

Graduate Certificate in Animal Assisted Therapy in Counseling (AAT-C)

Program Overview

This 9 credit Graduate Certificate in Animal Assisted Therapy in Counseling (AAT-C) provides specialized training and supervised practice in the ethical and humane inclusion of animals in the psychotherapeutic environment by credentialed mental health professionals. The curriculum is in alignment with the American Counseling Association (ACA) [AAT-C Competencies of Practice](#) (2017). The AAT-C certificate may be completed by Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) students using the available 9 credits of elective coursework in the CMHC program of study. It is also open to School Counseling, Social Work, and Psychology graduate students pursuing a clinical learning track.

Students who complete the UNF Graduate Certificate in Animal Assisted Therapy in Counseling will be able to:

- Interpret and apply the ACA AAT-C Competencies to practice in the CMHC setting.
- Articulate processes necessary to gain species-specific registrations needed for ethical practice.
- Classify animal welfare risks inherent in the utilization of animals in the counseling setting.
- Analyze attitudes, beliefs and acculturative experiences through experiential learning activities that foster student understanding of self, counselor identity and ethical practice especially with culturally diverse clients.
- Demonstrate ethical AAT-C practice congruent with identified evidence-based theories of counseling for assessment and interventions for treatment, personal growth and wellness.

Curriculum

HSC 6601 Animal Assisted Interventions & Therapies in Healthcare (3 credits)

This course provides a historical and theoretical foundation for the inclusion of animals as a treatment alternative or adjunct to traditional practices in healthcare/mental healthcare settings. An overview of training and practice standards, techniques, national certifications, ethics and animal welfare issues that impact the practice of Animal Assisted Interventions (AAI) & Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) are addressed. Counseling skills such as assessment, treatment planning and clinical documentation are also practiced.

MHS 6444 Animal Assisted Therapy in Counseling: Theory & Practice (3 credits)

An advanced practice course on the incorporation of animals into the clinical mental health counseling process. A history of Animal Assisted Therapy in Counseling, ethics and standards of practice currently available and evidence-based counseling theories of practice that can be incorporated into the AAT-C setting are addressed. This course addresses the need for

supervised experience outlined by the American Counseling Association Standards of Practice in Animal Assisted Therapy in Counseling (2017). *HSC 6601: Animal Assisted Interventions & Therapies in Healthcare* is a pre-requisite.

MHS 5403 Expressive Arts & Creativity in Counseling (3 credits)

This course provides theoretical foundations and practical experience using Process Experiential Theory combined with creative approaches in mental health counseling including the expressive arts, animals, nature and contemplative movement based practices. It encourages the development of counselor self-care and self-exploration using the creative process and addresses how creative approaches enhance the counseling process from a variety of theoretical counseling frameworks for differing populations and diagnoses.

Total Program Credits - 9

Special Note:

Non-degree seeking students enrolled in certificate programs are NOT eligible for financial aid. To apply for the post-graduate training and certification in Animal Assisted Therapy in Counseling as a non-degree seeking student, please see the UNF Division of Continuing Education/Brooks College of Health partner program <https://www.unf.edu/ce/AAT/>

Admissions

New CMHC Graduate Student:

See admissions Requirements on the CMHC website

https://www.unf.edu/brooks/public_health/cmhc.aspx

AND

Animal Assisted Therapy in Counseling Certificate Application Essay (in APA format)

1. Title page that includes:
 - Student Name
 - Animal Assisted Therapy in Counseling Supplemental Application
 - Date of Submission
2. 1-2 page typed, double spaced, essay that addresses the following:
 - Interest in the field of Animal Assisted Therapy in Counseling
 - Experience in working with animals, human-animal bond and/or the inclusion of animals and/or nature in healthcare or education
 - Expectations for professional use of Animal Assisted Therapy in Counseling Certificate
3. One recommendation letter from an existing program faculty member or faculty advisor
 - *School Counseling, Social Work or Psychology Graduate Students should submit the essay and recommendation letter from their faculty advisor. They are not required to meet CMHC program admissions requirements.*

Application Deadlines for Existing CMHC, School Counseling, Social Work or Psychology Graduate Students:

Fall Term.....August 1st

Spring Term.....December 1st

- Degree seeking students - Click [here](#) to apply - [UNF Graduate School](#)
- Non-degree seeking students – Click [here](#) to apply – [UNF Continuing Education](#)

Contact:

Dr. Carlene Taylor, Instructor

Integration of Creativity, Animals & Nature Initiative &

Animal Assisted Therapy in Counseling Certificate

Brooks College of Health | Clinical Mental Health Counseling

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