasis is placed on psychological, sociological, and physiological approaches. Included are such areas as human behavior (normal and abnormal), personality development, family relations/development, and life cycle issues.

Counseling

COUN 5100 Social and Cultural Foundations of Counseling (3)

This course examines the importance of understanding cultural and ethnic attributes and the dynamics these attributes have on the counseling relationship. Attention is given to gender roles, ethnic groups, subcultures, urban and rural societies, cultural mores, and differing family life patterns.

COUN 5140 Psychopharmacology (3)

This course provides an introduction to pharmacological agents that affect mental and emotional functions. Focus of the course will be on the effects and the actions of psychoactive drugs, including drugs used in the treatment of psychopathological disorders and drugs of abuse.

COUN 5150 Psychopathology (3)

This course focuses on the major psychological disorders as detailed in the current Diagnostic and Statistic Manual of Mental Disorders. The behavioral manifestations and dynamics of mental disorders will be explored, focusing on therapeutic assessment issues.

COUN 5160 Issues in Counseling (1-3)

The course is designed to provide for the examination of various aspects of the counseling profession, important trends in counseling, and focused topics areas. Course may be repeated for credit if content differs.

COUN 5200 Theories of Counseling (3)

This course examines the application of basic theories, principles, and techniques of counseling employed in the field of mental health. A major focus will be on the application of the theories and methods used in individual, group and family counseling.

COUN 5220 Assessment (3)

This course examines the various frameworks for assessing the functioning of individuals, groups, and families and the use of assessment in diagnosis and treatment. Attention will focus on the methods of data gathering and interpretation, individual and group testing, case study approaches, and the study of individual differences. Ethnic, cultural, and sex/gender factors are considered.

COUN 5230 Psychodiagnostics (3)

This course is designed to help students conceptualize mental disorders and to develop diagnostic strategies utilizing standard diagnostic nomenclature and treatment strategies, including choice of therapeutic models and indications/contraindications for particular kinds of therapy.

COUN 5500 Professional Seminars (1-3)

Students participate in seminars designed to examine contemporary issues in counseling. The professional seminar supplements the core and elective courses in the area of counseling by focusing on issues of current and special interest. Course may be repeated for credit if content differs. Graduate students may apply a maximum of 3 credit hours of these seminars as electives to meet the credit-hour requirements for graduation. This course may not be completed by directed study.

COUN 5540 Family Systems Theory (3)

This course explores the contribution of general systems theory to the development of family therapy. The focus is on examining different theoretical perspectives. Students will expand their acquired theoretical foundation by exploring the influence of their family of origin and current family life.

COUN 5545 Blended Family Therapy (3)

This course focuses on the application of Family Systems Theory to the issues involved in establishing high nurturance blended families.

COUN 5560 Human Sexuality (3)

This course examines the theories of human sexuality including the physiological, psychological, and sociocultural variables associated with sexual identity, behavior, and disorders.

COUN 5600 Techniques of Group Counseling (3)

This course examines group theory and types of groups, as well as descriptions of group practices, methods, dynamics, and facilitative skills.

COUN 5610 Techniques of Counseling (3)

This course emphasizes the stages of the helping relationship. Students practice basic attending and communications skills, including questioning, reflection of feeling and meaning, summarization, focusing, and self-disclosure. Students learn to help clients identify the problem that provides the focus for counseling. Students practice skills in role-played situations staged in class. Course may be repeated for credit if content differs.

COUN 5620 Techniques of Crisis Intervention (3)

This course examines the theory and methods of crisis intervention. Particular attention is given to the various contemporary techniques of intervention and resolution. Assessment techniques used in the intervention process are explored.

COUN 5630 Techniques of Substance Abuse Counseling (3)

This course examines the motivation and behavior patterns of the drug/alcohol user. This examination takes place in the wider context of deviance. A portion of the course is devoted to a survey and evaluation of the services and programs available to the drug/alcohol user from the point of view of the user, the user's family, and society.

COUN 5635 Techniques of Counseling Special Populations (3)

This course focuses on the application of counseling theory to working with clients from special population groups, e.g., exceptional students, dropouts, minorities, women re-entering the labor force, and older persons.

COUN 5640 Marriage and Family Counseling (3)

This course examines the issues of family therapy, stressing the application of general systems theory. The focus is on the major constructs in family therapy, identification of family structures and communication patterns, and the formulation of treatment goals.

COUN 5645 Brief Strategic Family Therapy (3)

This course examines the application of brief strategic family therapy to current issues in the development and maintenance of successfully functioning families.

COUN 5650 Conjoint Counseling (3)

This course examines the application of differing styles of counseling couples and families, stressing practice in simultaneously working with more than one client. The primary focus is on the approaches, strategies, and interventions employed in counseling various combinations of persons in relationships. Students will explore the various forms of counseling couples, including persons in marriage, work relationships, friends, and extended family members.

