

Program Overview

The Master of Arts (M.A.) with a major in Professional Counseling consists of four concentrations:

- clinical mental health counseling,
- marital, couple and family counseling, and
- school counseling
- school counselor - Texas Certificate

These four areas of concentration in the professional counseling major have required course sequences that build skills through three levels, from basic to advanced, via didactic and experiential activities. The curriculum includes core foundations in theories, interventions, assessment, and research. In addition, core tenets that are emphasized throughout the program include diversity, ethics, professional development, and self-awareness. There is a strong emphasis on experiential learning integrated with the application of didactic, research-based knowledge. Internship is required as the capstone experience. The concentration in clinical mental health counseling; marriage, couple, and family counseling; and school counseling are nationally accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs (CACREP).

The concentration of School Counselor - Texas Certificate, has similar courses and sequencing as the areas above. This concentration is focused on developing strong clinical skills and meeting the requirements of the Texas State Board of Educator Certification.

Application Requirements

Application requirements consist of institutional and program requirements for applicable semesters of entry during the current academic year. Additional information and changes to admission requirements for semesters other than the current academic year can be found on The Graduate College's website (<http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/>).

Unless otherwise noted on The Graduate College program page, AI tools can only be used to correct spelling and grammar errors in application materials.

Institutional Requirements

Institutional requirements are the minimum standards for admission to any graduate program at Texas State. These include:

- Completed online application
- Nonrefundable application fee
 - Degree Programs (Doctoral and Master's)
 - \$55 fee, or
 - \$90 for applications with international credentials
 - Post-Baccalaureate Programs (Certificate, Certification, Non-Degree, and Visiting)
 - \$20 fee, or
 - \$60 for applications with international credentials
- Official transcripts from each institution where course credit was granted. Final transcripts showing degree completion are required before the student may register for their second term of enrollment.
- GPA requirements (a higher GPA may be listed in the Program Requirements)
 - Doctoral programs require a 3.00 overall GPA or a 3.00 GPA in your last 60 hours (<https://www.gradcollege.txst.edu/>

[admissions/policy.html#gpa](#)) of undergraduate course work (plus any completed graduate courses).

- Master's and Specialist programs require a 2.75 overall GPA or a 2.75 GPA in your last 60 hours (<https://www.gradcollege.txst.edu/admissions/policy.html#gpa>) of undergraduate course work (plus any completed graduate courses).
- Post-Baccalaureate programs require a 2.50 overall GPA or a 2.50 GPA in your last 60 hours (<https://www.gradcollege.txst.edu/admissions/policy.html#gpa>) of undergraduate course work (plus any completed graduate courses).
- Baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited university. (Non-U.S. degrees must be equivalent to a four-year U.S. Bachelor's degree. In most cases, three-year degrees are not considered. Visit our International FAQs (<https://www.gradcollege.txst.edu/international/faqs.html>) for more information.)

Approved English Proficiency Exam Scores

Applicants are required to submit an approved English proficiency exam score that meets the minimum requirements below unless they have earned a bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited U.S. institution or the equivalent from a country on our exempt countries list (<http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/international/language.html#w waiver>). Some programs may restrict acceptable tests or require higher scores than the institutional scores; this will be noted in the Program Requirements.

- official TOEFL iBT scores required with a 78 overall if taken on or before January 21, 2026
- official TOEFL iBT scores required with a 4 overall if taken after January 21, 2026
- official PTE scores required with a 52 overall
- official IELTS (academic) scores required with a 6.5 overall and minimum individual module scores of 6.0
- official Duolingo scores required with a 110 overall
- official TOEFL Essentials scores required with an 8.5 overall
- official Texas State Intensive English Program score of 90% or higher in the highest-level course (level 5)

The institution does **not** offer admission if the scores above are not met.

