

Graduate Handbook

for



**Counseling
Program**

Clinical Mental Health Counseling

2023-2024

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The 2023-2024 Handbook of Graduate Programs in Counseling reflects the program requirements of the current Texas A&M University-Texarkana catalog. Students enrolling in the Graduate Counseling Program prior to Fall 2023 may meet the graduation requirements listed in the catalog governing the first semester in which they enrolled as degree-seeking students.

I. MISSION STATEMENT & PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Texas A&M University-Texarkana Counseling Program, through high quality instruction and educational opportunities develops talented counselors, life-long learners, and leaders in our field. Graduates of our program serve the mental health and educational needs of the diverse residents of Texas, boarder states, throughout the country, and around the world. Graduates are expected to serve as actively engaged agents of change in providing care for diverse populations. Through ethical practice and professional conduct, our graduates are expected to advocate for the field, serve their clients, and meet the needs of an ever-changing world.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the program adhere to the standards of practice deemed necessary for counseling programs by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP), and state Counselor Licensing Boards.

Our program has aligned curricular activities, course learning, and professional practice to adhere to CACREP standards to provide all students the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills, and attributes befitting for the counseling profession.

At the completion of the counseling program, students will be able to:

- Articulate and practice within a clear and well conceptualized professional counselor identity.
- Demonstrate effective and professional ethical conduct and ethical decision making.
- Exhibit professional practices with diverse clients.
- Show understanding and skill in working with clients at various and varied stages along the lifespan.
- Identify and utilize current approaches to working with clients with needs regarding career counseling, career information and career decision making .
- Utilize and demonstrate proficiency in providing a counseling relationship to clients.
- Show competence and understanding of the processes and procedures for effective group leadership and facilitation,
- Accurately and professionally demonstrate knowledge and skills in the process of clinical assessment and understanding assessment results.
- Demonstrate the use of data and statistical methods to understand counseling-related issues through rigorous and thorough research.

II. OVERVIEW OF GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Texas A & M University – Texarkana’s Clinical Mental Health Counseling program enables students to meet the academic requirements to sit for the licensing exam for the position of Clinical Mental Health Counselor.

A&M-Texarkana offers several graduate elective courses such as, Introduction to Trauma Counseling, Counseling Children and Adolescents, Play Therapy, Advanced Counseling Theories, and Sexual Behavior. These courses may also be utilized by clinicians to satisfy continuing education requirements.

Clinical Mental Health Counseling

The Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program consists of 60 credit hours. The program is CACREP accredited. The Counseling and Psychology faculty are committed to the training of effective professional mental health workers. Following the completion of the majority of coursework, students will translate coursework into practicum and internship field experiences. Students are required to take 9 semester credit hours of field experiences at approved mental health counseling agencies.

III. ADMISSION CRITERIA

NOTE: DEGREE SEEKING STUDENTS MAY NOT ENROLL IN COUNSELING COURSES PRIOR TO BEING OFFICIALLY ACCEPTED INTO THE COUNSELING PROGRAM.

- Important Dates:
 - To be eligible to be interviewed for the program, applicants must have all paperwork, documents and letters submitted by the following dates:
 - June 1 -----For Fall semester registration
 - October 1-----For Spring semester registration
 - March 1-----For Summer term registration
- A baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution
 - For those applicants who already hold a bachelor's degree, transcripts for ALL work completed must be sent to the Graduate Office.
 - For those applicants who are in the process of completing their last semester of undergraduate studies, the "Admissions Informed Consent" must be signed and returned to the Graduate Office. Applicants must have official transcripts sent to the Graduate Office after successful completion of the final semester of undergraduate work.
 - A competitive GPA with a minimum GPA of 3.0
 - Letter of interest, commitment, and purpose to the program. These materials will be evaluated for writing skills and potential for the student to achieve counseling competencies as required by the American Counseling Association.
 - Performance on appropriate standardized exams such as GRE or MAT.
 - Official scores must be submitted to the Graduate Office
 - Scores may be no older than 5 years at the time of application
- Supportive letters of evaluation from faculty and professional mentors
 - Minimum of 3 required.
 - Letters must be current and dated within 6 months of application.

- Successful In-person interview. Applicants who have met all of the criteria identified above before the due dates will be invited to campus for a 30 minute interview. This interview will include meeting with program faculty to discuss the program, goals of the applicant, and the potential fit between the applicant and the program.
- International Students.

Must be able to communicate, listen, read, write, and comprehend the English language sufficiently to use it easily and readily in daily communication and teaching. English language proficiency shall be evidenced by one of the following:

(A) completion of an undergraduate or graduate degree at an accredited institution of higher education in the United States; or

(B) verification of minimum scaled scores on the Test of English as a Foreign Language internet-Based Test (TOEFL iBT) of 24 for speaking, 22 for listening, 22 for reading, and 21 for writing; or

(C) if an undergraduate or graduate degree was earned at an institution of higher education in a country outside of the United States listed in the figure provided in this subparagraph. Figure: 19 TAC §230.11(b)(5)(C)

IV. MASTER'S COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS

All students seeking a Master's Degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling must pass the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) prior to receiving their degree.

Students are eligible to take the examination during their first semester of internship. The examination is offered once each semester (usually April and November) and once during the summer (usually July). Students must be enrolled in at least three semester credit hours of coursework to be eligible to take the Comprehensive Examination.

Accommodations are available for the CPCE. Students must inform the program coordinator about accommodations needed well in advance of the examination date. All accommodation approval determinations made by the university counseling program are subject to NBCC/ CCE approval under the Special Examination Accommodations Policy located on the NBCC website at https://nbcc.org/Assets/Policies/NBCC-CCE_Special_Examination_Accommodations_Policy.pdf.

The Comprehensive Examination is a knowledge-based examination that reflects the eight core curriculum areas approved by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP): (1) Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice, (2) Social and Cultural Diversity, (3) Human Growth and Development (4) Career Development, (5) Counseling and Helping Relationships, (6) Group Counseling and Group Work, (7) Assessment and Testing, and (8) Research and Program Evaluation. The Comprehensive Examination is designed as a summative evaluation of relevant knowledge obtained by students during their counselor preparation program.

There are 160 multiple choice questions on the CPCE, with 136 being scored. To pass the examination, students must answer a minimum of 65% of the questions correctly and pass 6 out of the 8 subsets based on CACREP learning standards. Students may take the exam a maximum of two times. If failed a second time, the exam may not be taken again without special permission of the Dean of the College. Any student failing to pass the comprehensive examination will not be awarded a Master's Degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling.

V. STATEMENT ON PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

Counseling is a profession that requires the mastery of a large body of knowledge and the acquisition of clinical skills, as well as high standards of behavior and appropriate attitudes. In addition to fulfilling all academic requirements, students are required to display attitudes, personal characteristics, and behaviors consistent with accepted standards of professional conduct at Texas A&M University–Texarkana, and further defined by the ethical standards for counselors.

The following personal characteristics and attitudes include but are not limited to those observed and evaluated throughout the Counseling curriculums. Students are expected to demonstrate these characteristics, both in their academic and personal pursuits.

Integrity: Displays honesty in all situations and interactions; is able to identify information that is confidential and maintain its confidentiality.

Tolerance: Demonstrates ability to accept people and situations. Acknowledges his/her biases and does not allow them to affect client care or contribute to threatening or harassing interactions with others.

Interpersonal relationships: Provides support and is empathetic in interactions with peers, clients, and their families. Interacts effectively with "difficult individuals." Demonstrates respect for and complements the roles of other professionals. Is cooperative and earns respect.

Initiative: Acquires ability to independently identify tasks to be performed and makes sure that tasks are completed satisfactorily. Performs duties promptly and efficiently. Is willing to spend additional time and to assume new responsibilities. Recognizes when help is required and when to ask for guidance.

Dependability: Completes tasks promptly and well. Arrives on time and actively participates in clinical and didactic activities. Follows through and is reliable.

Attitudes: Is actively concerned about others. Maintains a positive outlook toward others and toward assigned tasks. Recognizes and admits mistakes. Seeks and accepts feedback and uses it to improve performance.