COUN 5660 Sexual Counseling (3)

This course examines human sexual behavior and the theories of human sexuality underlying sexual counseling. Current techniques of sex therapies are discussed and evaluated, with focus on issues related to counseling the sexually abused, the sexual offender, and the sexually dysfunctional.

COUN 5670 Counseling of Children (3)

This course examines issues related to the counseling of children. Focus is on the application of counseling theories; techniques for interviewing children and their families; methods for designing and evaluating treat-

Counseling

ment plans; and the application of ethical standards and legal requirements.

COUN 5680 Counseling in the School Setting (3)

This course examines counseling practices in relation to children and adolescents in the school setting and the role and function of the counselor as a partner in the learning process. Focus is on developmental needs and age-related issues. Special problems of physical and sexual abuse, substance abuse, suicide, and grief are examined.

COUN 5685 Program Development for School Counselors (3)

This course focuses on the design, implementation, and evaluation of comprehensive developmental school programs to include technological interventions and identifications and identification of student academic, career, and personal/social competencies.

COUN 5700 Lifestyle and Career Development (3)

This course examines such areas as vocational choice theory, the relationship between career choice and lifestyle, sources of occupational and educational information, approaches to career decision-making processes, and career development exploration techniques.

COUN 5800 Professional Orientation and Ethics (3)

This course examines goals and objectives of professional organizations, codes of ethics, legal considerations, standards of preparation, certification, licensing, role identity of counselors and other personnel services specialists, and fee structures and the impact of fees on the counseling relationship.

COUN 5820 Consultation and Supervision (3)

This course examines consultation theory and practice as employed by counselors working and supervising in mental health facilities, educational institutions, and other counseling settings. The various forms of consultation and supervision will be explored, examining the framework for consultation with other professionals, educators, parents, and administrators.

COUN 5850 Research and Evaluation (3)

This course examines such areas as statistics, research design, and development of research and demonstration proposals. It includes understanding of legislation related to the development of research, program development, and demonstration proposals, as well as the development and evaluation of program objectives.

COUN 5900 Advanced Diagnostics and Treatment (3)

This course is designed to prepare the student to assess and treat specific clinical problems (i.e., anxiety disorders, personality disorders, mood disorders). The focus will be assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of mental, emotional, and behavioral problems using standardized diagnostic nomenclature. This is an advanced topics course and course content will be specified. Students are expected to have completed foundational courses. Course may be repeated for credit if content differs. Prerequisite: permission of instructor/academic advisor.

COUN 5925 Foundations of Psychotraumatology (3)

Foundations of Psychotraumatology introduces students to the basic concepts of traumatology and some of the key therapeutic interventions used in dealing with clients suffering from critical incidents, stress and/or posttraumatic stress following accident, assault, disaster, or acts of terrorism. The course provides an overview of the historical development of the field of psychotraumatology from early scientific focus at the beginning of the 20th century and leading to the present day clinical focus on critical incident stress management and post-traumatic stress. Students will further explore currently accepted approaches directed at the treatment of post-traumatic stress.

COUN 5950 Clinical Psychotraumatology (3)

Clinical Psychotraumatology focuses on equipping students with a full range of current psychotherapeutic interventions with which to deal with clients suffering from critical incidents stress and/or post-traumatic stress following accident, assault, disaster, or acts of terrorism. The course provides a thorough analysis of the leading clinical perspectives of the present day with opportunity to develop a personal therapeutic intervention model.

COUN 6000 Counseling Learning Practicum (3)

Students are required to complete a practicum in conjunction with their counseling curriculum. Each student plans his or her practicum with an academic advisor before completion of 15 credit hours in the program. A formal practicum proposal must be submitted to the counseling advisor before a student can register for the practicum, and the practicum should constitute the last course hours of the student's program. This is a non-paid practicum. Prerequisite: completion of all other required courses in this major. Course may be repeated for credit. The practicum is graded on the CR (credit) Option. Certain states may require more than 6 credit hours of practicum. Requires permission of instructor/academic advisor.

COUN 6500 Internship (3-9)

Intensive counseling experience that provides the student with the opportunity to perform a variety of counseling activities expected of a professional mental health counselor (e.g., application of diagnostic and therapeutic skills, record keeping, information and referral techniques, in-service and staff meetings). The internship must be in an approved setting under the supervision of a licensed on-site supervisor. Students must have completed all nine (9) program core courses and both required COUN 6000 Counseling Learning Practicum before submitting an application for the internship. Course may be repeated for credit. The internship is graded on the credit/no credit grading option. Requires permission of instructor/academic advisor.