- completed online application
- \$35 nonrefundable Texas Education Agency technology fee (if offered admission) and either
- \$55 nonrefundable application fee or
- \$90 nonrefundable application fee for applications with international credentials
- baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited university (Non-U.S. degrees must be equivalent to a four-year U.S. Bachelor's degree. In most cases, three-year degrees are not considered. Visit our International FAQs (<https://www.gradcollege.txst.edu/international/faqs.html>) for more information.)
- official transcripts from **each institution** where course credit was granted

- a 3.0 overall GPA or a 3.0 GPA in the last 60 hours of undergraduate course work (plus any completed graduate courses)
- official GRE (general test only) with competitive scores in the verbal reasoning and quantitative reasoning sections
 - The GRE may be waived if the student holds a master's or doctoral degree from a regionally accredited U.S. institution. If the student holds a master's or doctoral degree (or the equivalent thereof) from an accredited international institution, the GRE may be waived on an individual basis.
- informed consent form
- resume/CV detailing unique competencies that contribute to an aptitude for graduate study; personal experiences, such as volunteer work, that have aided in preparations for a career in counseling; additional language skills; technological competence and computer literacy
- statement of purpose (maximum 750 words, typed and double-spaced) addressing the following:*
 - professional goals and rationale for pursuing education and training in professional counseling as opposed to another mental health discipline such as psychology, social work, or counseling psychology
 - rationale for choosing the school counseling concentration
 - major strengths and weaknesses with respect to being admitted into the program
 - perspective on diversity including
 - personal contributions to and benefits from the richness of the professional counseling program
 - ways to increase inclusion of diversity in the counseling profession
- three forms of recommendation (not general reference letters)

Approved English Proficiency Exam Scores

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- official TOEFL iBT scores with minimum individual scores of
 - 22 listening
 - 22 reading
 - 24 speaking
 - 21 writing

This program does **not** offer admission if the scores above are not met.

*Additional Information

The statement of purpose will be evaluated for content, style, and quality. While the applicant may seek consultation and editing suggestions, this statement must be representative of the student's current level and style of writing and representative of what could be expected if admitted into the program.

Degree Requirements

The Master of Arts (M.A.) degree with a major in Professional Counseling concentration in School Counselor for Early Childhood through Grade 12 requires 48 semester credit hours. A grade of "B" or better must be

earned in all course work counting toward a Professional Counseling degree.

Course Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
Required Courses		
COUN 5305	Assessment in Counseling	3
COUN 5307	Theories of Counseling and Personality	3
COUN 5316	Counseling Diverse Populations	3
COUN 5328	Professional Orientation in School Counseling: Leadership, Advocacy, and Accountability	3
COUN 5338	Advanced Issues in School Counseling: Counseling, Consultation, and Coordination of Services	3
COUN 5350	Advanced Counselor Ethics	3
COUN 5354	Basic Counseling Skills and Abnormal Behavior	3
COUN 5355	Career Counseling	3
COUN 5358	Dynamics & Processes in Group Counseling	3
COUN 5368	Developmental Issues in Counseling Children, Adolescents, and Adults	3
COUN 5369	Child and Adolescent Counseling Methods	3
COUN 5373	Intermediate Methods in Play Therapy	3
COUN 5389	Site-Based Internship	3
COUN 5391	Research Methods	3
COUN 5689	Clinical Practicum	6
Total Hours		48

Comprehensive Examination Requirement

Students are required to take and pass the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) in order to register for the Clinical Practicum. Students are allowed three opportunities to pass the exam. Students who fail the CPCE after the first attempt must set up an appointment with their faculty advisor to develop a study plan prior to completing the program's application for a second CPCE administration. Students who fail the CPCE after the second attempt will meet with a Program Standards Committee (PSC) to discuss additional needs and support for the third administration. Upon the third failed attempt and PSC application of program policy, students are not allowed to register for classes and are not allowed further attempts at the comprehensive examination.

Students who do not successfully complete the requirements for the degree within the timelines specified will be dismissed from the program.

Master's level courses in Counseling, Leadership, Adult Education, and School Psychology: COUN

Courses Offered

Counseling (COUN)

COUN 5178. Independent Study.

Individual problems or research topics designed to place emphasis on selected areas of study. May be repeated twice for additional credit at the discretion of the department chair.

