

COUNSELOR EDUCATION, MASTER OF EDUCATION

Counseling is a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals (American Counseling Association, 2010). The Counselor Education Program will train professional counselors who serve the mental health needs of the citizens of Georgia and the nation. The mission of this online Counselor Education Program at Albany State University is to produce professional counselors who are proactive in promoting educational achievement, career success, mental health, personal, and social development, equity, and access for the individuals that they serve.

The objectives of the Program are:

- **Objective 1.** The program will prepare candidates who demonstrate a professional identity consistent with professional counseling, based on an understanding of historical, current, and emerging trends that shape the counseling profession.
- **Objective 2.** The program will offer curricular and co-curricular opportunities that provide candidates with opportunities to develop knowledge and skills that are meaningful and relevant for serving a multicultural, pluralistic society in diverse settings.
- **Objective 3.** The program will prepare reflective practitioners who integrate theory into practice through the application of counseling, learning, and motivational theories; data-driven decision-making; and the infusion of technology.
- **Objective 4.** Program candidates will identify systemic barriers that inhibit the maximum development of the populations that they serve and impede their ability to access opportunities and advocate for the removal of these barriers.
- **Objective 5.** Counseling faculty will develop professional growth and learning opportunities for practitioners in Southwest Georgia and beyond.

CREDENTIALING

Students are encouraged to know the requirements for credentialing in the state in which they wish to practice. Students who successfully complete this program earn the M.Ed. in Counselor Education and are eligible to apply for certification as a counselor, rehabilitation counselor, or school counselor, depending upon their area of concentration, and may be eligible to apply for counselor licensure. Students who earn the M.Ed. in Counselor Education with a concentration in School Counseling and are eligible for Georgia T-5 Certification in School Counseling.

COUNSELOR EDUCATION CONCENTRATIONS

Students in the Counselor Education Program may elect to earn their degree in one of three counseling concentrations:

Clinical Mental Health Counseling

The *Clinical Mental Health Counseling* specialization prepares individuals to provide evaluations, referrals, and short-term counseling services to help people prevent or remediate personal problems, conflicts, and emotional crises. Individuals who complete this program are eligible to apply for licensure in Georgia and certification from the National Board for Counselor Certification. All students are advised to become

knowledgeable of licensure requirements in the state in which they wish to practice.

Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling

Clinical Rehabilitation Counselors are professional counselors trained specifically to serve individuals with disabilities. The *Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling* specialization prepares professional counselors to assist individuals with disabilities to achieve their personal, career, and independent living goals. Individuals who complete this program are eligible to apply for licensure in Georgia and certification from the Commission for Rehabilitation Counselor Certification. All students are advised to become knowledgeable of licensure requirements in the state in which they wish to practice.

School Counseling

The 63 semester hour program School Counseling program is accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and has "approved" status with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. Candidates who are already Georgia certified or who have completed three (3) or more semester hours of coursework in the identification and education of children who have special educational needs through an approved professional learning program will complete 60 semester hours of coursework. Applicants do not have to be certified teachers to gain admission to the program.

COUNSELOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

Counselor Continuing Education provides non-degree options for individuals who seek personal enrichment and renewal as well as additional educational experiences needed to obtain certification or licensure. Applicants who wish to take courses but who are not seeking a degree must submit their application for graduate admission, Counselor Education Program application, Master's level transcript(s) and three current letters of recommendation to the Office of Graduate Admissions.

The Advanced Counseling Certificate in School Counseling allows individuals with master's degrees in counseling or closely related clinical fields to meet the requirements for Georgia certification in School Counseling. This certificate program tailors coursework to meet the individual's specific needs for certification, as determined by a review of the individual's academic record and the current certification requirements. *Applicants who have no clinical training or who need more than 18 semester hours for certification are not eligible* for the Advanced Counseling Certificate in School Counseling. Passing the GACE content examinations is required to complete the certificate.

