

Master of Science in Counseling

Within the area of counselor education, the College offers a master's degree, certificate programs, and a post-master's certificate of advanced study. The master of science in counseling degree provides its graduates with the counseling knowledge and skills used in school, clinical mental health, and rehabilitation settings. Students study human development and behavior, individual counseling theory, group theory and dynamics, research methodology, and psychological measurement and evaluation, in addition to courses in individual specialties—school counseling, clinical mental health counseling, and rehabilitation counseling. The Mental Health Rehabilitation Technician/Community (MHRT/C) Certificate Program may be taken independently of the master's degree. The certificate of advanced study in counseling is a post-master's program for current counselors who are interested in pursuing advanced coursework.

The mission of the counselor education program is to prepare counselors for ethical practice. The program prepares its graduates to act as facilitators of change in the lives of individuals at all developmental levels. By modeling high standards of professionalism and offering a foundation of knowledge, skills, self-awareness, and practice, the program aspires to prepare counselors of the highest quality to work in schools, mental health agencies, businesses, hospitals, rehabilitation organizations, private practice, and other settings.

Program Description

The master's program in counseling provides students with counseling knowledge and skills used in school, agency, private practice, and rehabilitation settings. Students study human development and behavior, individual counseling theory and skills, group theory and dynamics, research methodology, psychological measurement and evaluation, as well as courses in the individual specialty areas of school counseling, clinical mental health counseling, and rehabilitation counseling. Program training includes traditional university-based courses, distance education, and clinical instruction. The program provides an integrated and conceptually sound framework of knowledge, skills, and self awareness as a foundation for ethical practice in the fields of counseling and rehabilitation. In addition, the program provides leadership for the counseling profession at the state, regional, and national levels.

Students in the counseling program will be able to:

- a) demonstrate knowledge of core curriculum.
- b) demonstrate an integration and application of their knowledge and skills in the specialty areas in counseling (school, clinical mental health, and rehabilitation).
- c) demonstrate knowledge and skills in addressing issues of diversity
- d) apply individual and group counseling skills and techniques
- e) reflect on their personal and professional strengths, weaknesses, abilities, and challenges to identify professional development needs.
- f) analyze and apply relevant technologies for the growth and practice of counseling and rehabilitation.
- g) apply ethical decision-making in counseling situations.
- h) articulate how their professional identity is grounded in their personal identification with the standards and ethical practices of the counseling profession.

The master of science in counseling degree is divided into three specialty areas: school counseling, clinical mental health counseling, and rehabilitation counseling. Depending on the specialty area, the counselor education program requires 54-63 credit hours of coursework, which includes core courses, required specialty courses, and electives. In addition to coursework, each student must successfully pass the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE).

The counselor education program holds accreditation from the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP) for the clinical mental health and school counseling specialties, and from the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) for the rehabilitation specialty.

Special Admission Requirements

In addition to the general requirements of the College, candidates to the master's program should provide a narrative, preferably typed, in the form of a brief autobiography that relates the applicant's experiences that have led to an interest in counseling and application to the counselor education program. Candidates are also

asked to address the following statement: "As counseling professionals, we are constantly seeking areas in ourselves that bear examination and change. As future practitioners, you will be witness to a wide variety of client experiences." Please discuss areas in yourself that may block your ability to empathically listen to client experiences that are different than your own. The entire narrative, including the autobiography and the statement, should be limited to three typewritten, double-spaced pages which will be evaluated in terms of clarity of expression, grammatical construction, and other facets of English composition, as well as the quality of responses.

The admissions process requires a formal interview. Candidates to be interviewed will be rated on three areas of personal criteria: a) understanding of and commitment to the counseling field; b) self-awareness; and c) thinking skills/decision making ability. As part of the interview, applicants will be required to provide a brief, spontaneous writing sample.

Testing Requirement Applicants to the counseling program must take the MAT or GRE. One of the tests must be taken within five years of application. For those taking the Miller Analogies Test (MAT) you must have earned a score of 40 points or above, or a score of 390 or above if the test was taken after September 30, 2004. For the GRE (Graduate Record Exam) you must have earned a score of 900 or above combined verbal and quantitative scores (this requirement is waived for applicants already holding a graduate degree); and have earned a score of at least 550 on the paper-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), 79 or higher on the Internet-based test, or 213 on the computer-based test for students whose native language is not English.