1 Credit Hour. 1 Lecture Contact Hour. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5199B. Thesis.

This course represents a student's continuing thesis enrollments. The student continues to enroll in this course until the thesis is submitted for binding.

1 Credit Hour. 1 Lecture Contact Hour. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Credit/No Credit

COUN 5299B. Thesis.

This course represents a student's continuing thesis enrollments. The student continues to enroll in this course until the thesis is submitted for binding.

2 Credit Hours. 2 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Credit/No Credit

COUN 5301. Professional Counseling Orientation.

This course is presented as a basis for future counselors to understand community counseling agencies, standards of preparation, and the role identity of persons providing direct counseling treatment interventions. This course includes information on the licensure process, professional organizations, ethical and legal aspects of practice, advocacy processes, and theoretical/applied information.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5305. Assessment in Counseling.

This course will include problems and principles of administration, scoring and interpreting group and individually administered tests; utilization of test data for diagnostic, placement, predictive, and evaluative purposes; elementary statistical procedures; laboratory activities in test administration, scoring, and interpretation.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5307. Theories of Counseling.

This course introduces theories of counseling to prepare students to conceptualize problems and to respond with appropriate, evidence-based counseling interventions and techniques. Students will become familiar with the origin, key concepts, and interventions and techniques of each of the theories presented. Students will develop an awareness of how counseling theories drive the treatment process. A major focus of this course is to support students as they develop their personal theoretical orientation.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5316. Counseling Across Client Populations.

This course prepares students to recognize and discern how individual backgrounds, life experiences, and social environments influence the counseling process. Emphasis is placed on developing self-awareness, professional sensitivity, and adaptive strategies for working effectively with clients from a wide range of populations and life circumstances.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Course Attribute(s): Multicultural Content

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5328. Professional Orientation in School Counseling: Leadership, Advocacy, and Accountability.

This course provides an orientation to identity and role of professional school counselors, and introduction to the study of comprehensive developmental guidance programs. Course reflects the Texas and ASCA Models with related standards. Topics include: program planning, implementation, and evaluation; use of data and accountability; leadership role; and ethical and legal practices in schools.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5338. Advanced Issues in School Counseling: Counseling, Consultation, and Coordination of Services.

This course includes advanced topics in counseling children and adolescents in schools. Emphasis will be placed on developmentally appropriate preventative and responsive counseling services. Consultation and collaboration with parents, school personnel, community partners and contextual issues in school counseling will be addressed. Prerequisites: COUN 5316 and COUN 5328 and COUN 5368 all with grades of "B" or better.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5344. Introduction to Addictions Counseling.

This course provides an introduction to best practices in counseling clients dealing with substance and process addictions. Students gain a historical context and current understanding of the etiology, course, and progression of addictive disorders. Students learn to conceptualize addiction from contextual, systemic, relational, and holistic perspectives, with an emphasis on theory and research-driven counseling practice.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5346. Filial Therapy.

Theoretical and practical application of the filial model will be addressed as well as techniques in training parents in the overall principles and methodology of child-centered play therapy. Prerequisite: COUN 5358 and COUN 5373 both with grades of "B" or better. Corequisite: COUN 5389 or COUN 5689 either with a grade of "B" or better or instructor approval.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Credit/No Credit

COUN 5350. Advanced Counselor Ethics.

This course focuses on ethical standards of professional counseling organizations and credentialing bodies, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling settings. Emphasis is placed on national and current state board rules, records management, strategies for personal and professional self-evaluation, implications for practice, and client and professional advocacy.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5351. Current Issues in Marriage, Couple and Family Therapy.

This course provides students with information regarding special issues in marital, couple and family counseling, including: grief and loss; domestic violence; substance abuse in the family; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender issues; divorce; and re-parenting. Prerequisite: COUN 5316 and COUN 5367 both with grades of "B" or better.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5354. Basic Counseling Skills and Abnormal Behavior.