The Advanced Counseling certificate serves post-master's degree candidates who need specific courses to complete their licensure requirements. *Individuals who need more than nine (9) credit hours of coursework are not eligible* for this certificate.

EXIT EXAMINATION

In partial fulfillment of the M.Ed. in Counselor Education, students are required to submit scores on the specialization examination for their concentration (GACE/PRAXIS, CRC, or NCE). In instances where a state-specific examination is required, the student can request an exception.

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT

Students are required to complete at least 2 **four-day** on-campus residencies. Residency allows students to interact with fellow students and faculty in person, learn and practice basic and advanced skills in your concentration area, and build a strong learning community. There

is an *additional cost* for residency, which does not include travel, food and lodging expenses. Residency fees are *not included* in your program tuition.

STUDENT RETENTION

Students must earn a grade of B or higher in each course in Areas A, B, C, and E and maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. No grade lower than C will count toward graduation. Students in Counselor Education must maintain appropriate professional dispositions as well as meet the required academic standards; failure to do either can result in dismissal from the Program.

Program Admission Requirements

The Counselor Education Program admits cohorts for the summer and fall semesters only. Individuals seeking admissions to Counselor Education must apply to Albany State University Graduate School. Information concerning required materials and processes are available through Graduate Admissions. Admission decisions in the Counselor Education Program consider a number of factors, including grade point average (GPA), test scores, references, employment history and other experiences, previous graduate work, professional goals, and interviews. Counselor Education applicants are required to interview with the Counselor Education Admissions Committee.

The following Counselor Education Program specific supporting documents must also be submitted:

- Counselor Education Program application
- Official MAT, GRE, or GACE Test Scores
- Professional Statement
- Three current references

In lieu of GRE/MAT scores, applicants seeking Georgia School Counseling certification must submit passing scores on the Georgia Assessment of Content for Educators (GACE) Program Admission assessment (formerly named the GACE I or GACE Test of Basic Skills) or documented exemption.

Successful applicants may be admitted into one of the following statuses:

Regular Admission:

- An undergraduate grade point average of 2.8 or higher;
- A minimum standardized test score of: 402 on the Miller Analogies Test (MAT) or 146 Verbal and 140 Quantitative on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE); or, for **individuals seeking Georgia certification in School Counseling:** Passing scores on all three tests within the GACE Program Admission assessment [Reading (200), Mathematics (201), and Writing (202)] are required. The GACE Program Admission tests may be exempted if the applicant holds a current or expired Georgia Clear Renewable (professional) certification or sufficient scores are obtained on the SAT® (1000 Verbal/Critical Reading, and Math), ACT® (43 English and Math), or GRE® (1030 Verbal and Quantitative; after 8-1-11, 297 Verbal and Quantitative). **Individuals seeking School Counseling certification in other states** must provide passing scores on the Praxis® Core Academic Skills for Educators (Core) [Reading (156), Mathematics (157), and Writing (162)] are required. Students who enroll in the School Counseling but later apply to change concentrations must provide MAT or GRE scores. Students who enroll

in the School Counseling but later apply to change concentrations must provide MAT or GRE scores.

Provisional Admission:

- An undergraduate degree from a regionally accredited institution with an undergraduate grade point average of 2.2 or higher;
- A minimum score of: 374 on the MAT or 143 verbal and 138 quantitative on the GRE; or, for **individuals seeking Georgia certification in School Counseling:** Passing scores on all three tests within the GACE Program Admission assessment [Reading (200), Mathematics (201), and Writing (202)] are required. The GACE Program Admission tests may be exempted if the applicant holds a current or expired Georgia Clear Renewable (professional) certification or has obtained sufficient scores on the SAT® (1000 Verbal/Critical Reading, and Math), ACT® (43 English and Math), or GRE® (1030 Verbal and Quantitative; after 8-1-11, 297 Verbal and Quantitative). **Individuals seeking School Counseling certification in other states** must provide passing scores on the Praxis® Core Academic Skills for Educators (Core) [Reading (156), Mathematics (157), and Writing (162)] are required. Students who enroll in the School Counseling track but later apply to change tracks must provide MAT or GRE scores.
- A student remains in the provisional academic status until the Counselor Education admission requirements are met and the student is notified in writing of the approval of a change in status by the Graduate School. Applicants admitted in this status may not enroll in Area C courses until Regular admission status is attained.

