Master of Arts in Counseling

The Counselor Education Program within the College of Education and Human Sciences at the University of New Mexico offers both master’s and doctoral degrees that are accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The master’s degree requires a minimum of 60 semester credit hours and is offered in clinical mental health counseling and school counseling areas of focus. Completion of the degree meets the preparatory standards for eligibility in New Mexico as either a licensed mental health counselor (LMHC) or a certified school counselor.

The Counselor Education Mission Statement

The Counselor Education Program prepares students to address the counseling and human development needs of a pluralistic society. The program recruits and retains students who reflect the broad range of diversity found in New Mexico. Students graduate with knowledge and skills in core competency areas that include professional identity, social and cultural foundations, human growth and development, career development, helping relationships, group work, assessment, and research and program evaluation.

The Counselor Education Program features an integration of theory, research, practice, and interdisciplinary collaboration. It is intended to prepare counselors who are informed; who will be sensitive to the diversity and uniqueness of individuals, families, and communities; and who will value and promote the dignity, potential, and well-being of all people. The program prepares professional school and clinical mental health counselors (master’s level) and counselor educators (PhD level) to respond to a world with challenging and pressing social problems.

Faculty members are committed to integrating teaching, scholarship, research, clinical practice, and service, while promoting a climate of social justice, systemic change, and advocacy. The faculty’s goal is to infuse multicultural and diversity training in all aspects of academic and clinical coursework in order to prepare multiculturally competent counselors and counselor educators. From the beginning of the graduate course of study, classroom education is combined with real-world integration and experiences. These experiences provide the opportunity for students to work in and with various educational settings and community agencies.

The Counselor Education Aspirations

Consistent with the goals and vision of UNM and the College of Education and Human Sciences, the Counselor Education Program is committed to promoting excellence and diversity in teaching, scholarship, and community service. Faculty and students work to promote an understanding of human development and psychological health that will improve and foster optimal potential for individuals, families, and our communities.

The program features an integration of theory, research, and practice along with interdisciplinary collaboration that is intended to prepare counselors who are informed; who will be sensitive to the diversity and uniqueness of individuals, families, and communities; and who will value and promote the dignity, potential, and well-being of all people.
Courses Offered

The Counselor Education Program degree requirements are as follows:

_Foundational Core Courses_
COUN 510 Professional Orientation and Ethics
COUN 517 Theories of Counseling and Human Behavior
COUN 518 Group Counseling
COUN 584 Multicultural Issues in the Helping Professions

_Additional Required Core Courses_
COUN 513 Career Counseling
COUN 516 Crisis, Disaster and Trauma Counseling
COUN 577 Substance Use and Abuse
COUN 581 Sexuality in Counseling and Psychotherapy
COUN 515 Testing and Assessment in Counseling
COUN 576 Diagnosis of Mental Disorders
COUN 522 Communication Skills in Counseling
COUN 590 Practicum in Counseling
COUN 519 Group Counseling Internship
COUN 595 Internship (6 credits per area of focus)
EDPY 503 Principles of Human Development or
   FCS 503 Seminar in Human Growth and Development
EDPY 500 Survey of Research Methods in Education or
   EDPY 505 Conducting Quantitative Educational Research
EDPY 502 Survey of Statistics in Education or
   EDPY 511 Introductory Educational Statistics

_School Counseling Focus_
COUN 545 School Counseling
COUN 541 Counseling Children and Adolescents

_Clinical Mental Health Counseling Focus_
COUN 521 Clinical Mental Health Counseling
COUN 560 Family Counseling

Matriculation Requirements

In order to be admitted into the master’s program, students must have a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university in accordance with the requirements of the UNM admissions policies and Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) guidelines and dates. While specific areas of study (majors) are not required, our students most often come from behavioral sciences and human services-related fields such as psychology, social work, and sociology.