Applicants who did not score 40, or 390 if the test was taken after September 30, 2004, on the MAT or 900 combined on the verbal and quantitative sections of the GRE must enclose a letter asking for special consideration, in which they provide evidence of an ability to complete graduate studies successfully. Without such a letter, applicants who fail to meet eligibility requirements may be automatically denied.

Transfer Credit A maximum of six credit hours may be approved as transfer credit, provided these credits were earned no more than three years prior to matriculation and grades of B or better were received. Additional transfer credit may be approved by the program chair in exceptional circumstances, including certificates of graduate study program courses. Please also see College transfer credit policies in the CEHD Admission and Academic Policies section.

Graduate students in master's level counseling programs at other accredited universities may transfer into the program if they take their final 21 hours, including the internship requirement, in USM's counselor education program.

Professional Licensure and Certification Notice Students with a criminal record who are pursuing degrees leading to application for professional licensure or certification should contact the appropriate licensure or certification body prior to matriculation to ensure eligibility.

II. Clinical Mental Health Counseling Concentration

The clinical mental health counseling specialty requires a total of 63 credit hours of coursework. The specialty offers students a comprehensive array of studies which integrates the historical, philosophical, societal, cultural, economic, and political dimensions of the mental health and human service system with the roles, functions, skills, and professional identity of clinical counselors. Coursework will focus on the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental and emotional disorders, and the general principles and practices for the promotion of optimal mental health. During the final portion of their coursework, students will intern under the supervision of a licensed mental health worker. An individual graduating from this specialty will be eligible to sit for the National Counselor Examination (NCE) and it will also prepare them to be licensed as a clinical professional counselor (LCPC) in Maine. The clinical mental health counseling specialty holds accreditation from the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP).

Program Requirements

Core Courses (36 credits)

EDU	600	Research Methods and Techniques
HCE	500	Orientation to the Counseling Profession
HCE	604	Career Development

HCE	605	Psychological Measurement and Evaluation
HCE	620	Fundamentals of Counseling Theories
HCE	621	Fundamentals of Counseling Skills
HCE	626	Group Process and Procedures
HCE	627	Group Counseling
HCE	690	Individual Counseling Practicum Seminar
HCE	691	Individual Counseling Practicum Laboratory
HRD	664	Culture, Tradition, and Diversity
HRD	668	Human Development

Required Specialty Courses (21 credits)

HCE	640	Professional Issues for Mental Health Counselors
HCE	642	Perspectives in Chemical Dependency
HCE	644	Crisis Intervention
HCE	645	Diagnosis and Treatment Planning
HCE	686	Internship in Counselor Education (9 credits - 900 hours)

Electives (6 credits)

***Substance Abuse
Counseling Expertise
Area***

For those students interested in working in the area of substance abuse, the counselor education program offers coursework which will enable students to obtain a Substance Abuse Counseling expertise area within their master's degree. This expertise is available as part of the clinical mental health counseling specialty. Students who complete this expertise area as part of their master's degree meet all academic requirements necessary to become a licensed alcohol and drug counselor (LADC) in Maine. The following courses are required for the expertise area:

HCE	642	Perspectives on Chemical Dependency
HCE	643	Psychopharmacology and Substance-Related Disorders
HCE	644	Crisis Intervention
HCE	650	Basic Concepts in Couple and Family Counseling
HCE	686	Internship in Counselor Education (6 credits - 600 hours in an in-patient/out-patient substance abuse treatment facility)

III. Rehabilitation Counseling Concentration

The rehabilitation counseling specialty requires a total of 54 credit hours of coursework. The specialty is intended to promote quality rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities through the education of rehabilitation professionals, providing services to rehabilitation organizations, and sponsorship of rehabilitation-related research and training. The graduate program's primary goal is to help students acquire the basic foundation, knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to enter the profession of rehabilitation counseling and practice effectively as rehabilitation counselors.

The program's mission is achieved through pursuit of the following objectives:

To teach students the basic philosophic tenets of rehabilitation, specifically:

- a) the value, worth, dignity, and capabilities of all people;
- b) the right of all people to full societal participation with individuals in settings of their choice;
- c) the treatment of persons with disabilities as equal partners in the rehabilitation process;
- d) the emphasis on societal, community, and professional change as much as individual change;
- e) the importance of hope, individual capacity, community inclusion, support, and education; and
- f) the adherence to the Code of Professional Ethics for Rehabilitation Counselors.