This course is designed to introduce the student to basic counseling skills via role-play and practice session recording. The course also provides a general model for assessing abnormal behavior of clients and effective skills to elicit identifying behavior. Prerequisites: COUN 5307 and COUN 5350 both with grades of "B" or better. Corequisite: COUN 5301 or COUN 5328 either with a grade of "B" or better.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5355. Career Counseling.

This course considers career choice and development as critical aspects of persons in material cultures where occupation is a major component of one's identity. Career concerns often addressed in counseling are presented and discussed along with the area of vocational guidance, occupational information, and preference inventories.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5358. Dynamics & Processes in Group Counseling.

In this course, students will develop knowledge and skills in the basic principles of the dynamics that are characteristic of therapeutic groups. This course is an academic and clinical experience requiring highly active student participation in the form of honest, direct, and open communication combined with authentic self-exploration within the group setting. Corequisite: COUN 5354 with a grade of "B" or better.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5359. Psychopathology in Clinical Mental Health Counseling.

This course explores the principles of dysfunction in human behavior and systemic organization. This course includes diagnostic, preventive, and remedial methods and interventions.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5360. Intermediate Methods in Marital, Couple and Family Counseling.

Marital, couple, and family theory and techniques are discussed, selected, applied, and refined through lecture and supervised clinical practice. Specific skills include joining, diagnosis, goal formulation, treatment planning, termination, referral, and record keeping. Graded on a credit (CR), no credit (F) basis. Prerequisite: COUN 5316 and COUN 5354 and COUN 5367 all with grades of "B" or better. Corequisite: COUN 5359 and COUN 5369 both with grades of "B" or better.

3 Credit Hours. 1 Lecture Contact Hour. 2 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Credit/No Credit

COUN 5362. Practicum in Professional Supervision: Theories and Applications.

Provides experience in supervising practicum or intern students and integrating the theoretical foundations and current issues of professional supervision. Emphasis includes ethical, multicultural, gender, age, and lifestyle concerns in supervisory relationships, and academic requirements for supervisory status for Texas Licensed Professional Counselor and Licensed Specialist in School Psychology credentials. Course can be repeated once for credit.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Credit/No Credit

COUN 5366. Intermediate Methods in Adult Counseling.

Counseling theories and techniques are discussed, selected, applied and refined through lecture and supervised practice. Specific skills include initiating the helping relationship process, diagnosis, goal formulation, treatment planning, termination, referral, and record keeping. Prerequisite: COUN 5316 and COUN 5354 both with grades of "B" or better. Corequisite: COUN 5359 with a grade of "B" or better.

3 Credit Hours. 1 Lecture Contact Hour. 2 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Credit/No Credit

COUN 5367. Marital and Family Counseling: Current Theories.

This course is designed to examine the principles of communication and the goals of marital, couple and family counseling. Selected theories, approaches and techniques used in marital, couple and family counseling will be examined.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5368. Developmental Issues in Counseling Children, Adolescents, and Adults.

Emphasis will be on understanding the interactions between the developmental needs of each of these age groups and counseling techniques and procedures used to deliver mental health services to each of these groups.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5369. Child and Adolescent Counseling Methods.

This course focus is an overview of counseling interventions with children and adolescents in agency, school, and private practice. Group, individual, and systems techniques will be covered. Assessment of child psychopathology and techniques for consulting with parents will be included. Prerequisites: COUN 5368 with a grade of "B" or better. Corequisites: COUN 5354 with a grade of "B" or better.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5370. Intermediate Methods in Counseling Adolescents.

This course will prepare students to apply play therapy and counseling skills with older children and adolescents in various settings such as schools, counseling agencies, and group or private practice offices. Instruction will focus on advanced knowledge and skill competencies in working with children ages 10 to 18 using play therapy and expressive modalities. Prerequisite: COUN 5316 and COUN 5369 both with grades of "B" or better. Corequisite: COUN 5359 with a grade of "B" or better.

3 Credit Hours. 1 Lecture Contact Hour. 2 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Credit/No Credit

COUN 5372. Assessment in Individual, Couples, and Family Counseling.

