

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

School of Applied Health and Educational Psychology

Master of Science in Counseling

Options: Community Counseling, School Counseling

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Master's Program in Counseling at Oklahoma State University is housed in the School of Applied Health and Educational Psychology, College of Education, with offices in Willard Hall on the OSU-Stillwater campus, and in Main Hall on the OSU-Tulsa campus. The Program is based on a practitioner model of counselor training and is designed to prepare students for professional counseling roles in a variety of mental health and school settings. Counseling theory and practice are emphasized, while students also learn about research.

The degree awarded to students who complete either the Community Counseling or School Counseling option is the M.S. in Counseling. The option, "Community Counseling" or "School Counseling" is indicated on the student's transcript.

Both the Community Counseling and School Counseling options are based on the standards of the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The Program is CACREP accredited.

Students in the Community Counseling option are required to complete 60 graduate semester credit hours. Students in the School Counseling option are required to complete 57 graduate credit hours. Students in both options are required to complete two research courses, 100 hours of practicum, and 600 hours of internship at sites that are appropriate for their program option. Students may opt to conduct a thesis project or complete a creative component to complete the requirements for this degree.

COMMUNITY COUNSELING OPTION

The Community Counseling option prepares students to work with children, adults, families, and groups in a variety of human service settings, including community mental health centers, social service agencies, treatment facilities, medical hospitals, prisons, educational settings, and private practice.

The Community Counseling Option is designed to meet the academic requirements set forth in the regulations of the Oklahoma Licensed Professional Counselor Act. Graduates, after 3000 hours of supervised, post-degree experience and a passing score on a written exam are eligible for licensure as professional counselors in Oklahoma.

SCHOOL COUNSELING OPTION

The School Counseling Option prepares students to work as school counselors in public schools, serving students, teachers, and parents. The role of the school counselor is to coordinate the comprehensive school counseling program, focusing on educational, career, personal, and social development of students. Within this comprehensive school counseling program, school counselors provide counseling, consulting, coordinating, and appraisal services.

For those individuals holding a valid Oklahoma teaching certificate, the School Counseling Option is designed to meet the school counselor teacher accreditation standards for NCA, NCATE, and the state of Oklahoma. Students seeking OSU's recommendation for certification as an Oklahoma school counselor must apply for admission to Professional Education through OSU's Office of Professional Education at the beginning of their master's degree program in Counseling. Candidates for certification as a school counselor in the state of Oklahoma must also receive a passing score on state certification exams. Upon successful completion of the degree, the certification professional portfolio submissions, and certification testing requirements, candidates can apply for school counselor certification through OSU's Office of Professional Education. Individuals who do not hold an Oklahoma teaching certificate gained through an institutional program that included student teaching may contact the Oklahoma State Department of Education for information on the Alternative Placement (Certification) Program. The State Department may require additional course work above and beyond the degree.

PROGRAM HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

Mission Statement. The M.S. Program in Counseling was founded to prepare professional counselors who are knowledgeable in counseling theories and techniques, who can translate counseling theory into effective counseling practice, who are committed to respecting diversity among people, and who ascribe to the highest of ethical standards and practice. The Program incorporates teaching in psychological, pedagogical, and counseling theory, research, and practice into a practitioner-based training program that allows graduates to apply knowledge in these areas to their practice in school and mental health settings in the community. Consistent with the land-grant tradition of Oklahoma State University, the Program is committed to the outreach and training of students from Oklahoma and elsewhere who represent diversity in gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, culture, rural or urban backgrounds, socioeconomic status, religious affiliation, and disability status.

The philosophical orientation of the Program is consistent both with the historical development of counseling and with the current roles and functions of counselors. We give major emphases to preventive/developmental/educational interventions and to remediation of problems that arise in the normal development of relatively well-functioning people. Our focus on prevention and developmental change brings us to seek knowledge and skills related to facilitation of growth, such as training in education, consultation, environmental change, and self-help. Our focus on remediation motivates our acquisition of knowledge and skills in counseling as applied to individuals, groups, and families.

The more specific philosophical orientation of this program may be characterized as meta-theoretical, emphasizing the development of qualities and counseling conditions that appear to facilitate growth from a variety of theoretical paradigms. No single theory of counseling is presented as the best

approach. Instead, dialogue concerning propositions and practices of various theories is viewed as essential, as well as the trying out of various counseling and related methods, and the acquiring of knowledge of client dynamics, problems, resources, and possibilities for change.

There have been 92 graduates of the master's programs in Counseling over the past five years. Approximately 200 graduates of our program are currently licensed as professional counselors in the state of Oklahoma, and about 50 are certified school counselors in the state. Clearly, the number of our graduates who are serving the needs of the people of Oklahoma is consistent with OSU's mission as the major land-grant university in the state.