Readmission:

- Candidates who have not been in attendance in the Counselor Education Program for two semesters must apply through the Graduate Admissions Office for readmission.
- Candidates who have not been in attendance in the Counselor Education Program for three or more semesters must apply for readmission and complete a successful interview with the Counselor Education admission committee.

Course Offerings

Upon admission to the Counselor Education program, each student is assigned a Faculty Advisor. The Advisor assists the student with program planning and approval; collaborates with the student to monitor the student's progress; approves the selection of courses each semester; determines readiness for practicum and internship (COUN 5570 and COUN 5595); and completes the student's graduation audit.

Seven hundred (700) hours of clinical fieldwork experiences are required. When students enroll in COUN 5512 (or COUN 5570, for advanced students) and COUN 5595 a clinical fee of \$125.00 is assessed in addition to tuition. Both a criminal background check and proof of professional counselor's liability insurance are required to enroll in field work (COUN 5570 and COUN 5595) classes.

The sixty semester hour, online Counselor Education Program's core curriculum consists of 48 semester hours of required coursework that is completed by all majors, regardless of concentration. Each concentration consists of an additional 12-15 semester hours of required coursework. The curriculum is structured so that the core curriculum is completed in Areas A, C, and D; specialization courses are offered in Area B.

Courses Required for Certification and Degree Programs

Code	Title	Semester Hours
Area A: Foundations (21 Hours)		
COUN 5000	Introduction to Counseling Profession	3
COUN 5500	Theories of Counseling	3
COUN 5501	Lifespan Development	3
COUN 5520	Multicultural Counseling Theory and Practice	3
COUN 5540	Prevention, Intervention, and Consultation	3
COUN 5600	Legal and Ethical issues in Counseling	3
COUN 5610	Crisis Counseling and Intervention	3
EDUC 5199	Orientation to Adv Prof Educ	0
Area B: Nature of the Learner (12-15 Hours)		12-15
<i>School Counseling</i>		
COUN 5506	School Counseling Foundations	
COUN 5514	Counseling Children and Adolescents	
COUN 5528	School Counseling P-12	
COUN 5529	School Counseling Curriculum and Program Coordination (Clinical Mental Health)	
SPED 5501	Exceptional Child	
<i>Clinical Mental Health Counseling</i>		
COUN 5508	Introduction to Mental Health Counseling	
COUN 5560	Diagnosis and Treatment	
COUN 5561	Psychopharmacology	
COUN 5519	Addiction Counseling	
<i>Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling</i>		
COUN 5504	Foundations of Rehabilitation Counseling	
COUN 5550	Medical and Psychosocial Aspects of Disability I	
COUN 5525	Case Management	
COUN 5532	Vocational Development and Placement	
Area C: Clinical Skills (21 Hours)		
COUN 5512	Counseling Strategies and Techniques	3
COUN 5515	Group Counseling and Dynamics	3
COUN 5517	Couples and Family Counseling	3
COUN 5531	Career Development and Counseling	3
COUN 5570	Practicum	3
COUN 5595	Internship	3
COUN 5598	Internship II	3
Area D: Research (6 Hours)		
Select 6 semester hours from the following:		6
COUN 5510	Assessment in Counselor Education	
COUN 5620	Research and Program Evaluation for Counselors	
COUN 5596	Thesis	
Area E: Electives		
COUN 5001	Introduction to Professional Writing	
COUN 5002	Professional Issues in Counseling	
COUN 5551	Medical and Psychosocial Aspects of Disability II	
COUN 5575	Selected Topics in Counseling	
Any Area B course in a different specialization may be used here.		
Total Semester Hours		60-63