Counseling
Master of Arts (School Counseling - Distance)

The Master of Arts is appropriate for those who wish to become counselors in K-12 schools or community agencies, such as addiction treatment clinics, mental health centers, rehabilitation agencies, and family service organizations. A commitment to social justice and appreciation of diversity are integrated throughout the curriculum. The Department of Counseling Psychology and Community Services is also committed to seeking and valuing diversity in students and staff. This includes the variety of cultures, backgrounds, values, and experiences found among faculty and students; it also includes the diversity of our professional ways of practice, our ways of learning, and our personal and professional goals. We are committed to training multiculturally competent counselors.

A Master of Arts in Counseling, with a school counseling emphasis is offered via a synchronous distance program. The School Counseling emphasis prepares students to promote the academic, career, personal, and social development of K-12 students. Completion of coursework prepares students for licensure from the North Dakota Educational Standards and Practices Board as a school counselor, and is compatible with licensure requirements in other states.

Through online courses, practical experiences, and two extended-weekend, on-campus visits for two consecutive summers, students are prepared to practice as professional school counselors in elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. Students receive a broad, theoretical foundation in counseling, plus hands-on experiences. A commitment to social justice and appreciation of diversity is also integrated throughout the curriculum.

Admission Requirements

The applicant must meet the School of Graduate Studies’ current minimum general admission requirements as published in the graduate catalog.

1. A four-year bachelor’s degree from a recognized college or university (or be in a combined program).
2. Twenty semester credits of coursework in the behavioral sciences at the undergraduate level, which must include theories of personality, abnormal psychology, developmental psychology, and statistics. Additional courses in psychology and sociology may be applied toward this prerequisite. Courses in other social science disciplines where the focus is on the description or explanation of individual or group behavior may be accepted in fulfillment of this prerequisite at the discretion of the department. Applicants must submit this information on the “Supplemental Application Form and Undergraduate Coursework Summary.”
3. A cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of at least 2.75 for all undergraduate work or a GPA of at least 3.0 for the junior and senior years of undergraduate work (based on A= 4.00).
4. Satisfactory performance on the Graduate Record Exam General Test or the Miller Analogies Test.
5. Favorable recommendations and the admission committee’s perception of the “best fit” based on the applicant’s personal statement.
6. Satisfy the School of Graduate Studies’ English Language Proficiency requirements as published in the graduate catalog.

Prerequisites:

- Twenty semester credits of undergraduate coursework in the behavioral sciences at the undergraduate level, which must include educational psychology, educational instruction methods, classroom management, and statistics. Coursework in other social sciences disciplines where the focus is on the education, description or explanation of individual or group behavior may be accepted in fulfillment of this prerequisite at the discretion of the Counseling Psychology and Community Services Department.
- Admission is based on achievement in undergraduate work, favorable letters of recommendation and the admission committee’s perception of the “best fit” based on the applicant’s personal statement. Applicants must complete the “Supplemental Application Form and Undergraduate Coursework Summary.”

Degree Requirements

- Students may enroll in the school counseling practicum after they have satisfactorily completed at least ten credits in the program. After successfully completing practicum, students will enroll in Internship in School Counseling which is a two-semester (4-6 credit) supervised counseling experience at elementary and secondary school sites. Students with a current educator license will complete 4 credit (400 hours) internships while students without educational backgrounds will be required to complete a 6 credit (600 hour) internship. Internship will typically be completed during the final semesters of the program. Internship placements are individually arranged in collaboration with the School Counseling Coordinator.

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In addition to the professional school counseling course sequence, students are required to complete a series of research training experiences, culminating in the completion of an independent research project conducted under the direction of the student's adviser. Students are encouraged to begin considering and planning their research project early in their program.

After completing the majority of coursework for the degree and advancing to candidacy, students are eligible to sit for the Master’s Comprehensive Examination, which is offered spring semester. A passing score on the examination is required for graduation.

Faculty and Areas of Expertise

- **Sarah R. Edwards, Ph.D.**, Dating and Domestic Violence, Healthy Relationships, Client/Therapist Variable Affecting Treatment Outcome; Training and Supervision Issues, Health Behaviors and Barriers to Help Seeking, Rural Psychology Issues.
- **Cindy Juntunen, Ph.D.**, Career development and counseling; supervision and counselor development; ethics; professional issues and identity; psychologists as agents of social change, diversity issues. Vocational psychology; poverty; career values in racial/ethnic minority populations; feminist counseling, supervision.
- **Rachel Navarro, Ph.D.**, multicultural vocational psychology; academic and career development, campus climate and wellbeing with a focus on culturally diverse communities.
- **David Perry, Ph.D.**, Attitudes toward persons with disabilities, how they are formed, maintained, and changed; Effective ways of providing rehabilitation education; applications of Adlerian Psychology to Rehabilitation Counseling
- **KatySue Tillman, Ph.D.**, Child and adolescent psychopathology, trauma in children and adolescents, self-injurious behaviors in children and adolescents, psychological help-seeking and treatment outcome research
- **Dorlene Walker, Ph.D.**, Data management in schools; Collaborative educational problem solving; School program evaluation.
- **Kara Wettersten, Ph.D.**, Research methods, qualitative and quantitative; career counseling, psychological testing; supervision and practice. Comparative outcome research; solution focused therapy; domestic violence; healthy relationships.
- **David H. Whitcomb, Ph.D.**, Community and Addictions Counseling Programs, Training: Counseling theories and development, Community Agencies, Master's Internship, Multicultural Counseling, Supervision and Counselor Training. Lesbian, gay, and bisexual (lgb) identity development; the sociopolitical context of coming out as lgb; facilitating multicultural competence in counselors; career paths and professional development of psychology graduate students; organizational, structural, and management issues of university counseling centers.

Contact Information

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