School Counseling

Level of Specialization

- K-12

Program Purposes

The Master of Education in School Counseling degree program is intended for individuals who plan a professional career in school counseling. In this program, the school counselor is viewed as a professional who provides services to all students in a K-12 school setting. In serving this population, the school counselor seeks to facilitate the learning and positive development of all students, and provides preventative, remedial and, at times, crisis intervention services. Thus, at the conclusion of this graduate program, candidates possess the requisite knowledge, skills and dispositions that will allow them to function effectively in the holistic development of students in the K-12 setting. These competencies are based upon the six-unit outcomes that form the foundation for the conceptual framework of the College of Education. These outcomes include becoming a dedicated professional, instructional leader, continuous assessor, educational advocate, collaborative bridge-builder and reflective decision-maker.

A background in teacher education is NOT a requirement for admission to the School Counseling program. Students who successfully complete the program will be eligible for certification as a K-12 school counselor in Maryland.

Certification

The School Counseling program is accredited by the Maryland State Department of Education.

For more information:
Office of Graduate Services
301-687-7053
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Program Objectives

1. To provide academic and experiential preparation in the major content areas of school counseling, grades K-12, in accordance with the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Program’s standards for school counseling programs
2. To provide supervised opportunities for practical application of school counseling that underscore academic learning
3. To train students in ethical practices of school counseling as prescribed by the American Counseling Association and the American School Counselor Association
4. To require knowledge, application, analysis and reflection of current thought and research in the field
5. To require knowledge, recognition and ability to work with children in a school setting in developmental, preventative, remedial and crisis counseling
6. To develop knowledge and skills in consulting with faculty, parents and referral sources in the community
7. To develop technological skills necessary to function as a school counselor
8. To require an internship experience that integrates the program’s content and skills with on-site activities and assessment
9. To develop knowledge of and ability to work with an array of diversity issues that are present in a K-12 environment
10. To foster personal growth with professional knowledge and skill development

Special Admission Criteria

NOTE: Students will be admitted for graduate study in school counseling once a year to begin coursework in the summer session. Application deadline is February 1. All applications received after the deadline will be considered pending availability in the cohort.

Applicants to the M.Ed. in School Counseling program must comply with the following:

1. If applicants have not earned at least a 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale in their undergraduate programs, they must submit a minimum score of 402 on the Miller Analogies Test or a minimum of 300 (V+Q) on the General Test of the Graduate Record Examination prior to the interview. Scores below the above criteria may be considered individually.
2. Applicants must provide the names, occupational titles, addresses and phone numbers of at least three references, two of whom must be previous work supervisors or someone who will be able to respond to questions concerning the candidate’s suitability for graduate study in school counseling.
3. Applicants will provide a typewritten statement that will answer questions about themselves. These questions will be supplied by the Office of Graduate Services as part of the application for graduate study.
4. Applicants are required to have a pre-admission interview with the graduate program coordinator.
5. Applicant’s undergraduate preparation must include the following courses (or their equivalent as determined by the program coordinator) for a total of 6 hours:
   a. Introduction/General Psychology
   b. Educational Psychology or Developmental Psychology (Child or Adolescent)
6. Applicants must provide documentation of experience working with children and/or adolescents through paid employment, extensive volunteer work and/or internship.

Special Degree Requirements

Study Plan

Students seeking a master’s degree in school counseling are required to file a study plan with the program coordinator prior to the first course. Once approved, any changes in course work require permission of the program coordinator.

Admission to Candidacy

Application for admission to candidacy is made after completion of 15-18 credit hours of graduate course work. This must include the two Professional Education Core courses (EDUC 603, EDUC 606) as well as a minimum of 6 hours in the School Counseling Concentration (including SCCO 600 and SCCO 609). A cumulative GPA of 3.0 is also required, as well as the completion of any provisional admissions requirements. Transfer credits are not counted toward the 15-18 credits unless they are accepted as equivalent courses, and then the grades are not calculated in the GPA.
The program coordinator with the program faculty will review the application and make a decision regarding degree candidacy based on evidence of satisfactory academic performance and professional growth and development of the student. If a student's performance is found to be not acceptable, or the student's behavior indicates concern for optimal functioning as a school counselor, the program coordinator and program faculty have the right to require that the student be removed from the program based on the student's aptitude, professional growth or potential. If a student is removed from the program, he or she has the right to appeal to the Graduate Leadership Team of the Education Professions Department. If the appeal is denied, the student may reapply to the program after 1 year.

Comprehensive Examinations
All students seeking a degree in school counseling are required to successfully complete the comprehensive examination. The exam will be given once in the fall and once in the spring. Students typically take the exam during or just prior to their final semester in the program. If there is a question regarding the quality of responses on the comprehensive examination, it will be read by another faculty member. If necessary, the student will have the opportunity to rewrite a question one time, or to complete an oral examination with the school counseling faculty.

Personal Growth Experience
All students are required to participate in a counseling experience designed to enhance self-growth and self-awareness. This may be individual or group counseling, or a structured workshop, and must be a minimum of 12 contact hours. Students are to establish appropriate documentation of this experience with the program coordinator.

Fingerprinting/Background Check
All students will be required to receive fingerprinting and background check before participating in any field work in the schools. School counseling candidates will complete the process the first semester (fall) through the department field placement office.

Program Description (45 credits)

Professional Education Core (6 credits)
EDUC 603 Principles and Practices of Research
EDUC 606 Developmental Theory and Experiential Growth

Area of Concentration (33 credits)
SCCO 600 Core Counseling Skills
SCCO 601 Program Planning & Service Delivery
SCCO 606 Social & Cultural Diversity: Issues & Counseling Interventions
SCCO 608 Lifestyle, Career Development and Decision-Making
SCCO 609 Theories & Techniques in School Counseling
SCCO 610 Legal, Ethical and Professional Issues in School Counseling
SCCO 612 Practicum
SCCO 613 Group Dynamics & Interventions in the School Setting
SCCO 619 Assessment Issues in the School Setting
SCCO 692 School Counseling Seminar
EDUC 700 Research Paper or Project or 3-credit elective

Electives may be selected from psychology, special education or other disciplines with approval from the program coordinator.

Capstone (6 credits)
SCCO 693 Internship in School Counseling

Total credit hours: 45

Transfer/Proficiency Credit:
If you have successfully completed (grade B or better) graduate courses at another accredited institution, you may apply for transfer credit up to 9 credits in this program. If, upon faculty assessment, the courses are deemed comparable to courses in this program, you will be awarded credit toward completion of your degree. All courses considered for transfer credit must meet the Graduate transfer credit policy requirements, including the six-year limit.

You also have an option to request a proficiency exam in one course (SCCO 600 Core Counseling Skills), based on your prior training and experience. You may earn credit for a maximum of one course in this manner. Proficiency exams may be taken only once per course. In the event “proficiency by examination” is not granted, you are expected to enroll in the course as soon as possible.

You may not exceed a combined total of 9 credits by transfer and credit by exam.