Function under stress: Maintains professional composure and exhibits good personal and clinical judgment in stressful situations. Identifies unprofessional conduct while recognizing the

importance of maintaining professional behavior in the clinical setting, in spite of inappropriate action on the part of others.

Appearance: Displays appropriate professional appearance and is appropriately groomed.

Student Code of Conduct

Students at Texas A&M University-Texarkana are expected to obey all federal, state, and local laws, in addition to the regulations of the University. The University regards the following as illustrations of misconduct or violations of acceptable University conduct by individuals or groups which may result in review by the appropriate University agencies:

1. Academic dishonesty, cheating and/or plagiarism.
2. Furnishing false information to the University.
3. Forgery, alteration, unauthorized possession, or misuse of University documents, records, identification cards, or existing copyright laws. This would include faculty publications and laboratory materials related to the educational process.
4. Malicious destruction, damage, unauthorized possession, or misuse of University property, including library and laboratory materials or of private property on the campus.
5. Participating in hazing, acts which are degrading or injurious, or acts in which another is held against his or her will.
6. Abuse, whether physical, mental or otherwise, of another person in the University community, including members of the administration, faculty, staff, the student body and citizens of Texarkana.
7. Possession, consumption, sale, manufacture, or furnishing of alcoholic beverages on University property.
8. Possession, consumption, sale, manufacture of illicit drugs and narcotics, including marijuana, and drug paraphernalia.
9. Disorderly conduct which occurs at any University sponsored activity whether the activity occurs on or off campus.
10. Malfeasance or misuse of elective or appointive office in a student organization.
11. Possession of weapons on University property. Examples: knives, firearms, explosives, incendiary bombs, etc. Exception to this rule is licensed peace officers.
12. Violations of local, state, and federal laws which occur on campus.
13. Recurring incidents which are in violation of University policies and/or other such persistently irresponsible behavior that questions the student's serious intent to pursue an education.
14. Failure to respond to a summons by letter, telephone call or message delivered by an A&M Texarkana employee from the Vice President for Student and Academic Support Services concerning a matter of conduct.
15. Failure to meet financial obligations incurred by the student to the University.
16. Theft or unauthorized possession of student property, including textbooks.
17. Such other violations or policies included in official publications of the University.

Retention/Dismissal Policy

RETENTION POLICY

Students must attain a course grade of “B” or better in all courses for the degree. Students who earn a “C” in any course must retake the course the next time it is offered at A&M-Texarkana; the student will be placed on academic probation until a “B” or better is earned. Failure to maintain the university’s required cumulative grade point average of 3.00 during any semester of enrollment at Texas A&M-Texarkana will result in the student being placed on academic probation the following semester. If the student earns the required grade of “B” or better and meets the cumulative grade point average of 3.00 at the end of the probationary period, the student will be removed from academic probation. Failure to meet the required grade of “B” or better or the cumulative grade point average of 3.00 the following semester (including summer terms) will result in the student being suspended from the graduate program.

If a student was admitted to the graduate program provisionally or on academic probation, the student must maintain at least a cumulative grade point average of 3.25 the first 12 semester hours of graduate work which must include COUN 516 during the fall or spring semesters (whichever comes first). Students who are provisionally admitted will not be allowed to take more than 12 hours combined prior to the review period. If the probationary student falls below a cumulative grade point average of 3.25 in the first 12 hours of course work, the student will be dismissed from the graduate program. Probationary students who meet or exceed the cumulative grade point average of 3.25 after 12 hours of graduate course work will be reviewed by faculty for removal from academic probation.

RE-ADMISSION POLICY

Following a suspension period of six months a student may request readmission into the graduate program. Each re-admission decision is made on an individual basis. If a student is re-admitted to the graduate program after suspension, the student must maintain a “B” or better in each course, failure to do so will result in dismissal.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Through the use of professional judgment, faculty members continuously evaluate students’ performance and fitness for the profession. Students receive feedback about their performance from faculty members, advisors, and supervisors. At any time during the program faculty members can complete the “Counseling Student Competency Evaluation” if they deem necessary as a way to provide feedback or remediation to the student.

STUDENT REVIEW POLICY AND APPEAL PROCESS

Students admitted into the graduate program will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure fitness for the profession. If a faculty member believes that a student is not making satisfactory progress or meeting program, professional, or university standards, that faculty member will discuss the concerns with the student. If the faculty member believes that the student’s performance cannot improve to acceptable standards, the faculty member may request that the student be reviewed by the counseling program faculty.

If the student is deemed as unsatisfactory, the department will provide a written statement to the student regarding non-satisfactory progress. At this time the student will be provided an opportunity to meet with the department of counseling to discuss concerns. After consideration of this matter,

and within 10 working days of meeting with the student, the department will make its recommendation for either the student to remain in, be dismissed from the program, and/or the student must meet specified conditions (remediation plan) to remain in the program. Within 10 working days of the receipt of this information, the student will notify his/her faculty advisor of his or her acceptance or appeal of the department's recommendation. The ack of notification is viewed as the student's acceptance. If a student is recommended to stay in the graduate program, a growth plan may be developed for the student.

If a student appeals the decision, the Department Chair will determine whether or not the student remains in the program or is subject to specified conditions. The Department Chair may or may not meet with the student prior to this decision being made. The Chair's final decision will be provided to the student in writing.

FINAL APPEAL

A student who is not satisfied with the Department Chair's decision may appeal to the Dean of the College of Education and Liberal Arts. For the appeal to be considered, the student must submit in writing a request to appeal to their faculty advisor within 10 working days. The Dean will consider the matter and notify the student of the decision within 10 working days of the receipt of the appeal from the faculty advisor.

Counseling Student Performance Evaluation

On the following page is a counseling student performance evaluation that is filled out by pre-practicum, practicum, and internship instructors. It may also be filled out by other faculty when issues arise. Just like all health professions, the counseling program faculty are licensed clinicians who are responsible for gatekeeping the profession to protect the public from maleficence (harm). Professors are cognizant of the attributes a counselor must possess and use these guidelines to determine a student's fit for the profession. Any decisions made are first brought to the core counseling program faculty and follow university guidelines and procedures.

Become familiar with the expectations of this program and be mindful that you are not only being evaluated quantitatively but qualitatively.

Counseling Student Performance Evaluation (CSPE)

Graduate Clinical Mental Health Program
College of Education and Liberal Arts
Texas A&M University-Texarkana

Student: _____

Today's Date: _____

Faculty Member: _____

Course Number: _____

The department of counseling is obligated by professional ethics (see ACA Code of Ethics) and the Texas A&M University-Texarkana procedure to assess students as to their potential for meeting expectations in the field of professional counseling. The competencies outlined below are specific to the field of professional counseling and are in *addition* to academic requirements. The department may suspend any students from the program who is judged as incapable of meeting these expectations. Procedures regarding potential dismissal from the counseling program are outlined in the Handbook of Graduate Programs in Counseling.

This form may be used by any faculty member and with any student enrolled in any graduate counseling course. The form is utilized to provide the student with feedback regarding their potential for meet expectations of the field of professional counseling. Completion of this form is required for COUN 516 and COUN 525. Each CSPE must be placed in the student's file along with any remediation plan developed by the faculty in conference with the student.

Based on your observations of the student, select the relevant items then circle the number that corresponds to the level of concern.

