

MASTER OF ARTS IN MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Dr. Jason Newsome, Program Director

Program Mission Statement

The mission of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program is to provide quality instruction and training that produces competent professionals who provide effective mental health services to those in need.

Program Description

The Master of Arts degree in Mental Health Counseling is a 60-hour program of study designed to prepare students to enter the field of counseling. The primary objective of the program is to prepare ethical, compassionate professionals who are equipped with the knowledge, values, and skills to promote wellness in the area of mental health. In addition to traditional coursework, students are required to complete a 100-hour practicum and 600-hour internship to meet graduation requirements.

Program Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course of study Graduates will:

- 1. Use assessment techniques and tools to diagnose mental disorders in accordance with the current edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.
- 2. Demonstrate competence in the use of basic counseling skills.
- 3. Integrate knowledge of the current version of the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics into clinical decision-making.
- 4. Apply theoretical models of counseling and psychotherapy to client problems to develop and implement empirically-supported treatment plans that include consideration for related developmental, social, personality, and environmental factors.
- 5. Evaluate clinical outcomes and use current research to inform revisions in practice of both individual practitioners as well as the related systems.
- 6. Demonstrate competent application of counseling concepts and models that shows respect and appreciation for diversity.

What You Will Study

The program requires 60 hours with 15 required courses and a minimum of 4 elective courses. All courses in the table below are required for licensure and also meet the curricular requirements for The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs.

NOTE: The university cannot apply for accreditation until it has students in all phases of the program. The university must have students in their final semester at the time the application is submitted.

| Number | Credit Hours | Course Title |
|-------------|--------------|---|
| COUN 500 | 3 | Professional Counseling Orientation |
| COUN 501 | 3 | Human Growth and Development |
| COUN 502 | 3 | Multicultural Counseling |
| COUN 503 | 3 | Counseling Theories |
| COUN 510 | 3 | Introduction to Mental Health Counseling |
| COUN 511 | 3 | Counseling Techniques |
| COUN 512 | 3 | Theories and Techniques of Assessment |
| COUN 520 | 3 | Diagnosis and Treatment Planning |
| COUN 513 | 3 | Research and Program Evaluation |
| COUN 600 | 3 | Group Counseling |
| COUN 601 | 3 | Career Counseling |
| COUN 602 | 3 | Substance Abuse Counseling and Prevention |
| COUN 603 | 3 | Marriage and Family Counseling |
| COUN 698 | 3 | Practicum |
| COUN 699 | 6 | Internship |
| Total Hours | 48 | |
| | 12 | Electives |
| Total Hours | 60 | |

Admission Requirements

To be considered for admission to the program, applicants must:

- Have a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5
- (NOTE: A GPA of 3.0 must be maintained while in the program.)
- Have at least 9 semester credit hours (or 12 quarter hours) in social sciences that includes Introduction to Psychology and Lifespan Development or their equivalent.
- Submit 2 letters of recommendation from professional and/or academic sources. Suitable examples include professors, employers, or organizational leaders who can address the applicant's ability to complete graduate-level coursework, motivation, and ethics.
- Compose a Statement of Purpose of 750 – 1,000 words that addresses the following:
- Discuss why you desire to become a counselor, including factors that influenced you as well as professional goals.
- Discuss your strengths and weaknesses in terms of academics as well as interpersonal relationships.
- Describe your perspective on diversity and ways to show respect to individuals from cultural backgrounds different from your own.

Applicants will be reviewed for admission by the Program Director and admissions decisions will be communicated by the Office of Admissions.

Additional Requirements

Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling majors must meet all University of Charleston graduation requirements, complete all program and course assignments, and must take and pass a comprehensive examination during the final semester.

The Counseling Program Handbook that students receive prior to their orientation is the authoritative document for specific, detailed descriptions of requirements, expectations, and graduation from the Counseling Program. The handbook also provides students with information related to licensure as a professional counselor. Students should consult that document, as well as his or her advisor, for complete information about the Counseling Program.