Core Program Objectives

Students in this Program will gain knowledge and understanding of:

1. Professional identity, including history of the profession, roles of counselors, organizational structures, ethics, standards, credentialing, public policy, advocacy, and emerging issues in the profession.
2. Social and cultural diversity, including multicultural trends, counseling strategies, theories, competencies, and contextual factors for working with diverse populations, and counselor's roles in social justice and advocacy.
3. Human growth and development, including theories of learning, development, and transition, both normal and abnormal, for individuals and families across the lifespan.
4. Career and lifestyle development, including theories, models, assessment and counseling strategies, information resources, program planning and administration, and emerging issues in a changing world-of-work.
5. Helping Relationships, including counselor and consultant characteristics, and counseling, consulting, and systems theories, processes, and skills for working with families, children, and adults.
6. Group Work, including group development, group dynamics, and group counseling theories, methods, and skills.
7. Assessment, including basic principles of testing and assessment, case conceptualization, diagnosis, diversity factors related to assessment, and individual and group approaches to assessment and evaluation.
8. Research and program evaluation, including research methods, basic statistics, needs assessment, and program evaluation.

In addition, the school counseling program has adopted the following competencies based on the Oklahoma Competencies for Certification of School Counselors

www.sde.state.ok.us/home/defaultie.html

Competencies for School Counselors

Candidates for certification will gain knowledge and understanding of:

1. Human development in order to provide a comprehensive, developmental guidance and counseling program.
2. The impact of environmental influences on students' developmental achievement, to help students develop strategies to reason and cope with situations that may hinder learning.
3. Effective leadership skills to plan, implement, and evaluate a comprehensive, developmental guidance and counseling program to address the needs of all students.
4. Guidance and counseling services that address the needs and concerns of students and that help students develop skills to use in future situations.
5. How to facilitate the education and career development of individual students to help all achieve success.
6. Formal and informal assessment to provide information about and to students, to monitor student progress and to recommend changes to the student's educational environment.
7. Consultation processes with parents and school personnel, how to provide professional expertise and establish collaborative relationships that foster a support system for students, parents, and the community.
8. Human diversity as it applies to providing equitable guidance counseling services for all students and promoting a climate of mutual respect that helps students value themselves and others.
9. The need for strong and positive ties with the home and the community to promote students' growth in school and beyond the school setting.
10. Professional ethical codes, the importance of professional development and the need to work with colleagues to advance the profession.

CURRICULUM AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

It takes a minimum of two years of full-time graduate work (including summer semesters) to complete the program (community or school options). Students follow an organized sequence of study, in which academic coursework, research, and practice experiences are emphasized. Although certain specific requirements must be met by all students, each individual's plan of study is developed around his or her particular goals, in consultation with the individual's advisory committee. Two, three-hour elective courses are required for students in the Community Counseling option, which allows students to tailor the program to their specific training interests.

A variety of didactic and experiential/cooperative educational methods are incorporated into most coursework. Class sizes range from small (N=8) to large (N=30). For the small to medium-sized classes, close supervision of the students' work is provided. In addition to in-class experiences, students also learn via out-of-class activities, primarily through clinical placements at local agencies.

There is a common core of courses for the M.S. in Counseling, specific courses for each option (school or community), courses in research and inquiry, and a thesis/creative component option.

Common Counseling Core for School and Community Options (36 credit hours):

CPSY 5473	Introduction to Counseling Practice
CPSY 5553	Principles of Counseling
CPSY 5493	Professional and Ethical Issues in Counseling
EPSY 5103	Human Development
CPSY 5503	Multicultural Counseling
CPSY 5583	Group Process
CPSY 5453	Vocational and Career Information
CPSY 6553	Advanced Practice in Marriage & Family Treatment
EPSY 6323	Psychological Consultation
CPSY 5593	Counseling Practicum
CPSY 5683	Internship in Counseling I
CPSY 5693	Internship in Counseling II

Research and Inquiry (6 credit hours; required for both options)

REMS 5953	Elementary Statistical Methods in Education
REMS 5013	Research Design and Methodology

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Community Counseling Option (18 credit hours)

CPSY 5483	Community Counseling & Resource Development
CPSY 5563	Conceptualization & Diagnosis in Counseling
CPSY 5523	Individual Appraisal
(electives)	6 graduate credit hours, must be counseling or psychology-related
(one of the following):	
REMS 5373	Educational Measurements OR
CPSY 5783	Psycho-educational Testing of Exceptional Individuals

School Counseling Option: (15 credit hours)

