

# COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE: SCHOOL COUNSELING, MASTER OF ARTS

## Overview

It is the goal of the Counseling Program to serve the needs of the San Antonio community and local school districts by developing highly skilled school counselors, clinical mental health counselors, and marriage, couple, and family counselors.

The Master of Arts degree (M.A.) in Counseling & Guidance: School Counseling requires fifty-one hours of counseling coursework. The School Counseling degree is designed for students wishing to work in the school setting. This degree emphasizes the implementation and management of school counseling programs while training highly skilled mental health professionals to utilize therapeutic and developmental principles to effect change. The 51-hour School Counseling degree satisfies academic requirements for School Counselor Certification in the State of Texas. To satisfy the 60-hour Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) academic requirements in the State of Texas, students may add 9 hours of prescribed coursework to their 51-hour plan.

## Admissions

### Admission Process

Students seeking admission to any of the counseling degree programs must meet the basic requirements outlined in the Admission section of this catalog. Applicants without an appropriate background may be required to complete additional preparatory coursework. Such coursework will be determined by the Associate Chair or other designated program representative.

Students seeking admission to any of the Counseling degree programs must meet the following criteria:

1. For applicants with an undergraduate cumulative grade point average between 2.60 and 2.99 or an undergraduate grade point average of 3.00 or higher for the last 60 semester credits (or 90 quarter credits).
2. A three-page written Statement of Purpose is required.
3. A group interview with Counseling Admissions Committee is required.
4. International students must have a minimum score of 79 on the TOEFL Internet-based test, 213 on the TOEFL computer-based, 550 on the TOEFL paper-based test, or 6 on the IELTS.

### Admission to School Counseling Program

In order to be fully admitted to the school counseling program, the applicant must meet all university program requirements as well as admission requirements specified by the State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in 19 Texas Administrative Code 227. The applicant must provide a teaching service record from a public or accredited private/charter school and complete the application for school counseling degree program. Upon receipt of the application and teaching documentation, an appointment will be scheduled between faculty and the prospective school counseling applicant. This appointment will include an oral interview, discussion of supply and demand, verification of GPA and academic standing, personal

vision statement, review of code of ethics, and notice that criminal record check is required prior to practicum and internships.

### Special Requirements for the Graduate Counseling Programs

To be considered for admission into any of the counseling degree programs, students with previous graduate coursework must be in good standing with their prior university. To ensure a solid foundation for counseling coursework, the Associate Chair or other designated program representative has the right to examine an applicant's undergraduate transcript and require additional prerequisite coursework if necessary. Applicants without an appropriate background may be required to complete additional preparatory coursework.

### Student Progress Monitoring and Program Accountability

The Counselor Education program at Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to consistent and even-handed monitoring of students' academic progress and professional development during their program of study. These activities are facilitated by the inclusion, tracking, and evaluation of key performance indicators, fitness to practice documentation, and program progress using the Tevera data integration platform. These data assist the program faculty in activities such as student support, program evaluation, curriculum development, management of field placements, and accreditation reporting.

### Program Fees

All first-semester program students are charged a \$205 program fee that provides them lifetime access to the Tevera platform and program-affiliated access to the Counseling Skills Scale (CSS). Both Tevera and the CSS are integrated meaningfully throughout every student's program of study.

## Requirements Curricula

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Required Courses</b>		
EDCG 5333	Research in Counseling	3
EDCG 5335	Human Dev Across Lifespan	3
EDCG 5311	Theories of Counseling	3
EDCG 5342	Counseling Diverse Populations	3
EDCG 5316	School Counseling: Leadership and Advocacy	3
EDCG 5313	Prof Orientation & Ethics	3
EDCG 5327	Abnormal Human Behavior	3
EDCG 5317	Counseling Techniques	3
EDCG 5325	Assessment	3
EDCG 5328	Group Counseling Techniques	3
EDCG 5353	Career Counseling	3
EDCG 5332	Substance Use/Process Addict	3
EDCG 5352	Counseling Curriculum and Systemic Interventions	3
EDCG 5350	School Counseling Practicum <sup>1</sup>	3
EDCG 5362	School Counseling Internship <sup>2</sup>	3
EDCG 5362	School Counseling Internship <sup>2</sup>	3
EDCG 5362	School Counseling Internship <sup>2</sup>	3
EDCG 5336	Abnormal Conditions and Interventions <sup>3</sup>	3
EDCG 5339	Legal Issues in Counseling <sup>3</sup>	3

EDCG 5314 Theoretical Foundations of Individual, Couples, and Family Counseling<sup>3</sup> 3

**Total Credits** 60

- 1 100 hours
- 2 200 hours
- 3 Beginning Fall 2017, students will need a total of 60 hours of counseling coursework to satisfy LPC academic requirements. In addition to the required 51 hours listed above, the following courses will need to be included to meet LPC academic requirements:

## Fitness to Practice

Admission to the program does not guarantee fitness to remain in the program. Only those students who meet program standards will be allowed to continue in the program. Students pursuing a Master of Arts degree in Counseling & Guidance: School Counseling, Master of Arts degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling, or a Master of Arts degree in Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling must meet fitness to practice standards that are assessed by faculty throughout the program. These standards include demonstration of emotional and mental fitness in their interaction with others as well as conformance with codes of professional counseling associations and of the state of Texas. Students who fail to demonstrate fitness or conformance to appropriate codes may be asked to enter into a remediation plan in order to remain in the program. If a remediation plan is developed, students must demonstrate satisfactory remediation prior to being allowed to proceed toward graduation. In rare cases, a student's ability to practice may exceed remediation and a recommendation for removal from the program is possible.