N= No opportunity to observe
0= No concern

1= Concerned
2= Highly Concerned

Integrity

1. The student conducts themselves in an ethical manner to promote confidence within the counseling profession.	N	0	1	2
2. The student refrains from making false, misleading, or deceptive statements.	N	0	1	2
3. The student demonstrates honesty, fairness and respect for others.	N	0	1	2
4. The student respects individuals' rights to privacy, confidentiality, and choices regarding self-determination and autonomy.	N	0	1	2
5. The student demonstrates sensitivity to real and ascribed differences in the power between themselves and others and does not exploit or mislead other people during or after professional relationships.	N	0	1	2

Tolerance

1. The student respects the fundamental rights, dignity and worth of all people.	N	0	1	2
2. The student respects cultural, individual, and role differences including but not limited to age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status.	N	0	1	2
3. The student demonstrates an awareness of his/her own belief system, values, needs, and limitations and the effect these have on his/her own work.	N	0	1	2

Interpersonal Relationships

1. The student demonstrates the ability to establish relationships in a manner that working alliances can be formed.	N	0	1	2
2. The student utilizes appropriate self-disclosure skillfully and carefully.	N	0	1	2

3. The student avoids improper and potentially harmful dual relationships.	N	0	1	2
4. The student demonstrates adequate interpersonal skills, exhibiting a genuine interest and appreciation from others, respect for others, and the ability to interact with others in a professional manner.	N	0	1	2
5. The student understands, accepts, and demonstrates the core conditions of counseling: unconditional positive regard, genuineness, and empathy.	N	0	1	2

Initiative

1. The student provides only those services and applies only those techniques for which he/she is qualified by education, training, and experience.	N	0	1	2
2. The student takes responsibility for assuring client welfare when faced with situations outside of his/her area of expertise.	N	0	1	2
3. The student is willing to increase knowledge (and implement) of effective counseling strategies.	N	0	1	2
4. The student takes responsibility for compensating for his/her deficiencies.	N	0	1	2

Dependability

1. The student regularly attends class, is on time for class, and stays for the full class meeting time.	N	0	1	2
2. In field placements, the student establishes and maintains a regular schedule of attendance and service for the entire semester.	N	0	1	2
3. The student demonstrates the ability to follow directions and complies fully with the directives of the faculty and site supervisors.	N	0	1	2
4. The student demonstrates an understanding of and abides by the legal requirements relevant to counselor training and practice.	N	0	1	2
5. The student adheres to the professional standards as outlined by the ACA Code of Ethics (2005).	N	0	1	2

Attitudes

1. The student demonstrates the ability to receive, integrate and utilize feedback from peers, faculty, and supervisors.	N	0	1	2
2. The student exhibits appropriate levels of self-assurance, confidence, and trust in their abilities.	N	0	1	2
3. The student takes responsibility for assuring other's welfare when encountering the boundaries of his/her expertise.	N	0	1	2
4. The student demonstrates a respectful attitude toward peers, professors, supervisors, and others.	N	0	1	2
5. The student contributes appropriately to classroom and supervisory discussion and is not disruptive in the classroom, field placement, or supervisory settings.	N	0	1	2

Function Under Stress

1. The student follows professionally recognized conflict resolution processes, seeking to informally address the issue first with the individual(s) with whom the conflict exists.	N	0	1	2
2. The student demonstrates the ability to work effectively with distressful emotions (her/his own emotions and the emotions of others).	N	0	1	2
3. The student demonstrates appropriate self-control in relationships with faculty, peers, and others.	N	0	1	2

4. The student demonstrates a capacity for understanding the influence others have on his/her development and are willing to explore his/her own emotions, behavior, and cognitions in order to enhance self-awareness and knowledge.	N	0	1	2
5. The student demonstrates analysis and resolution of ethical dilemmas.	N	0	1	2

Appearance

1. The student presents a professional image and demeanor at field placement sites.	N	0	1	2
2. The student demonstrates oral and written language skills consistent with graduate level education.	N	0	1	2
3. The student appropriately represents the field of counseling and the university.	N	0	1	2

COMMENTS:

Student Signature

Date

Faculty Signature

Date

Remediation Plan

(To accompany the Counseling Student Performance Evaluation if necessary.)

Student: _____

Date: _____

Remediation Plan:

Follow-up appointment: _____

Faculty Signature

Grade Grievance and Appeal Process

A student with a grievance regarding a final course grade should attempt to resolve the issue by conferring with the course instructor.

If the student remains dissatisfied after meeting with the instructor, he /she may then meet with the department head. If still dissatisfied with the outcome, he/she may file a formal, written appeal with the appropriate Academic Dean (College Dean or Dean of Graduate Studies) within 14 university business days of the grade posting.

The student must utilize the Grade Appeal Petition available in the Academic Dean's office.

The Academic Dean (College Dean) will forward the formal, written appeal to the Director of University Initiatives.

The Director of University Initiatives will examine the student's written appeal to determine whether the student has established by credible evidence that, if left uncontested, would establish a reasonable case of unfair academic evaluation. Further action may occur resulting in a formal hearing to resolve the grade/grades in question.

Please see <https://tamut.edu/student-affairs/files/student-conduct-code.pdf> for a more detailed description of the process.

Non-Academic Grievance Procedure

Students or faculty who has a grievance regarding student conduct exclusive of academic performance should bring his grievance to the attention of the Vice President for Student and Academic Support Services (VP-SASS).

1. VP-SASS will confer with the student involved in the questionable behavior to ascertain the circumstances of the infraction.
2. After speaking with both parties involved in the disturbance, the VP-SASS may place the student on immediate disciplinary probation if the VP-SASS has determined that the student's behavior violates acceptable University conduct. Acceptable University conduct is defined as behavior compatible with University campus standards. If disclosure of a criminal nature is suspected, a representative of the University police and/or Texarkana Police Department will be contacted immediately for possible intervention.
3. When placed on disciplinary probation, the student will be notified, in writing, by the VPSASS. If unacceptable behavior continues or recurs at a later time, a student on disciplinary probation will be considered subject to suspension immediately following a hearing. In extreme cases, a student may be placed on suspension as the result of a first infraction if the severity of the infraction warrants suspension. The decision to render a

suspension will always follow a hearing to ensure that the student's right of due process is protected.

4. A student who is on disciplinary probation and who continues to engage in unacceptable behavior will be summoned to a hearing prior to suspension. The Hearing Committee will be comprised of a faculty member not involved in the disturbance, a representative staff or faculty member selected by the Student Affairs Council and the VP-SASS. Persons witnessing the breach of University campus standards will be asked to present a description. The student who is on probation must be present and may choose to bring another student enrolled in A&M-Texarkana to the hearing with him or her. The accompanying student may attend but not participate in the hearing.
5. As a result of information brought forth in the hearing, the VP-SASS, on recommendation of the Committee, may suspend the student from the University. This suspension will be for a designated period of time.
6. Subsequent problems after readmission from suspension will be reviewed in the same manner; however, the recommendation may then be expulsion rather than a subsequent suspension.
7. The decision of the VP-SASS and the Hearing Committee may be appealed to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs.
8. All records concerning the actions taken in grievance procedures will be kept on file by the VP-SASS.
9. A suspended or expelled student who has been officially withdrawn from the University will receive no refund of tuition and fees.

Sexual Harassment Policy

The employment and educational environment throughout A&M -Texarkana shall be free from all forms of sexual discrimination and sexual harassment. Conduct constituting sexual harassment is specifically prohibited and will result in appropriate sanctions. Sexual harassment, as defined in Section 39-03 of the Texas Penal Code, is a Class A misdemeanor and a violation of State and Federal statutes.

Sexual harassment means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, submission to which is made a condition of a person's exercise of enjoyment of any right, privilege, power, or immunity, either explicitly or implicitly.

Further definition and clarification may be found in System Policy 08.01 *Civil Rights Protections and Compliance*. This policy may be obtained through the Human Resource/Civil Rights Protection Officer or the Vice President for Student Engagement and Success.

A student having a complaint of sexual harassment may be directed to the Director of Student Services. An informal complaint is intended to result in the resolution of the complaint and an immediate halt of the unwelcome behavior. If the offending behavior does not cease, a formal complaint may be filed in writing with the Human Resource/Civil Rights Protection Officer or the Vice President for Student Engagement and Success.

For more information about student conduct see <https://tamut.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct/index.html> and for student complaints go to <https://tamut.edu/student-affairs/complaints.html>.

