

Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is it a full-time program?

Yes. The program is offered in a full-time cohort model. A cohort is a group of students following the same program of study at the same time and place. Classroom-based course requirements are scheduled two days per week, typically on Tuesdays and Thursdays each week. Students typically elect to complete their field experience hours and/or pursue employment on alternate days when classes are not scheduled.

2. How long does the program take?

Students complete the program in 5 semesters. The curriculum generally follows this sequence:

First Year:

First Semester

PCO 6869	Legal & Ethical Issues	3
PCO 6271	Social & Cultural Foundations	3
PCO 6406	Counseling Theories & Practice	3
PSY 6216	Research & Program Eval	3

Second Semester

CLP 6166	Psychopathology	3
PCO 6408	Fundamentals of M.H.C.	3
PCO 6317	Individual Eval/Assessment	4
DEP 6055	Adv. Human Development	3

Third Semester

PCO 6311	Psy of Substance Abuse	3
CLP 6459	Principles of Sex Therapy	3
PCO 6945	Practicum	3

Second Year

First Semester

PCO 6407	Group Theories	4
PCO 6531	Career/Lifestyle Assessment	3
PCO 6939	Cognitive Therapy	3
PCO 6943	Internship	3

Second Semester

PCO 6051	Counseling in Community	3
PCO 6939	Sem: Marriage & Family	3
PCO 6943	Internship	4
Elective	or Thesis A	3

2. Can I be licensed as a Mental Health Counselor in the state of Florida?

Yes. At the completion of your degree you will be “license-eligible.” You will have satisfied the educational requirements dictated by the state of Florida’s licensing board; however, you will need to complete an additional two years of clinical experience (3000 hours which includes 1500 hours in direct client contact), as a “Registered Mental Health Intern.” (see http://www.doh.state.fl.us/mqa/491/ap_intern-regis.pdf). During this period you will need to be supervised by a board-approved licensed Mental Health Counselor. You must also receive a passing score on the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE). The board has

recently permitted licensure applicants to sit for the NCMHCE prior to the completion of the registered internship. Call the board office (850-245-4474) for further information and/or see http://www.doh.state.fl.us/mqa/491/soc_lic_req.html#Licensure for a detailed description of licensure requirements.

3. How do your graduates fare in terms of employment? What is the average starting salary?

Our graduates are employed in a variety of settings including inpatient psychiatric facilities, hospitals, schools, substance abuse and community mental health treatment facilities, etc. A large number of our graduates also work in group practices or private practice after obtaining licensure, due in part to new laws allowing counselors to be paid for their services by insurance companies. According to the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* published by the U.S. Department of Labor, employment opportunities over the next 5 years for counselors are expected to grow at a faster rate than for all occupations (<http://stats.bls.gov/oco/ocos067.htm>). As of 2006, the median annual income for mental health counselors was \$34,380.

4. Are assistantships and scholarships available to help supplement the cost of tuition?

Yes. There are limited graduate assistantships available throughout the university. The College of Arts and Sciences also occasionally offers tuition scholarships on a competitive basis (please contact the MACP director, icarroll@unf.edu for further details). The Delores Auzenne Fellowship is available to aid minority students and the Office of Graduate Studies office offers scholarship grants to graduate students pursuing scholarly projects. Projects may be funded up to \$500. Please consult the Office of Graduate Studies at 620-1360 or www.unf.edu/graduatestudies for further information about assistantships and additional scholarship information.

5. Are research opportunities available to students?

Yes. Our faculty members typically maintain active research agendas and have research teams comprised of undergraduate and graduate students. While masters comprehensive exams and theses are not required, students may elect to complete a thesis. This option is particularly attractive to students who are interested in pursuing doctoral study in psychology following graduation.

6. Are students required to complete an internship in the program ?

Students in our program are required to complete a practicum in their first year and an internship during their last two semesters of study. The internship is the culminating experience of the student's masters program. All together students must complete a total of 1,000 hours of supervised field work. Approximately 400 hours of the 1000 hours include direct clinical service either in an individual or group setting. Throughout the practicum and internship, students also meet in individual and/or group supervision with a university supervisor. Currently, we have approximately 30 sites located in Jacksonville and surrounding areas which are available for students to complete either their practicum or internship. These sites range from out-patient day treatment facilities to in-patient hospitals and include such diverse populations as children, adolescents, the chronically mentally ill, the terminally ill, persons with AIDS, juvenile offenders and adult sexual offenders. Typically our interns do not get paid for their time.

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