This course addresses the assessment of individual, couple, and family functioning and the planning and implementation of marital, couple and family treatment methods.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5373. Intermediate Methods in Play Therapy.

This course explores the philosophical basis for play therapy, the history of play therapy, theoretical applications, techniques, stages, ethical issues, and application to a variety of populations and diagnostic categories. This course has a supervised practice experience. Prerequisite: COUN 5316 and COUN 5369 both with grades of "B" or better. Corequisite: COUN 5359 with a grade of "B" or better.

3 Credit Hours. 1 Lecture Contact Hour. 2 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Credit/No Credit

COUN 5378. Problems in Counseling.

Individual problems not related to thesis. Designed to place emphasis on selected areas of study. May be repeated once for additional credit at the discretion of the department chair.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5380. Introduction to Animal-Assisted Counseling.

Animal-assisted counseling (AAC) is a goal-directed process in which a trained therapy animal works in partnership with a counselor to help clients resolve psychosocial challenges and achieve growth. This course will provide an introduction to the AAC field, the human-animal bond, evidence-based research in AAC, and positive training approaches.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5381. Sandtray Therapy Methods.

This course provides students with the philosophical basis for sandtray therapy as a therapeutic intervention for children and families, including a review of its history, applications, techniques, stages, and ethical issues. Didactic and experiential methods are used. Prerequisite: COUN 5369 with a grade of "B" or better. Corequisite: COUN 5389 or COUN 5689 either with a grade of "B" or better.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5389. Site-Based Internship.

This course is an on-site practicum-internship occurring in a school or agency setting with supervision by on-site and university supervisors. It may be repeated based on the recommendation of the counseling faculty. Prerequisites: COUN 5689 with a grade of "CR" and instructor approval.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Course Attribute(s): Exclude from 3-peat Processing
Grade Mode: Credit/No Credit

COUN 5391. Research Methods.

This course provides an understanding of research methods and design, statistical analysis, needs assessment, and program evaluation relevant to the field of professional counseling.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5394. Counseling Women.

This elective course involves student exploration of gender in historical, social, and global contexts with emphasis on counseling approaches and interventions specific to the concerns of women and girls. Topics include gender development, gender socialization, sexuality, career and family, violence against women, body image concerns, and overall women's mental health. (MULT).

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Course Attribute(s): Multicultural Content
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5395. Foundations of Trauma and Crisis Counseling.

The course offers an introduction to principles of trauma counseling and crisis interventions. Topics include the neurobiology of trauma, diagnosis of trauma-related mental health concerns, and best practices related to trauma-informed counseling and crisis intervention addressing symptomatology of individuals, families, and communities directly or secondarily affected by crisis and trauma.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

COUN 5399A. Thesis.

This course represents a student's initial thesis enrollment. No thesis credit is awarded until student has completed the thesis in COUN 5399B.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Credit/No Credit

COUN 5399B. Thesis.

This course represents a student's continuing thesis enrollments. The student continues to enroll in this course until the thesis is submitted for binding.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Credit/No Credit

COUN 5599B. Thesis.

This course represents a student's continuing thesis enrollments. The student continues to enroll in this course until the thesis is submitted for binding.

5 Credit Hours. 5 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Credit/No Credit

COUN 5689. Clinical Practicum.

This practicum involves providing supervised counseling services to clients in university-affiliated counseling clinics and a staffing seminar. It may be taken up to three times (18 credit hours) based on the recommendation of the counseling faculty. Prerequisites: COUN 5358 and COUN 5369 and [COUN 5360 or COUN 5366 or COUN 5370 or COUN 5373] all with grades of "B" or better and instructor approval.

6 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 3 Lab Contact Hours.

Course Attribute(s): Exclude from 3-peat Processing

Grade Mode: Credit/No Credit

COUN 5999B. Thesis.

This course represents a student's continuing thesis enrollments. The student continues to enroll in this course until the thesis is submitted for binding.

9 Credit Hours. 9 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.

Grade Mode: Credit/No Credit