VI. DEGREE PLAN

Degree: Master of Science Major: Clinical Mental Health (60 SCH)

Purpose of the Degree Program

The required courses of this program meet current eligibility requirements of the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors and the Arkansas Board of Examiners in Counseling. Students completing this program of study satisfy the academic requirements to sit for the state licensing exam. The Clinical Mental Health program is also compliant with standards set forth by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

Prerequisite Courses

PSY 316 Abnormal Psychology (Prereq. for PSY 503)

PSYC 2317 Statistical Methods in Psychology (Prereq. for PSY 560 or equivalent)

Major Courses

COUN 510 Counseling Theories

COUN 511 Introduction to Counseling Services

COUN 512 Career Development & Information

COUN 516 Pre-Practicum

COUN 520 Counseling Diverse Populations

COUN 525 Practicum

COUN 526 Internship (6 SCH)

COUN 528 Group Procedures in Counseling

COUN 541 Counseling the Counseling the Substance Abuser: Prevention, Intervention and Treatment

COUN 585 Crisis Intervention: Theory & Practice

PSY 503 Psychology of Behavior Disorders

PSY 540 Research Literature and Techniques

PSY 543 Human Growth and Development

PSY 560 Clinical Assessment

PSY 575 Ethics in Counseling & Psychology

PSY 578 Marriage & Family Therapy

PSY 579 Psychopharmacology for Counselors

6 SCH Electives in Counseling or Psychology

Suggested Electives

COUN 540 Introduction to Play Therapy

COUN 536 Introduction to Trauma Counseling

COUN 538 Advanced Counseling Theories

COUN 534 Child & Adolescent Counseling

COUN 542 Assessment and Treatment of Addictive Disorders

COUN 543 Core Functions and Competencies of Addiction Counseling

PSY 545 Human Sexual Behavior

VII. MASTER SCHEDULE

Courses required to complete the degree programs may not be offered every semester. This is a list of the semesters when these courses are routinely scheduled to be taught. Students should plan their scheduling of courses to ensure the course will be offered in time for graduation.

COURSES	SEMESTER			
	Fall	Spring	Summer 1	Summer 2
Required Courses				
COUN 510 Counseling Theories	X			
COUN 511 Introduction to Counseling Services	X			
COUN 512 Career Development and Information	X			
COUN 516 Pre-Practicum	X	X		
COUN 520 Counseling Diverse Populations		X		
COUN 525 Practicum	X	X		
COUN 526 Internship	X	X		
COUN 528 Group Procedures in Counseling			X	
COUN 541 Counseling the Substance Abuser		X		
COUN 585 Crisis Intervention: Theory and Practice	X			
PSY 503 Psychology of Behavior Disorders	X			
PSY 540 Research Literature and Techniques		X		
PSY 543 Human Growth and Development			X	
PSY 560 Clinical Assessment		X		
PSY 575 Ethics in Counseling and Psychology		X		
PSY 578 Marriage and Family Therapy		X		
PSY 579 Psychopharmacology for Counselors	X			
Elective Courses				
COUN 540 Introduction to Play Therapy		Even		
COUN 536 Introduction to Trauma Counseling		Even		
COUN 538 Advanced Counseling Theories				X
COUN 534 Child & Adolescent Counseling				Odd
COUN 542 Assessment and Treatment of Addictive Disorders		X		
COUN 543 Core Functions and Competencies of Addiction Counseling			X	
PSY 545 Human Sexual Behavior	X			

VIII. PLAN OF STUDY

Clinical Mental Health – Three Year Degree Plan

Students should note all courses are offered once per calendar year with the exception of counseling skills courses such as pre-practicum, practicum, and internship, which are offered every fall and spring semester. Additionally, some courses are only offered once every two years; these include: COUN 534 (odd years), COUN 536 (odd years), and COUN 540 (even years).

It is pertinent that you meet with your advisor every semester to make sure you are following your degree plan. It is ultimately your responsibility to follow these guidelines to remain on target to graduate.

PLAN OF STUDY

Degree Program Courses	Credit Hours	Semester/Year
Pre-requisite Courses		
PSY 316 Abnormal Psychology ¹	3	
PSYC 2317 Statistical Methods in Psychology ²	3	
Major Courses		
COUN 510 Counseling Theories	3	
COUN 511 Introduction to Counseling Services	3	
COUN 512 Career Development and Information	3	
COUN 516 Pre-Practicum	3	
COUN 520 Counseling Diverse Populations	3	
COUN 525 Practicum	3	
COUN 526 Internship	6	
COUN 528 Group Procedures in Counseling	3	
COUN 541 Counseling the Substance Abuser	3	
COUN 585 Crisis Intervention: Theory and Practice	3	
PSY 503 Psychology of Behavior Disorders	3	
PSY 540 Research Literature and Techniques	3	
PSY 543 Human Growth and Development	3	
PSY 560 Clinical Assessment	3	
PSY 575 Ethics in Counseling and Psychology	3	
PSY 578 Marriage and Family Therapy	3	
PSY 579 Psychopharmacology for Counselors	3	
Elective Course 1 (Refer to handbook)	3	
Elective Course 2 (Refer to handbook)	3	
Minimum Hours for Degree	60	

1 Prereq for PSY 503

2 Prereq for PSY 560

IX. TRANSFER OF ACADEMIC CREDIT

Prospective and Current Students:

Students may transfer up to 12 semester hours for credit throughout their enrollment in the graduate program. Should the student request some of their course work to be carried over for course credit, program faculty will review it after acceptance to the program. At this time, faculty will determine if the course work meets the standards and criteria for acceptance. Prospective students should be aware that admission to the program does not guarantee prior course work will be accepted.

Students who are accepted to the clinical mental health counseling program must gain approval from counseling program faculty prior to enrollment of a course at another institution to gain credit for the course. Clinical mental health students should note, coursework from CACREP accredited institutions are preferred over non-CACREP courses as suitable substitutions for our courses. However, each case is different. For this reason, program faculty will review the syllabi and the university program in which it was earned, as well as when it was earned. Experiential skills courses, such as pre-practicum, practicum, and internship must be taken from TAMUT's counseling program.

Continuing Education Credit:

A&M-Texarkana's clinical mental health counseling program faculty welcomes students requesting post-master's degree course work. Students who have a desire to enroll in course work after the completion of a master's degree will be asked to submit a copy of their academic transcript of the master's degree earned and/or professional license/certification prior to enrollment.

X. PRACTICUM AND INTERNSHIP

The Practicum and Internship provide community-based counseling experiences in which students have direct supervision in individual and group counseling and a variety of experiences to prepare the student for the chosen area of practice. These courses are the capstone courses for the Counseling degree and prepare students for counseling in the workplace.

Students must earn a B or better in the prerequisite courses in order to take COUN 525.

Students must complete an application for admission to COUN 525 and submit the application to Dr. Karen Parker, Practicum/Internship Coordinator. For admission to the fall semester the application must be completed and turned in by March 1st. For admission to the spring semester the application must be completed and turned in by October 1st. A copy of the application is in the back of the handbook or can be requested from Dr. Parker.

Course Descriptions:

Practicum (COUN 525): Experience in applying counseling skills and techniques under supervision in placement settings. Students who are working a full-time job, should only register for two other courses when taking Practicum due to the intensive workloads involved with this course.

Prerequisites:

COUN 510, COUN 511, COUN 516, COUN 528, PSY 503, PSY 543, and PSY 575 all with a grade of B or better. Students may take COUN 512, PSY 560, COUN 585, and COUN 541 concurrently with Practicum and must have prior approval of Practicum/Internship Coordinator prior to enrolling.

Internship (COUN 526): Advanced field experience in applying counseling skills and techniques under supervision in placement settings. Students who are working a full-time job should only register for one other course when taking Internship due to the intensive workload involved with this course.

Prerequisites:

COUN 512, COUN 525, COUN 541, COUN 585, and PSY 560. Students enrolling in internship must have consent of the program faculty.