CPSY 5513	Comprehensive School Counseling Programs
CPSY 5533	Developmental Interventions
EPSY 5113	Child Psychopathology
CIED 5053	Curriculum Issues
(one of the following):	
CPSY 5523	Individual Appraisal OR
CPSY 5783	Psycho-educational Testing of Exceptional Individuals

Thesis or Creative Component:

CPSY 5000 Master's Thesis (6 hours) **OR**

A Creative Component approved by the student's advisory committee for no additional credit hours. Students in the school counseling option are required to assemble a professional education portfolio and may use their portfolio as their creative component. Information and instructions for the portfolio are disseminated during the mandatory orientation meetings each fall and spring semester; further information is available at

www.okstate.edu/education/schoolcounselingportfolio.

Note: Students in the community counseling option may take 6 hours of thesis credit in lieu of electives. Students in the school counseling option who complete a thesis would increase their total program hours from 57 to 63.

Clinical Experience

A minimum of one semester of master's-level practicum (100 contact hours, 40 hours in direct service) and two semesters of master's-level internship (300 contact hours per semester; 120 hours in direct service each semester) is required to obtain supervised experiences in the application of counseling services.

In the counseling practicum and internship, students provide counseling and educational interventions (i.e., individual counseling, group counseling, guidance programs, outreach programs, intake interviews) to clients under the supervision of licensed or certified professionals at their site. In all training experiences, students are supervised 1 hour per week (individual supervision) by licensed or

certified professionals on-site, 1 hour per week (individual supervision) on-campus by the course instructor (or an advanced, supervised doctoral student), and 2 hours per week in on-campus group supervision.

There are opportunities for clinical experience at several on-campus agencies, including a university counseling service, a mental health clinic at the student hospital, and a career information center. Off-campus placements in both the Stillwater and Tulsa areas have included elementary and secondary schools, community mental health centers, family service centers, a domestic violence center, and youth services centers, with several practicum options in cities within a 75 mile radius of Stillwater and Tulsa.

Research Opportunities

Research experience is gained through coursework and through completing a master's thesis. The purpose of the master's thesis is to provide an opportunity for students to integrate and apply a wide range of research skills in a special area of interest directly related to counseling.

Some students chose to complete a creative component rather than a thesis. Some of our students' creative projects have been research literature reviews on a topic of interest (e.g., use of metaphors in counseling with children; depression), or developing instructional materials (e.g., developing a course on addictions; creating a PowerPoint presentation on women and work; writing a student handbook for the Program).

Students can also participate in research by joining research teams. Research teams consist of one or more faculty and one or more students, and focus on a topic of interest to the group as a whole. Student membership in the research team is designed to foster student interest in research, to help students apply what is learned in their research courses, and to encourage students to integrate research and practice. Indeed, many of these teams have been successful in disseminating their research at national counseling conferences and/or professional journals.

Advising

Students are assigned temporary advisors until the student forms a master's advisory committee. This committee is chaired by a member of the Graduate Faculty and includes two other faculty members in the School of Applied Health and Educational Psychology. This committee advises the student on the plan of study and ensures that program requirements are met.

Financial Assistance

Financial aid is sometimes available to master's students in the form of graduate assistantships or work-study programs. Students can be informed of other financial aid sources by contacting the OSU Financial Aid Office, 119 Student Union, 405-744-6604. Note that the Financial Aid office may have separate deadlines and require additional application procedures.

In addition, there are a number of scholarships available in the College of Education for which our students are eligible; visit the website at www.okstate.edu/education/sahep/cpsy

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Admission

Each applicant/student **must** follow the admissions procedures and requirements for completion of graduate programs as explained in the Oklahoma State University *Catalog*.

Applications are accepted at any time throughout the year, although they are reviewed only once per year, **February 15**. Students are formally admitted to the program once per year.

Only applicants with a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution may be considered for full admission into the master's program.

Applicants will be screened by a committee of Counseling Area faculty members, and finalists will be asked to participate in an on-campus interview. **These interviews are MANDATORY**, although some provisions may be made for out-of-state students. Final admission decisions will be made following these interviews.

In reviewing your application materials, we include consideration of the following:

- a) Input from references and regular, adjunct, and affiliate program faculty;
- b) Personal qualities that are assets for those in the helping profession.
- c) An aptitude for development of counseling-related skills.
- d) An aptitude for graduate-level studies, including your technological competence and computer literacy;
- d) Career goals and objectives and their consistency with our program;
- e) Openness to self-examination and personal and professional self-development.
- f) Respect for diversity and the right of individuals to determine the course of their own lives, and an orientation toward beneficence.

