

Counselor Education, MA

Clinical Mental Health Counseling

The Master of Arts program in counselor education with a clinical mental health counseling subprogram requires a minimum of 60 s.h. of graduate credit. Students must maintain a graduate program grade-point average of at least 3.00. Full-time students can complete the program in approximately 20 months (four semesters).

The program prepares professional counselors to provide assistance with psychological wellness through flexible, consumer-oriented therapy to individuals experiencing various problems in living, including mental disorders and substance abuse. They combine traditional psychotherapy with a practical, problem-solving approach that creates a dynamic efficient path for change and problem resolution.

Clinical mental health counselors work in a variety of settings, including public government agencies; private practice; community mental health agencies; managed behavioral health care organizations; integrated delivery systems; hospitals, including the Veteran's Administration; employee assistance programs; and substance abuse treatment centers. They provide interventions designed to help individuals with their immediate needs such as assessment and diagnosis, psychotherapy, treatment planning, brief and solution-focused therapy, alcoholism and substance abuse treatment, psychoeducational and prevention, and crisis management.

The MA subprogram in clinical mental health counseling is accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). Graduates of the program are eligible for certification by the National Board for Certified Counselors. By completing the program's coursework, students also complete the courses they must take in order to apply for licensure as mental health counselors in Iowa. Students who complete the program and wish to seek licensure in other states should refer to the relevant state licensing board for specific requirements.

The curriculum blends academic work with supervised clinical experiences. Students take practicum and internship concurrently with academic courses. The program concludes with a full-time internship (40 hours per week) during a spring semester. Students are assigned to mental health agencies or facilities that meet CACREP accreditation standards and that have programs or clientele aligned with a student's interests and educational objectives. Clinical placements require criminal background checks. Supervised practicums, internships, and comprehensive examinations are not offered during summer sessions.

The MA in counselor education with a clinical mental health counseling subprogram requires the following work.

Required Courses

| Course # | Title | Hours |
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| All of these: | | |
| CSED:5202 | Introduction to Group Counseling | 3 |
| CSED:5203 | Career Development and Counseling | 3 |

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| CSED:5221 | Theories of Counseling and Human Development Across the Life Span | 3 |
| CSED:5241 | Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice | 3 |
| CSED:5248 | Diagnosis and Treatment Planning for Traditional, Vulnerable, and Special Populations in Counseling | 3 |
| CSED:5249 | Medical and Psychopathological Aspects of Chronic Illness and Disability | 3 |
| CSED:5250 | Multiculturalism in Helping Professions | 3 |
| CSED:5254 | Assessment and Appraisal | 3 |
| CSED:5278 | Applied Microcounseling | 3 |
| CSED:6342 | Psychosocial Aspects of Health and Disability Across the Developmental Lifespan | 3 |
| CSED:6349 | Practicum in Clinical Mental Health Counseling | 3 |
| CSED:6352 | Internship in Clinical Mental Health Counseling | 12 |
| CSED:6353 | Pre-Practicum and Case Management in Counseling | 3 |
| CSED:6500 | Research and Program Evaluation | 3 |

Electives

In consultation with their advisors, students choose 9 s.h. (from a minimum of 3 courses) in elective coursework. Students are permitted to select coursework numbered 3000 and above from counselor education (prefix CSED), teaching and learning (prefix EDTL), educational policy and leadership studies (prefix EPLS), and psychological and quantitative foundations (prefix PSQF). Students are encouraged to select from the following course list, as these courses are curated for counselor education students.

| Course # | Title | Hours |
|-----------|--|-------|
| CSED:4110 | Psychology of Food and Mood | 3 |
| CSED:4113 | Sleep, Sleep Deprivation, and Sleep Disorders | 3 |
| CSED:4114 | Psychology of Body Modification and Self-Image | 3 |
| CSED:4130 | Human Sexuality | 3 |
| CSED:4131 | Loss, Death, and Bereavement | 3 |
| CSED:4132 | Introduction to Addictions and Impulse Control Disorders | 3 |
| CSED:4162 | Introduction to Couple and Family Therapy | 3 |
| CSED:4173 | Trauma Across the Lifespan | 3 |
| CSED:4174 | Positive Psychology | 3 |
| CSED:4175 | Motivational Interviewing | 3 |
| CSED:4176 | Child Abuse: Assessment, Intervention, and Advocacy | 3 |
| CSED:4179 | Sexuality Within the Helping Professions | 3 |

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| CSED:4185 | Introduction to Substance Abuse | 3 |
| CSED:4187 | Introduction to Assistive Technology | 3 |
| CSED:5280 | Topical Seminar in Counselor Education (may be taken more than once if the topic differs) | arr. |

Comprehensive Examination

The comprehensive examination consists of a departmental comprehensive portfolio that documents knowledge, skills, and dispositions on the process and practice of clinical mental health counseling. Exams are offered only during fall and spring semesters.

Admission

Applicants must meet the department's general admission requirements. They should have a good academic record and relevant experiences. No specific undergraduate major area of study is required for the MA program, but a major in one of the social sciences is considered good preparation. Postbaccalaureate work and volunteer experiences relevant to the field of mental health counseling are preferred. The program encourages applications from persons historically underrepresented in the field, particularly those with a disability and/or members of underrepresented groups. A personal interview is required.

Although students may be admitted for any semester, the program highly recommends that full-time students begin in the fall.