PRIOR APPROVAL

To enroll in Practicum, students must submit an application to the Internship Coordinator, Dr. Karen Parker. Students wishing to change their field placement site for the following semester must also submit an application noting the change. Students who maintain the same field placement throughout all semesters of field placement do not have to submit a second application. The deadline for submitting the practicum/internship application is March 1 for fall semesters and October 1 for spring semesters. After transcripts have been examined to verify that all prerequisites have been met and the student has been determined to be eligible to take these courses, the student will: a.) talk to the Internship Coordinator who will work with the student to find an appropriate placement if the student is not able to find one, b.) interview at the internship site to finalize placement, and c.) receive appropriate background checks and orientation in coordination with the placement sites.

LIABILITY INSURANCE

For Practicum and Internship, students are required to purchase liability insurance with the Health Care Providers Service Organization (HPSO) through the Texas Counseling Association or American Counseling Association. Student members of TCA (\$70 student membership fee) can purchase liability insurance for \$18 (total costs = \$88). Student members of ACA (\$105 student membership fee) receive FREE liability insurance coverage with their membership. Students must have liability insurance prior to seeing clients. Liability insurance is not provided by A&M-Texarkana. All students must show proof of liability insurance to the instructor at the beginning of the term. Failure to show proof of insurance will result in being dropped from the course.

PRACTICUM & INTERNSHIP COURSE HOURS

I. Clinical Mental Health Requirements: There are a total of 100 clock hours (40 direct client contact) in Practicum over one semester and 600 clock hours for Internship (240 direct client contact) over two semesters.

Practicum - 48 classroom hours (group supervision) + 100 hours onsite (15 weeks of 7 hours per week).

Internship - 48 classroom hours (group supervision) + 600 hours onsite (30 weeks of 20 hours per week). Students must take two separate semesters of internship with an average of 300 hours per semester. Internship cannot be taken concurrently with practicum.

SETTINGS FOR THE PRACTICUM & INTERNSHIP

1. Community Healthcore
2. Southwest Arkansas Counseling and Mental Health Center
3. Bowie County Women’s Recovery Center
4. Bowie County Adult Probation
5. Haven Homes for Men (male counselors)
6. Haven Homes for Women (female counselors)
7. Genesis Prime Care
8. Day Springs Treatment Center
9. Methodist Counseling Center of Magnolia
10. Arkansas Counseling and Psychodiagnostics
11. Zen Gee Counseling Services
12. Cornerstone Counseling Services
13. Pediatric Family Counseling
14. Other settings in which a licensed mental health professional can supervise the intern can be considered for placement.

APPLICATION FOR PRACTICUM/INTERNSHIP

Counseling 525

Application for Admission to Practicum/Change of Site

Date: _____

Deadline for Fall: March 1

Deadline for Spring: October 1

Student Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

_____ Zip code: _____

e-mail address: _____

1. What semester and year would you like to begin practicum?

Fall _____ (year) or Spring _____ (year)

2. In which state(s) do you plan on pursuing licensure?

Texas Arkansas Other: _____

3. Will you need assistance in locating a practicum site or do you already have a site in mind?

If you need assistance, what population type do you want to work with (children, adolescents, adults, substance abuse, criminal offenders, etc.)? _____

4. Have you completed the prerequisite courses required for COUN 525? See below.

COUN 510, 511, 516, PSY 503 and PSY 575,

The following courses may be taken concurrently COUN 541, and PSY 560 & 585 may be taken concurrently with COUN 525.

I have completed all the required prerequisite courses: Yes or No

If no, I will complete the required courses prior to the semester I am requesting to begin COUN 525: Yes or No

XI. COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Counseling (COUN)

- 510. Counseling Theories.** Surveys the major theories of counseling and psychotherapy with emphasis on the application of these theories to counseling situations.
- 511. Introduction to Counseling Services.** Introduces students to the scope and purposes of the counseling profession. Standards of preparation, codes of ethics, professional organizations, licensure and certification requirements will be studied. The importance of the essential characteristics of effective therapists will be examined.
- 512. Career Development and Information.** Combines the use of current career information and career development theories in career counseling. Provides an overview of evaluating educational, occupational, and personal-social information for career development. The course will cover the nature of work, the dynamics of vocational choice and development, psychological and sociological factors in job selection, manpower trends, occupational surveys, job analysis, and recent publications dealing with these topics. May be taken concurrently with COUN 525 for Elementary School emphasis.
- 516. Pre-Practicum.** Supervised experience in individual counseling will be provided in a laboratory setting. Demonstration of professional standards, counseling, skills and personal characteristics appropriate to the counseling relationship is expected. This course must be taken in the first 12 hours of coursework.
- 517. Assessment in Counseling.** Integrates theory and practice related to the use of standardized aptitude, achievement, and interest tests. The utilization of appraisal data for educational and vocational advising, placement and follow-up will be covered. Experience will be gained in the administration and interpretation of selected aptitude, achievement and interest assessments.
- 520. Counseling Diverse Populations.** Focuses on the multicultural issues that may arise within the context of counseling clients. The course is designed to raise students' awareness of their own values and their clients' values, how these values may differ in the areas of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and socio-economic class, and how these differences may impact the therapeutic relationship.
- 523. School Counseling.** Provides an overview of school and vocational counseling programs. An in-depth study of the functions of school counselors will be provided which includes counseling, consulting, coordinating and assessment services. Students will learn how to develop a comprehensive school counseling program, working with and serving students, teachers, staff and administration.
- 525. Practicum.** Experience in applying counseling skills and techniques under supervision in placement settings. Graded on a (S) satisfactory or (U) unsatisfactory basis. Students must earn a grade of "B" or better on prerequisite courses to be considered for admission to this

class. Prerequisites: COUN 510, 511, 516, PSY 503, 543 and 575. PSY 560, COUN 541, and COUN 585 may be taken concurrently with Practicum. COUN 512 may be taken concurrently with Practicum. Offered Fall and Spring semesters. Must have prior approval program faculty.

- 526. Internship.** Advanced field experience in applying counseling skills and techniques under supervision in placement settings. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor. Graded on a (S) satisfactory or (U) unsatisfactory basis. Prerequisite for CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH Option: COUN 512, 525, and 528. NOTE: Students who are working a full-time job must register for no more than two other courses when taking Internship.
- 528. Group Procedures in Counseling.** Examines the dynamics of group process and practice with emphasis on theory and techniques of group leadership. Research paper on theory, procedure or issues in group counseling is required. Prerequisite: COUN 511, 516 and permission of the instructor.
- 530. Bereavement Counseling.** An in-depth study in counseling individuals who are coping with significant losses, dying and death. Counseling theories and approaches, which assist people through the grief process, will be highlighted. Prerequisite: COUN 516.
- 534. Counseling Children and Adolescents.** This course is a didactic and experiential course that prepares students to work with the special needs of children and adolescents. This course will focus on developmental needs, specific therapeutic interventions, and common emotional issues of children and adolescents. Group and individual counseling techniques will be practiced, and treatment options will be covered. Prerequisite: COUN 516.
- 536. Introduction to Trauma Counseling.** This course provides an introduction to working with populations who have experienced trauma. The focus of the course is assisting counselors in training to become familiar with the symptoms, evaluation, and treatment processes associated with trauma. The course requires basic knowledge of crisis intervention, assessment, and counseling skills.
- 540. Introduction to Play Therapy.** This course is designed to (1) assist those who work with children in understanding the fundamental tenets of play therapy, (2) help participants develop an effective philosophy of and approach to play therapy, (3) increase participants understanding of the inner world and behavior of children, (4) help students connect with children on a feeling level, (5) promote self-awareness and self-understanding, (6) increase participants' understanding of child development, particularly with children ages three to nine, (7) enhance participants' sensitivity to and acceptance of others, and (8) equip students with beginning level play therapy skills. Prerequisite: COUN 516.
- 541. Counseling the Substance Abuser: Prevention, Intervention, and Treatment.** This course is based on the fundamental assumption that substance abusers and their families are a heterogeneous group and must be treated from an individualized perspective. Clients dealing with substance abuse issues vary in their behavior patterns, the physical effects of drugs on them, and the life consequences of their drinking or other drug use, their personality, their

social environment, gender, culture, and other life-span variables. Counseling strategies need to fit the goals and needs of the individual client. The counselor must develop the skills needed to work either as a substance abuse specialist or as a generalist who must sometimes address substance abuse problems/issues. Each student will be able to describe the history and scope of drug use in the United States, developmental correlates, and cultural differences affecting drug and substance abuse. Students will be able to document their understanding of drugs and addictions, recovery, and social problems with citations from current research. Prerequisite: COUN 511.