A minimum 3.0 overall undergraduate GPA (on a 4.0 scale) is required for admission to the UNM Counselor Education master’s program.
**Application and Admission Procedures**

Please carefully follow the instructions on the application instruction checklist that you can access on the Counselor Education webpage.

Application to the Counselor Education master’s program includes application fee, official transcripts, a completed university application, a letter of intent/personal statement, three recommendations, and a program application.

**Please combine your letter of intent and your program application into one document with a page break and upload to the letter of intent section.**

The master’s degree application does not require the GRE.

Application deadlines are **July 15** for admission in the following spring semester and **December 15** for admission the following fall semester. Students are admitted for the semester for which they are accepted. Deferring admissions requires program faculty approval.

Only those applications that are complete (including all paperwork, fees, transcripts, etc.) will be reviewed. No Exceptions. We recommend you submit all application materials at least two weeks prior to the deadline dates to ensure the processing of your application.

For questions about the Master of Arts in Counseling, please contact the Counselor Education office by calling (505) 277-4535 or emailing ifce@unm.edu. Potential applicants are encouraged to attend information sessions regarding the program.

It is your responsibility to ensure that all application materials have been uploaded to your online application. You may check on the status of your application by logging on to LoboWeb.

**How Your Application Is Evaluated**

Six criteria are applied in evaluating your application. Applications that address each of these issues receive more consideration.

1. **Academic Record and Potential**
   The Graduate School and the Counselor Education Program seek students who have an undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 (B) or greater. Students must have a bachelor’s degree or be in their last semester of their undergraduate program. The only exception to a cumulative 3.0 GPA for the undergraduate degree is having completed a graduate degree with a GPA of 3.0 or greater.

2. **Academic Background**
   We are seeking students who have 18 credit hours of upper division (300–400 level course) undergraduate and/or graduate course work in the behavioral sciences. Courses that can be used to satisfy this requirement include education, psychology, family studies, sociology, anthropology, nursing, and social work, depending on the course content.

3. **Relevant Work Experience**
   We will assess your work/volunteer experience and its relevance to your potential as a counselor. It is to your advantage to tell us about your work/volunteer training including experiences teaching, working in human service settings, providing counseling services, and so forth. Please provide a resume for review.
4. Letters of Recommendation
Three letters of recommendation are required to be submitted via the online application for your application to be considered complete. One recommendation letter must be from a professor and the other two may be either academic or from work supervisors, each of whom can attest to your motivation and potential. You will need to provide the names and emails of the persons from whom you are requesting recommendations. Many referees prefer to write letters on their own stationary; these may be uploaded to your online application. They MUST still complete the numerical ratings on the online application. Personal or character references from friends, clergy, politicians, or family members are usually not rated as highly as detailed letters from individuals who know about the counseling profession and are in a position to judge your professional and academic potential.

5. Letter of Intent/Personal Statement (3 double-spaced pages maximum)
Provide a statement that gives a supporting rationale for pursuing a master’s degree in counseling. Include your long-term and short-term goals, your personal qualities, and characteristics to support your pursuit of the counseling degree. Also discuss your experiences with cultural diversity and cultural background. Limit your statement to three double-spaced pages using 10–12-point font. Please combine your letter of intent and your program application into one document with a page break and upload to the letter of intent section. We consider your statement a sample of the writing we can expect from you as a student.

6. Multicultural Competence
In your personal statement describe your understanding or cultural pluralism. Tell us about your experiences or studies of people from cultures, backgrounds, or beliefs different from your own.

Interview With the Faculty

Typically, about half of the applicants (selected from an initial screening based on the aforementioned criteria) are invited to interview with the faculty. This provides us with the opportunity to meet potential students and for you to expand on your qualifications for admission to the Counselor Education Program.

Disclaimer

The Counselor Education Program complies with UNM admissions policies and OGS guidelines and dates. Admission to the MA or PhD programs in no way guarantees practicum and/or internship placement, licensure, or employment. Additionally, finger printing and background checks may be required for some placements.

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