To provide the practical knowledge and skills so that students become competent rehabilitation counselors in a wide variety of settings through:

- a) the use of class and community experiences to acquaint students with rehabilitation philosophies, methods, and organizations;
- b) the exposure to varied, experiential and field-based learning in rehabilitation counseling.

To offer services, training, and research to area rehabilitation agencies, consumer groups, and professional organizations through faculty and students:

- a) participation on local professional and consumer boards and committees;
- b) presentation at local and regional conferences;
- c) provision of local in-service training and consultations.

This program is designed to provide students with the basic competencies to provide rehabilitation counseling to a broad range of individuals with disabilities in a variety of settings, such as state vocational rehabilitation facilities, independent living centers, rehabilitation hospitals, employment assistance programs, private industry, the veteran's administration, and private-for-profit rehabilitation companies. The rehabilitation counseling specialty holds accreditation from the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE).

The rehabilitation counseling specialty focuses on the medical, psychological, vocational, and societal issues that surround people with disabilities and the practice of rehabilitation. Students are also offered practicum and internship experiences in community agencies that promote equity and empowerment of people with disabilities. Upon completion of their degree, students are eligible to take a national exam that qualifies them as certified rehabilitation counselors (CRC). Graduates of this specialty become employed in public, private, and nonprofit rehabilitation agencies in Maine and across the country.

Students are eligible to receive the MHRT/community certificate from the state of Maine upon completion of the degree program.

Program Requirements

Core Courses (27 credits)

EDU	600	Research Methods and Techniques
HCE	605	Psychological Measurement and Evaluation
HCE	620	Fundamentals of Counseling Theories
HCE	621	Fundamentals of Counseling Skills
HCE	626	Group Process and Procedures
HCE	627	Group Counseling
HCE	690	Individual Counseling Practicum Seminar
HCE	691	Individual Counseling Practicum Laboratory
HRD	668	Human Development

Required Specialty Courses (24 credits)

HCE	610	Introduction to Rehabilitation Counseling and Services
HCE	611	Medical and Psychological Aspects of Disability and Rehabilitation
HCE	612	Multicultural Counseling: Family and Disability Issues
HCE	614	Principles of Psychosocial Rehabilitation
HCE	615	Vocational Counseling and Placement in Rehabilitation
HCE	619	Myth, Madness, and Mental Illness
HCE	686	Internship in Counselor Education (6 credits - 600 hours)

Electives (3 credits)

III. School Counseling Concentration

The school counseling specialty requires a total of 60 credit hours of coursework. Upon completion, students are eligible for certification from the Maine Department of Education in the area of school guidance and counseling, levels K-12. Certified graduates are qualified to become employed in elementary, middle, and secondary schools in Maine. Students are trained to become specialists in the planning and delivery of comprehensive developmental school counseling programs that reflect current research and validated paradigms. Graduates of this specialty are eligible to sit for the National Counselor Examination. The school counseling specialty holds accreditation from the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP).

Program Requirements

Core Courses (36 credits)

EDU	600	Research Methods and Techniques
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HCE	500	Orientation to the Counseling Profession
HCE	604	Career Development
HCE	605	Psychological Measurement and Evaluation
HCE	620	Fundamentals of Counseling Theories
HCE	621	Fundamentals of Counseling Skills
HCE	626	Group Process and Procedures
HCE	627	Group Counseling
HCE	690	Individual Counseling Practicum Seminar
HCE	691	Individual Counseling Practicum Laboratory
HRD	664	Culture, Tradition, and Diversity
HRD	668	Human Development

Required Specialty Courses (21 credits)

HCE	607	School Guidance Programs and Services
HCE	609	The Practice of School Counseling
HCE	622	Counseling Children and Adolescents
HCE	642	Perspectives in Chemical Dependency
HCE	644	Crisis Intervention
HCE	686	Internship in Counselor Education (6 credits - 600 hours)

Electives (3 credits)

Note: To receive certification as a school counselor in the state of Maine, students must take an exceptionalities course. This may be an undergraduate or graduate course. If you choose to take a graduate course, we recommend SED 540 Nature and Needs of Learners Who Are Exceptional.