The following materials are required by the Graduate College:

1. A completed Graduate College application (available in 202 Whitehurst or on-line at www.gradcollege.okstate.edu)
2. Two official transcripts of all completed coursework (at the college level).

Send Graduate College application and transcripts directly to:

*Dean, Graduate College
202 Whitehurst Hall
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater OK 74078
(405-744-6368)*

The following materials are required by The College of Education:

1) An official record of scores on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or the Miller Analogies Test (MAT). A GRE score of 900 (combined verbal and quantitative scores) is a competitive test score for full admission. A MAT score of 39 is a competitive test score for full admission.

In addition, an undergraduate GPA of at least 2.75 and a graduate GPA of at least 3.25 (if applicable) are required for admission to this program.

2) Three positive letters of reference from people who know you well and who are in a position to render an evaluation of your professional competence and potential as a counselor (preferably your course instructors, employers, and/or supervisors). Blank copies are available in 325V Willard or can be downloaded from www.okstate.edu/education/graduatestudies.

3) A Statement of Professionally-Related Experiences and Goals: Approximately three typed pages emphasizing a) pertinent professional, educational and/or personal experiences that have contributed to your interest in the counseling profession, and b) your professional aspirations. A resume or vita is considered a helpful supplement to this statement.

4. Either in your statement or resume/vita, please include information about your general competencies with technology (e.g., videotaping) and your computer skills.

Send GRE or MAT scores, reference letters, statement of professionally-related experiences/goals, and resume/vita directly to:

*Graduate Records Office
College of Education
325V Willard Hall
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, OK 74078*

*(405) 744-9483
(405) 744-6399 FAX*

Provisional Admission. If your GPA falls under our minimum standards, and if you have qualifications/experiences that warrant special consideration and are justified by program faculty as a warranted exception to established criteria, and if there is space available, you may be provisionally admitted to the program.

If you are provisionally admitted, you may enroll for one semester (or 12 credit hours maximum) and must, during this period of enrollment, earn a GPA of at least 3.25 in the first semester (9-12 hours) of graduate coursework.

If you meet these criteria, you will be given full admission to the Program.

Students may submit requests for special consideration for admission if extenuating circumstances exist. Such requests will become part of the student's folder and may be considered by the program area faculty.

Leveling or Prerequisites. At this time, no leveling or prerequisite coursework is required. However, undergraduate majors and/or individuals with considerable coursework related to social sciences and/or education are preferred. Students who are admitted to the school counseling option may need to take additional coursework following the completion of this program to become certified in certain states. For example, if students do not have a background in education, they may be required by the Oklahoma Commission on Teacher Preparation (OCTP) to take some education courses.

Transfer Credit. Nine (9) graduate credit hours (excluding practicum, internship, and thesis) may be transferred from other recognized graduate programs, if the coursework is no more than ten (10) years old at the time of graduation from this Program, and if approved by your Graduate Advisory Committee.

Minimum G.P.A. Standards. A minimum overall grade point average of 3.0 is required in all academic coursework, with the exception of CPSY 5473, 5553, 5593, 5683/93, and thesis credits, in which the course grade must not be below a "B."

College of Education Statement on Diversity. The College of Education is committed to the promotion and affirmation of diversity in the broadest sense. This commitment is consistent with the ethical principles of the various professions represented in the College. These principles place a high value on the dignity and worth of individuals regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity, sexual/affectional orientation, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, and socio-economic class. Appreciation of the value of diversity also extends to diversity of thought and perspective. Faculty make every effort to promote an atmosphere of respect and trust in which individuals feel free to explore, discuss and express their beliefs with one another.

The program has done exceptionally well by both university and national standards in recruiting qualified ethnic minority students to the program. In particular, we have successfully recruited American Indian people, especially through our involvement in the American Indians into Psychology grant program, a federally funded project. Part of our efforts in recruiting minority students has been active faculty and student involvement in direct recruiting activities locally, regionally and around the country. We also maintain a section in our website that exclusively focuses on multicultural programming and have aggressively pursued other scholarship programs within Oklahoma and nationally for which our students may be eligible.

Faculty – Like the students of the program, faculty seek to be ethical professional helpers who work for the betterment of society. A poignant illustration of our societal commitment for both faculty and students is our joint involvement in the School Violence Prevention program in local schools. Faculty additionally are highly committed to providing excellent instruction and research activities, and this may be seen in consistently positive teacher evaluations for our faculty and numerous publications and presentations at both local and national levels. Currently there are ten faculty members (all with doctoral degrees) in the Program area.

For more information about the Program, visit our websites,

www.okstate.edu/education/sahep/cpsy/index.htm

www.okstate.edu/education/schoolcounselingportfolio/