## Transferability of Courses

Transfer courses are limited to six hours and subject to approval by the Department Chair and College Dean. Courses that include the demonstration of counseling skills will not be eligible for transfer credit. Courses previously used for one graduate degree will not be approved for transfer to a subsequent graduate degree. All requests for the transfer of courses must be made within the first semester of enrollment.

## Course Load

Only grades of "A" or "B" will be accepted toward this degree. Candidates for the Master of Arts degree in Counseling and Guidance: School Counseling must earn a minimum of 51 semester credit hours and maintain a minimum overall GPA of 3.0.

## School Counselor Certification

Eligibility for the standard Texas school counselor certificate requires that a candidate:

1. Meet TEA program admission requirements;
2. Successfully complete a school counselor preparation program;
3. Pass the school counselor certification exam (TEXES-152 School Counselor Exam);
4. Hold, at a minimum, a 51-hour master's degree in counseling from an accredited institution of higher education; and
5. Document two years of classroom teaching experience in an accredited school.

In order to be fully admitted to the school counseling program, the applicant must meet all university program requirements as well as

admission requirements specified by the State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in 19 Texas Administrative Code 227. Once school counseling admission requirements have been completed, the student will receive either a) an offer of formal admission in writing or b) denial to school counseling program. (TEC 227.17) This formal offer will be dated, and must be accepted or denied in writing by the student by date specified on letter. If the CHK department does not receive a written communication of acceptance by specified date on letter, the department will consider that the student has declined the offer in writing by mail, personal delivery, facsimile, email, or an electronic notification.

Until formally admitted to school counseling program, students may not take coursework, training, or receive examination approval specific to the school counseling certification program. The coursework for the school counseling program is rigorous, interactive, student-focused, and performance-based.

In order to sit for the state exam, a candidate must be admitted to the Educator Preparation Program, meet academic competency requirements and receive approval to test from the school counseling program coordinator. Students wishing to register for the TExES School Counselor Exam will meet with the School Counseling Program Coordinator at least four weeks prior to the TExES registration deadline. Pursuant to the Texas Education Code (TEC), §22.083, candidates must undergo a criminal history background check prior to employment as an educator. A person who is enrolled or planning to enroll in a State Board for Educator Certification-approved educator preparation program or planning to take a certification examination may request a preliminary criminal history evaluation letter regarding the person's potential ineligibility for certification due to a conviction or deferred adjudication for a felony or misdemeanor offense.

## Incompletes

The spirit of the "Incomplete" is to give a student an opportunity to complete a course after the end of the semester. An Incomplete will only be considered under specific circumstances:

1. 70% of the class has been completed and student is passing with a "C" or better
2. The circumstance for which the "I" is requested is supported with documentation
3. Student has been attending class on a regular basis

Incompletes are not to be used to remedy excessive absences. Unforeseen circumstances precipitating the request for an "I", should occur near the end of the semester. Students who are experiencing difficulties at the beginning or midway through the course should contact their professor immediately to discuss options. When a professor agrees to grant an "I", a contract between the student and professor that outlines a specific timeline for completion of the course will be generated. Topics such as highest possible grade will also be outlined. If the contract is not fulfilled, the professor will submit a change of grade form with earned letter grade. All "I"s will automatically revert to an "F" after one year.

## Dropping a Course

Each student is responsible for knowing the drop date for any given semester. Professors are not responsible, under any circumstances, for "dropping" a student from a course. Please be aware that if you do not formally drop a course and fail to fulfill the academic requirements, the professor will submit the earned grade.

## **Practicum and Internship Eligibility**

In order for a student to participate in a Counseling Practicum and Internship at Texas A&M University-San Antonio, the student must have demonstrated proficiency in benchmark assessments spaced throughout the Counseling Program. Additionally, all skill-level courses must have been successfully completed at Texas A&M University-San Antonio.

Two semesters prior to enrollment in Practicum/Internship, the student will communicate with the Practicum/Internship Coordinator to discuss practicum/internship application deadlines, approved practicum/internship sites, and required paperwork for admission to Practicum/Internship. Adhering to published deadlines, students will complete and submit all required documents for practicum/internship registration approval. Students must complete core courses, be in “good standing” and have no outstanding Incompletes to be approved for admission to practicum/internship. Students must maintain the highest standards of professional behavior in order to continue enrollment in Practicum/Internship.