Post-Master's Certificate of Advanced Study in Counseling

The post-master's certificate of advanced study (CAS) in counseling is designed to offer a broad range of professional development opportunities for practicing counselors. The overall goal of the certificate program is to enhance and enrich the counselor's educational foundation and to give focus to advanced knowledge and skills that will shape future professional practice. The CAS in counseling requires 30 credit hours of graduate coursework. Students will work cooperatively with faculty to design a certificate program that is substantive, developmental and focused, and may also take advantage of special certification options in counseling supervision, play therapy, substance abuse counseling, rehabilitation counseling, and couple and family therapy.

Special Admission Requirements

Candidates should have a master's degree in counseling or allied field and, preferably, two years of experience in professional practice. In addition to the general requirements of the College, candidates should provide a proposed plan of study for the CAS that includes:

- a) a brief autobiography, including the area of study in the master's degree and related experience, professional training, and credentials;
- b) overall goal to be accomplished through the program;
- c) future aspirations and professional development needs;
- d) proposed coursework, including a tentative list of courses or other curricular experiences.

Transfer Policy

Students may not transfer courses that were part of a master's degree of fewer than 60 credits toward the CAS. Up to six post-master's graduate credits may be accepted by the CAS admissions committee, provided these credits were earned no more than three years prior to matriculation in the CAS and were completed with a grade of B or better.

Students may be able to apply up to 12 credits that were part of a master's degree that required 60 or more credits toward the CAS. These courses must be directly related to the student's proposed CAS program of study, provided these credits are approved by the counselor education program faculty and were completed with a grade of B or better.

Program Requirements

Focus Area (30 credits)

Students can pursue one or more of the focus areas detailed below, or design a professionally relevant focus area of their own with the assistance of a faculty advisor.

Portfolio

Students develop a professional portfolio describing progress toward professional goals while in the CAS program. Portfolios are used in final seminars as the basis for discussion, summary, and sharing among completing students.

Focus Areas

Clinical Supervision

HCE	681	Clinical Supervision
HCE	687	Internship in Clinical Supervision
HCE	694	Practicum in Individual Supervision

Electives: 21 credits selected in consultation with an advisor

Holistic Counseling

HCE	507	Spirituality and Religion in Counseling
HCE	619	Myth, Madness, and Mental Illness
HCE	641	Mind-Body Techniques
HRD	558	Aging and Life Review
HRD	693	Life Stories: Personal Mythmaking and Spiritual Development

Electives: 15 credits selected in consultation with the advisor.

Play Therapy

HCE	623	Theories and Applications of Play Therapy: Summer Institute
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Electives: 27 credits selected in consultation with an advisor. At least two courses (6 credits) must be selected from the following list to qualify for national certification:

HCE	622	Counseling Children and Adolescents
HCE	624	Child-Centered Play Therapy
HCE	625	Adlerian Play Therapy
HCE	687	Internship in Clinical Supervision (play therapy placement)
HCE	694	Practicum in Individual Supervision (play therapy placement)
HCE	695	Practicum in Play Therapy

Self-Designed

With the assistance of their faculty advisor, students may design a program of study that fulfills their individual learning goals. This option may also be used to obtain state certification in rehabilitation or school counseling, or state licensure as a substance abuse counselor.

Mental Health Rehabilitation Technician (MHRT)/ Community Certificate

The MHRT/community certificate program is especially suited for practitioners who work in the mental health system and desire training in psychosocial rehabilitation, and persons with prior graduate training who need flexible coursework to update their skills and knowledge in the psychosocial rehabilitation approach. Persons with a bachelor's degree and one year direct experience in the mental health field may apply for the five-course sequence. Applications and materials need to be submitted to the Office of Graduate Admissions, 39 Exeter Street, PO Box 9300, Portland, ME 04104-9300. For more information about the program and application materials, see the CEHD Web site at www.usm.maine.edu/cehd/counselor-education/mhrt.htm. The five-course program described below leads to the MHRT/community certificate and can also lead to the new state employment specialist certificate.

HCE	610	Introduction to Rehabilitation Counseling and Services
HCE	611	Medical and Psychological Aspects of Disability and Rehabilitation
HCE	612	Multicultural Counseling: Family and Disability Issues
HCE	614	Principles of Psychosocial Rehabilitation
HCE	615	Vocational Counseling and Placement in Rehabilitation