- 542. Assessment and Treatment of Addictive Disorders.** Prerequisite: COUN 541. This is an advanced course in addictions treatment with emphasis on the practical application of knowledge of addictions to help develop skills and attitudes expected of addiction professionals. Emphasis will be placed on the core functions of addiction counselors and the competencies modes of addiction.
- 543. Core Functions and Competencies of Addiction Counseling.** Prerequisite: COUN 541 and COUN 542. This is an advanced course in addictions treatment with emphasis on the practical application of knowledge of addictions to help develop skills and attitudes expected of addiction professionals. Emphasis will be placed on the core functions of addiction counselors and the competencies model of addiction.
- 585. Crisis Intervention: Theory and Practice.** This course is an overview of crisis intervention. Major theoretical models of situational crises are examined and operationalized across a variety of service delivery systems. Students will develop conceptual competency necessary for professionals engaged in crisis interventions. Special emphasis is given to contemporary research in suicidology, disaster psychology, and crisis management for public schools. Topics of discussion include emergency situations such as natural disasters, terrorism, school violence, abuse, and crisis interventions with diverse populations. Prerequisite: COUN 516.
- 589. Independent Study.** Individual instruction. May be repeated when topics vary.
- 597. Special Topics.** Organized class. May be repeated when topics vary. Special courses designed to cover areas of specific interest.

Psychology (PSY)

- 503. Psychology of Behavior Disorders.** Prepares students to diagnose psychological disorders using the current diagnostic manual. Videotape cases will be used to illustrate the various types of disorders. Attention will also be given to gathering relevant information from the clinical interview, psychometrics, and other sources to assist in the diagnostic process. Prerequisite: PSY 316 or equivalent.
- 516. Psychological Theories of Learning.** Surveys the various theories of learning from classical and operant conditioning to cognitive developmental models and information processing. Emphasizes application of appropriate theories to real life situations.

- 540. Research Literature and Techniques.** Review and research studies produced by investigators in student's major field with emphasis on investigative and verification techniques employed. Demonstrate competence in using systematic research techniques by investigation and formal reporting of a problem. (Replaces IS 595 for Counseling Psychology majors.)
- 543. Human Growth and Development.** Examines physical, cognitive and psychosexual development across the human life span. Emphasis is given to the complex process that grows out of the interactions between a changing person and a changing world that continues throughout the entire life span.
- 545. Human Sexual Behavior.** Examines biological capabilities, psychological characteristics and social and cultural influences on human sexual behavior. The course emphasizes the diversity of sexual learning, attitudes and values. Students who have already completed PSY 445 are not eligible for this course. (Cross-listed with PSY 445.)
- 560. Clinical Assessment.** This course provides students with historical perspective concerning the nature and meaning of assessment. It addresses basic concepts of standardized and non-standardized methods of clinical assessment for a variety of clinical settings. Also addressed are the statistical and psychometric concepts of reliability and validity. The student will learn how the Mental Status Exam, Clinical Interview and MMPI-2 are used in clinical settings and how to perform these assessments complete to report writing. The student will learn how to evaluate the quality of testing instruments. Issues of diversity and ethical strategies for selecting, administering and interpreting assessment and evaluation instruments is addressed). Prerequisite PSYC 2317 or equivalent.
- 575. Ethics in Counseling and Psychology.** Explores the range of ethical issues that professionals may encounter within the field of psychology. Through lecture, discussion, reading, and role-plays, students will explore such issues as ethical codes and ethical decision-making, boundaries of competence, confidentiality, dual relationships, insurance/third party payments, advertising, assessment, teaching, therapy and research.
- 578. Marriage and Family Therapy.** An examination of the application of relationship counseling theory to the study of marital systems and the application of family systems theory to the study of family dynamics. The focus will be on structural, strategic and system approaches. A combination of didactic and experiential methods is employed. Students are expected to be involved in role-playing and strategic exercises.
- 579. Psychopharmacology for Counselors.** The course is a basic introduction to psychopharmacology non-medical counselors. Basic neuropsychological principles will be discussed and applied to relevant diagnostic groups involving various classes of psychopharmacological medications. The course will help counselors to understand client issues that pertain to psychopharmacology. It will equip the counselor-in-training to better understand psychopharmacology and to interact with medical personnel who prescribe psychotherapeutic medications. This training will allow counselors to understand how medications are used and how the application of various psychopharmacological medications can affect the counseling process.

- 589. Individual Study.** Individual instruction. May be repeated when topics vary.
- 597. Special Topics.** Organized class. May be repeated when topics vary. Special courses designed to cover areas of specific interest.

XII. CREDENTIALING INFORMATION

It is recommended that students seek information from the professional licensing or credentialing board or authority relevant to their chosen field to guide their planning for completion of all necessary steps toward becoming a licensed counselor. State board information

Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors, Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council, 1801 Congress Ave., Ste. 7.300 | Austin, Texas 78701. 512-305-7700 Or 800-821-3205.
<https://www.bhec.texas.gov/texas-state-board-of-examiners-of-professional-counselors/index.html>

Arkansas Board of Examiners in Counseling, 101 E. Capitol Ave #202, Little Rock, AR 72201, 501-683-5800.
<https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programs-services/topics/arkansas-state-board-of-examiners-in-counseling>

Recommendations

Upon graduation, and after a passing score on credentialing examination, students are eligible to apply for professional licensure or certification. The faculty may assist students with the application process and may endorse students for such credentials. The faculty may also complete the paperwork attesting to the completion of Practicum/Internship experiences needed for eligibility for such credentials.

Faculty may also be asked to complete letters of recommendation for the application process to other degrees (e.g., doctoral degrees) or for job applications and employment. Students should note, faculty are not required to endorse all candidates who graduate from the clinical mental health counseling program. Students hoping to receive recommendations should be mindful of all academic and professional behaviors throughout their work in the graduate program.

XIII. PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS & LICENSING BOARDS

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling program encourages students to become members of professional organizations and honors societies. Membership in these organizations help students to develop their professional counseling identity, improve their counseling knowledge and skills, and cultivate ethical practice in the counseling profession.

Chi Sigma Iota is the international honor society of professional counseling. CSI was created for students in counseling, counselor educators, and professional counselors who are dedicated to elevating the counseling profession through research and service. CSI’s mission is to promote scholarship, research, professionalism, leadership and excellence in counseling, and to recognize high attainment in the pursuit of academic and clinical excellence in the profession of counseling. TAMUT’s chapter to CSI is Delta Gamma Sigma. Counseling students are eligible for membership once they have completed 9 semester hours of study in Counseling and have earned a 3.5 GPA or better. Students will be contacted once they are eligible for membership. For more information about Chi Sigma Iota and what it has to offer, go to the following website: <http://www.csi-net.org>

Professional organizations, state licensing boards, and state employment resources are listed in the chart below.

<p>American Counseling Association P.O. Box 31110 Alexandria, VA 22310-9110 800-347-6647 https://www.counseling.org</p>	<p>National Board of Certified Counselors 3 Terrace Way Greensboro, North Carolina 27403 336-547-0607 https://www.nbcc.org</p>
<p>Texas Counseling Association 1210 San Antonio St #200 Austin, TX 78701 512-472-3403 www.txca.org</p>	<p>Arkansas Counseling Association PO Box 1321 Arkadelphia, AR 71923 1-870-345-9308 https://www.arcounseling.org</p>
<p>Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors Texas Dept. of Health 1801 Congress Ave., Ste. 7.300 Austin, Texas 78701512-305-7700 https://www.bhec.texas.gov/texas-state-board-of-examiners-of-professional-counselors/index.html</p>	<p>Arkansas Board of Examiners in Counseling 101 E. Capitol Ave. #202 Little Rock, AR 72201 501-683-5800 https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programs-services/topics/arkansas-state-board-of-examiners-in-counseling</p>
<p>Employment Resources: Texas Workforce Commission (Search Scientific Technical Positions) www.twc.state.tx.us</p>	<p>Employment Resources: Arkansas Department of Workforce Services http://dws.arkansas.gov</p>

XIV. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program:

What is CACREP?

