Help Families and Individuals Find Their Paths

The Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology degree provides the academic pathway for students who are committed to the practice of professional counseling. The program includes core courses that all MA Counseling Psychology students must take and two options for license eligibility.

- **Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT) Option** emphasizes marriage and family therapy and is designed for students who are committed to the practice of individual, couples, family, adolescent, and child psychotherapy.
- **Professional Clinical Counselor (PCC) Option** emphasizes counseling techniques and theory, including those related to career development, and is designed for students who are committed to the practice of individual and group counseling.

**Program highlights:**
- Understand the core psychological concepts that underpin counseling, psychotherapy, and mental health counseling
- Learn to assess and diagnose psychological distress, impairment, and mental disorders
- Gain a working knowledge of topics including psychopharmacology, addictive and compulsive disorders, structured psychological assessment, relational violence, gender and sexuality, and trauma/crisis

**Online and On-campus Programs**
**Monthly Starts and Accelerated Classes**
**WSCUC Accredited**
MASTER OF ARTS IN COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY

Academic Program Director: Brian Tilley; (760) 268-1550; btilley@nu.edu

The Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology degree provides the academic pathway for students who are committed to the practice of professional counseling. The program includes two core course sequences, Core Sequence I and III, that are designed to assist students in the preparation for the California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) after graduation and fulfill all BBS licensing requirements for the license relevant to the student’s MAC sequence option.

The program is guided by the standards of the California Board of Behavioral Sciences for academic training relevant to licensing as a Marriage and Family Therapist in the State of California (MFT Sequence) or as a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (PCC Sequence), and by contemporary scientific, professional, and public practice. At the completion of the program students will achieve the following outcomes required for successful practice of Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT Sequence) or Professional Clinical Counseling (PCC Sequence).

Program Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this program, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate core psychological concepts and therapeutic skills that underpin counseling, psychotherapy, and mental health counseling.
- Critically evaluate the relevant methods of research used in the study of behavior and their limitations.
- Understand and demonstrate current professional standards of ethics, values, and laws related to the practice of professional psychotherapists.
- Demonstrate cultural competence in addressing the mental health needs of people of diverse backgrounds and circumstances, including an appreciation for the wide cultural diversity among California’s multiple diverse communities.
- Evaluate psychological distress and/or impairment, mental disorders, and problems in living in diverse individuals and systems within various mental health settings.
- Develop culturally appropriate strategies, treatment plans, and professional relationships for successful interventions with diverse client groups in various clinical contexts.
- Apply related therapeutic interventions with diverse clients using a variety of psychotherapeutic models.
- Apply a working knowledge of a range of topics important to mental health practice including (but not limited to) psychopharmacology, addictive and compulsive disorders, structured psychological assessment, relational violence, gender and sexuality, and trauma/crisis.
- Understand norms and principles of public mental health work including (but not limited to) case management, collaborative treatment, evidence-based practice, strength-based model, resiliency, and recovery-oriented care to work with clients.
- Integrate professional development through self-reflection emphasizing personal capacities such as self-awareness, integrity, sensitivity, flexibility, insight, compassion, imagination, and personal presence.

Degree Requirements

To receive the Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology, students must complete at least 90 quarter units of graduate work. A total of 13.5 quarter units of graduate credit may be granted for equivalent graduate work completed at another regionally accredited institution, as it applies to this degree and if the units were not used in earning another advanced degree. Students for whom English is a second language must take and pass an English Language Proficiency exam prior to beginning any coursework. Students should refer to the section on graduate admission for specific information regarding additional application and evaluation requirements.

Prerequisites for the Major

(2 courses; 9 quarter units)

Students who hold a bachelor’s degree in Psychology may request these courses to be waived. Please contact the Academic Program Director.

PSY 501A Foundations in Counseling I
PSY 501B Foundations in Counseling II
Core Requirements

Sequence I

(6 courses; 27 quarter units)

Students will take classes from this sequence, then take 3 area of specialization courses, Core Course Sequence II.

- PSY 605  Lifespan Development  
  Prerequisite: Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology or PSY 501A and PSY 501B
- PSY 620  Perspectives on Psychology  
  Prerequisite: Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology or PSY 501A and PSY 501B
- PSY 610  Case Management  
  Prerequisite: Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology or PSY 501A and PSY 501B
- PSY 611A  Counseling Paradigms I  
  Prerequisite: Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology or PSY 501A and PSY 501B
- PSY 612A  Clinical Assessment I
- PSY 612B  Clinical Assessment II  
  Prerequisite: PSY 612A

Core Requirements Sequence II

PCC Option

(3 courses; 13.5 quarter units)

Students interested in becoming a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor will take these courses between Core Sequence I and III.

- PSY 653  Research and Evaluation
- PSY 624A  Testing and Assessment
- CED 612  Career & Academic Counseling

MFT Option

(3 courses; 13.5 quarter units)

Students interested in becoming a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist will take these courses between Core Sequence I and III.

- PSY 636  Child and Adolescent Therapy
- PSY 632A  Family Therapy
- PSY 632B  Couples Therapy

Core Requirements Sequence III

(11 Courses; 49.5 quarter units)

- PSY 627  Legal & Ethical Issues
- PSY 611B  Counseling Paradigms II
- PSY 680A  Counseling Practicum I  
  Prerequisite: PSY 611B with a minimum grade of S
- PSY 628  Group Therapy
- PSY 637  Cultural Competencies
- CHD 640  Treatment of Addictions
- PSY 626  Human Sexuality
- PSY 679  Psychology of Trauma
- PSY 680B  Counseling Practicum II  
  Prerequisite: PSY 680A
- PSY 678  Clinical Biopsychology
- PSY 638  Wellbeing & Wellness

For complete program information, see the National University Catalog 82, effective 10/2018.