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP) is an independent agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation to accredit master and doctoral programs in counseling related fields. CACREP programs demonstrate a commitment to meeting the highest academic standards. For information pertaining to the advantages of attending a CACREP program, please visit <https://www.cacrep.org>.

Does the student need to find their own practicum and internship site?

Because students need to submit the appropriate paperwork prior to registering for practicum and internship, a student will be provided with possible sites which fit their interests. TAMUT, Counseling Faculty will assist students in this process.

Is there a way to visit several sites before choosing one for practicum and internship?

Yes, graduate students can visit several internship sites prior to choosing one. After speaking with the TAMUT counseling faculty, it is recommended for graduate students to set an appointment to speak with possible practicum/internship site supervisors.

Is the internship at the same site as the practicum or can it be at a different site?

Yes, practicum and internship may be at the same site, but they may not be taken simultaneously. However, graduate students should consider taking practicum and internship at different placement sites to expand levels of experiences.

What is the best way to prepare and study for the Comprehensive Exam?

The best way to prepare for the comprehensive exam is to study material covered in your counseling coursework. This includes reviewing syllabi, tests, quizzes, papers, etc. Some students have found it helpful to review Rosenthal's (2007) Encyclopedia of Counseling; however, this should not be used as a primary tool. It is recommended, that students begin preparing for the comprehensive exam at the beginning of their graduate studies.

What is the minimum GPA requirement to stay in the program?

Students must attain a course grade of "B" or better in all courses for the degree. Students who earn a "C" in any course must retake the course the next time it is offered at A&M-Texarkana. Students must maintain the university's required cumulative grade point average of 3.00 every semester while enrolled in the Clinical Mental Health Program at TAMUT. For additional information current and prospective students should refer the Retention-Dismissal Policy in Counseling Student Handbook.

What grade must I have for each class to satisfy licensure requirements?

Most counseling licensing boards expect a grade of "B" or better on all required courses for licensure. Please, check the state licensing board where you intend to apply for licensure.

How many credit hours can be transferred from another university?

Students can transfer up to 12 graduate hours from another university. However, all hours transferred must be approved by faculty. The faculty reserves the right to not accept graduate credit hours from other universities. Prior to registering for a course offered at another university, the student should meet with his/her faculty advisor.

✦ ***How long will this program take me if I only take two courses per semester?***

As of July 1, 2013, CACREP requires graduates to receive 60 semester hours. By taking only two courses a semester, the student will attend approximately 10 semesters, given program standards and grade point average standards are met. As a result, students who register for courses each semester (including summer) can graduate in approximately three-to-four years.

✦ ***When should I plan to do practicum and internship?***

Practicum must be taken after core courses and prior to internship. Graduate students should schedule a meeting with their faculty advisor to determine which semester practicum should be taken. Students should plan on taking internship the last year of their graduate studies.

✦ ***Where do I take the comprehensive exam?***

The comprehensive exam is offered on campus. The department will notify students of the information pertaining to date, time, and location via letter and/or during the internship course.

✦ ***What are the recommended classes for CACREP accreditation?***

CACREP requires coursework in the following areas which meet specific criteria: 1) Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice, 2) Social and Cultural Diversity, 3) Human Growth and Development, 4) Career Development, 5) Helping Relationships, 6) Group Work, 7) Assessment, and 8) Research and Program Evaluation. Students should refer to the Counseling Student Handbook for the list of courses offered and meet with their faculty advisor prior to registering.

✦ ***Is there a recommended order that classes should be taken in?***

Yes, there are prerequisites for specific courses. Students should refer to the graduate handbook for the list of prerequisites, recommended order of courses, and speak with their faculty advisor prior to registering.

✦ ***What other requirements are there to practice counseling in addition to coursework, comprehensive exam, and licensure exam?***

Different licensing boards have different requirements. Students should refer to the state licensing board website where they plan to apply for licensure.

✦ ***Is there a difference between internship and practicum? Can they be taken in the same semester?*** Yes, there is a difference between practicum and internship hours and the requirements. No, these courses cannot be taken simultaneously.

✦ ***What will I need to score on the Comprehensive exam to pass?***

To pass the comprehensive exam, students must answer a minimum of 65% of the questions correctly and pass six out of eight course sections. Students may take the exam a maximum of two times. If failed a second time, the exam may not be taken again without special permission of the Dean of the College.

How do I get the insurance I need for practicum and internship?

Through becoming a member of the Texas Counseling Association (TCA) American Counseling Association (ACA). As a student member, you are eligible to purchase insurance through the Healthcare Providers Service Organization (HPSO).

Does TAMUT have a program to assist me with finding a job after graduation?

TAMUT does not have a specific program to assist students with finding a job after graduation. However, many graduates have made contacts within the mental health field as a result of the graduate program and internship experiences.

Licensure:

Will I be able to use this program for licensure in any state?

Yes, you will be able to use coursework completed at TAMUT toward licensure within any state in the United States. However, on occasion, some states have additional requirements that go beyond graduate course work. The student/graduate should refer to the state's licensure requirements for the state in which they are seeking licensure.

Should I have a specific area of focus?

Students are encouraged to take elective and additional courses in a specific area of interest in their graduate studies. Though not a requirement of all coursework, graduates with specific areas of focus can enhance their skills and can stand out in the field of mental health.

After graduation when can I take the test to become licensed/certified?

Graduates of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program must register prior to taking the National Counselor Examination (NCE) for licensure and national certification. Information regarding registration and taking the NCE can be found at <http://www.nbcc.org/nce>.

When is the state board exam given in Texas? And when is it given in Arkansas?

The states of Texas and Arkansas require a passing score on the National Counselor Examination (NCE). For more information go to <http://www.nbcc.org/nce>.

What do I have to do to keep my license renewed? How much does it cost every year?

Information regarding licensure renewal can be found on the state's website in which licensure is held. Initial and renewal cost vary from state to state.

How do I find someone to supervise my 3000 hours after I graduate?

Graduates can find a board approved supervisor by going to the state licensing board website and viewing current supervisors in good standing. Because of the nature of this professional relationship, graduates are encouraged to interview several supervisors to ensure a good fit, much like a client would interview a counselor.

Is the ratio of supervision per worked hours different in Texas and Arkansas?

No, in both Texas and Arkansas, counselor interns are required to have a minimum of one hour of face-to-face supervision per week regardless of counseling and/or working hours.

How much should I expect to pay someone to supervise me?

Because counselor supervisors take professional responsibility for counseling interns, they set their own fee for supervision. The cost of supervision varies in accordance with location. Counselor interns should be prepared to pay anywhere from \$75 -\$150 per hour of supervision. Some counseling agencies will pay for supervision.

✦ Does the Clinical Mental Health Program Faculty assist in finding placement for the required 3000 hours for licensure?

Graduates are responsible for finding their own site to accrue the required 3000 hours. However, clinical mental health faculty may provide suggestions or have knowledge of available sites. Furthermore, many graduates of TAMUT have made contacts within the mental health field as a result of the graduate program and internship experiences.

✦ Who do I contact to determine if a class can be transferred from another university to count toward Arkansas or Texas licensure?

In efforts to determine if a class can be transferred from another university to count toward Arkansas or Texas licensure, students should contact the board for that state. Because other universities must submit paperwork and be granted approval prior to the course being taken, it is recommended that students check with ABEC prior to registering for courses at universities other than TAMUT or Universities in Arkansas.

✦ When I graduate how many different tests do I have to take from the time of graduation to licensure?

Graduates will need to take the National Counselor Examination (NCE) and may be required to take additional exams such the Oral Exam and/or Jurisprudence Exam (Arkansas) or Jurisprudence Exam (Texas). Because requirements vary from state to state, graduates must refer to the licensing board's website for additional information.

✦ How do I study for the licensing exam?

Graduates can find resources to assist them in preparing for the NCE on the NBCC website:

<http://www.nbcc.org/nce>.

In addition, graduates have also found success studying Rosenthal's (2007) Encyclopedia of Counseling.

XV. FACULTY PROFILES

CORE COUNSELING FACULTY

Joy Hutchinson, Ph.D.

Program Coordinator

Assistant Professor of Counselor Education

Telephone: 903-223-3027

Email: ester.hutchinson@tamut.edu

University of Memphis, Ph.D.

University of Holy Cross, M.A.

University of Holy Cross, B.S.

South Louisiana Community College, A.A.S.

Dr. Hutchinson earned her Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision from the University of Memphis. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor, Mental Health Service Provider (LPC-MHSP) in the state of Tennessee. She is an advanced Clinical Certified Trauma Professional (CCTP-II) who is active in private practice where she focuses on working with first responders. Dr. Hutchinson's theoretical integrative approach to therapy is based on a melding of solution-focused brief therapy (SFBT) and person-centered practices. She believes that people have the ability to find their own solutions by giving them the opportunity to be heard and connect with another human being.

Dr. Hutchinson's research agenda includes addressing stigma, anxiety, burnout, suicidality, and traumatic stress injuries, and best mental health practices among first responders, counselor professional identity, licensure portability, and gatekeeping. She is an active presenter at research conferences and has published original research papers. She is currently serving on the Crisis, Resilience and First Responder Trauma Training Advisory Council (CRAFT-AC), where they are working to create programs to train counselors who wish to serve first responders.

Dr. Hutchinson was awarded the Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (SACES) grant for her dissertation research *The Lived Experiences of Emergency Medical Technicians in Seeking and Participating in Individual Counseling*. She was also awarded a grant while serving as the Doctoral President on Chi Sigma Iota that was used to create a community event that brought the community and local wellness services together. That same event was later given a service award through Chi Sigma Iota's National office.

Dr. Hutchinson is an active member in several professional organizations such as American Counseling Association (ACA), Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (SACES), Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling (AARC), Tennessee Counseling Association (TCA), Tennessee Licensed Professional Counselors Association (TLPCA), and others.

Angela McCoy Harless, Ph.D.

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Southern Arkansas University, B.M.E.
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University of Arkansas, Ph.D.

Dr. Harless earned her Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision at the University of Arkansas. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor and Supervisor (LPC-S) with certification in Technology Assisted Counseling (TA-S). She has been a licensed counselor for 13 years. She is an active clinician with a private practice, counseling clients of all ages with a wide variety of issues and disorders and supervises newly licensed counselors. Dr. Harless uses a theoretical integrative approach to counseling with a foundation in person-centered and humanistic theories, which includes creative arts therapy, play therapy, and narrative therapies with her clients.

Dr. Harless is committed to research and scholarship pertaining to alternative medicine and holistic interventions for mental health and well-being, the effects of music on emotions and memory, and child and adolescent counseling in impoverished areas and schools. She is the primary author of "Writing and Presenting Research" in the *Handbook of Counseling and Counselor Education*.

Dr. Harless is an active member of the American Counseling Association, Arkansas Counseling Association, the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, and Arkansas Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (former President). She was honored by the Arkansas Counseling Association with the Emerging Leadership Award (2014) and the Roger Herring Research Award (2020).

Karen Parker, Ph.D.

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Louisiana Tech University, B.A.
University of Louisiana-Monroe, M.A.
University of New Orleans, Ph.D.

Dr. Parker is a Licensed Professional Counselor-Supervisor (LPC-S) and a Licensed Marriage and family Therapist (LMFT) in the state of Louisiana. She has previously taught graduate level counseling courses at Southern Arkansas University, and Texas A&M-San Antonio. Dr. Parker began teaching at Texas A&M-Texarkana in the Fall of 2020. She serves as Co-Advisor to the Delta Gamma Sigma Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota, Counseling Academic and Professional Honor Society International

Dr. Parker has extensive clinical experience in family preservation, foster care, at-risk youth, victims of sexual assault and grief counseling. She also has experience in veterans and military family counseling. While teaching at Texas A&M-San Antonio, she developed and served as the program coordinator of the Marriage and Family Therapy with a Military Emphasis Program. While teaching at Southern Arkansas University, Dr. Parker served as the program coordinator for the Clinical and Mental Health Counseling program as well as the coordinator for practicum and internship experiences.

Dr. Parker is actively affiliated with American Counseling Association, Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, Society for Sexual, Affectional, Intersex, and Gender Expansive Identities, Arkansas Counseling Association, and Arkansas Association for Counselor Education and Supervision.

Dr. Parker's research interests include spirituality and affectional orientation, the use of narratives in grief counseling, narrative inquiry in the counseling field, the therapeutic value of auto-ethnographies, and the use of art in research.

ASSISTING FACULTY

Angela M. Sikorski, Ph.D.

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University of Wisconsin Green Bay, B.S.

University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, M.S., Ph.D.

Dr. Sikorski is a neuroscientist who earned her PhD in Experimental Psychology from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee in 2005. She was employed as a postdoctoral fellow in the Neurobiology Laboratory at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) until joining the faculty at Texas A&M University- Texarkana in 2008.

Dr. Sikorski's research interests include studying the extent to which experience alters brain morphology, learning, and memory, as well as the teaching of psychology. Dr. Sikorski's teaching philosophy is based upon her belief that mentorship is critical to the success of students both during and beyond college. As such, at A&M-Texarkana, Dr. Sikorski recruits exceptional students to assist her with her research. Over a dozen students who have worked with Dr. Sikorski have had the opportunity to co-author presentations at both local and national meetings.

Dr. Sikorski is a member of the Society for Neuroscience (SFN) and the program coordinator for the Southwestern Psychological Association (SWPA).

David Yells, Ph.D.

Bellevue University, B.A.

University of Nebraska at Omaha, M.A.

University of Nebraska, Ph.D.

Dr. Yells is a behavioral neuroscientist who earned his PhD in Developmental Psychology from the University of Nebraska in 1994. He completed a postdoctoral fellowship in psychiatry at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. He served as a faculty member, department chair, and Dean at Utah Valley University beginning in 1999. He joined TAMUT as the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs in 2017. He returned to full-time faculty status in 2020.

Dr. Yells' current research interests include the neurobiology of mental illness, with a particular emphasis in Substance Use Disorder. His earlier research focused on reproductive neuroendocrinology and human memory performance. His teaching philosophy is based on Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, in which meeting students at their current level is critical in helping them move forward.



Counseling Program

Graduate Programs of Clinical Mental Health Counseling Statement of Understanding

I, _____ (student name), have received and read the Handbook of Graduate Programs in Counseling for Clinical Mental Health Counseling. I understand the policies and procedures as stated in the handbook, including the Retention/Dismissal Procedure. I agree to fulfill the requirements as stated and to abide by the policies set forth and comply with all applicable state and federal laws and policies, rules, regulations, and procedures of the Texas A&M University System and Texas A&M University-Texarkana.

Additionally, I understand that graduate programs in counseling involve activities and learning experiences that require a certain amount of self-disclosure and personal reflection that may cause some personal discomfort. I also recognize that I am obligated to treat self-disclosure of others with respect and maintain confidentiality of peers who participate in class activities with me.

Furthermore, I acknowledge graduate students enrolled in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling programs are expected to maintain high academic standards and develop the necessary skills required to work with people of diverse needs. Thus, acceptance to the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program does not guarantee fitness for the profession, which is a requirement for continuation in the graduate program. If a faculty member, at any time determines a student's behaviors or attitudes are of concern, he/she may be referred to a faculty staffing to discuss the student's progress.

I agree that the faculty of the Counseling and Psychology Department at Texas A&M University-Texarkana has the right and responsibility to monitor my academic progress, my professional ethical behavior, and my personal characteristics related to counseling and psychology coursework.

Student's Name (Printed)

Date

Student's Signature

Date