

Counseling Psychology School of Social Sciences and Education

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Program Description

The three-year, 66-semester unit Master of Science in Counseling Psychology Program at CSUB trains students to meet the community need for ethical, competent, and adaptable mental health professionals. It is designed to satisfy the academic requirements of the California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) statutory requirements, Section 4980.36 of the Business and Professions Code (BPC), for the California License in Marriage and Family Therapy (LMFT) as well as 4999.33 for the Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC). Students receive broad training that prepares them for work in diverse and changing settings. The well-trained counselor will understand that:

- counseling involves the application of intervention techniques based on the best theory and empirical research available;
- the counseling relationship is central to effective therapeutic intervention;
- counselors creatively use their knowledge, skills, and personal experiences to create an environment where clients can make positive change;
- clients' adaptive and maladaptive functioning is determined by multiple factors including individual, familial and cultural influences; and
- training and education in counseling is a lifelong process that begins in graduate school and continues throughout the counselor's professional career.

The CSUB Counseling Psychology program particularly values personal exploration in training and supervision. The curricular objectives of the Master of Science in Counseling Psychology therefore emphasize:

- a foundation in the theory and research upon which clinical practice is based;
- development of self-awareness and relationship-building skills that contribute to strong therapeutic alliances with clients;
- experiential learning, through which students learn and practice relevant skills and come to trust their own experience in work with clients;
- an understanding of and a sensitivity to the effects of diverse individual, familial, and cultural factors; and,
- development of skills needed for lifelong learning and continued professional growth.

Experiential Learning Requirements

The Master of Science in Counseling Psychology Program is sequentially arranged and includes an emphasis on principles of experiential learning. Students are expected to participate from both counselor and client perspectives in individual, dyadic, and group exercises. Enrollment in the program implies student consent to engage in individual and group experiential learning activities in various courses.

Ethical and Professional Conduct

Throughout the program, it is important for students to remember that they are enrolled in a program designed to train professional counselors. The use of case vignettes, live clients, and student experiences are essential to this process. It is, thus, expected that students will conduct themselves as professionals and maintain the confidentiality of all client or student material generated or presented in any program class. A violation of this ethical requirement of confidentiality will result in faculty review of students' conduct and subsequent progress in the Program.

The Code of Ethics of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) and the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics each stress the importance of confidentiality in counseling relationships. These codes apply not only to licensed therapists, but also to students in the MS Counseling Psychology program who are expected to maintain the confidentiality of all information disclosed by, and related to, both clients and peers in the various experiential activities throughout the program.

While the preservation of confidentiality is only one aspect of professional conduct, the faculty takes seriously the ACA Code of Ethics to endorse for a degree and/or licensure only those candidates that exemplify high standards of ethical and personal conduct; and Standard F.1.a that asks faculty to ensure that students are able to provide competent service. We refer to these concepts as pre-professional development.

Pre-Professional Development

Throughout the program students must provide evidence of the ability to interact competently and ethically with others from a variety of backgrounds. The student must engage in behaviors that:

- Demonstrate positive, consistent, and effective contributions to the classroom learning and atmosphere.
- Exhibit harmonious and collegial relationships with peers and faculty.
- Reflect professionalism and responsibility in areas such as attendance, timely completion of assignments, and attention to regulations and expectations.

Students must also demonstrate, by conduct and academic performance, achievement of curricular goals (listed above) appropriate to their progress in the program. Such evidence also may come from practicum and technique-based courses, courses with an experiential focus, or from supervised experiences. Students will be evaluated by the Counseling Psychology Faculty Committee (CPFC) at each point of reclassification and will be given feedback on their preprofessional development. The Graduate Studies section of the CSUB Catalog describes the procedures for student Appeals and Grievances.

CPSY 6110, 6130, 6360, 6410, 6420, 6430, 6460, 6810, and 6820 are clinical process classes. These are experiential in nature and require the use of live clients and video recording of sessions. Because of the additional time needed for supervision, and to move people from room to room and

to change digital recordings, the class schedule may indicate more time than mandated for clinical process classes. CPSY 6910, 6920 and 6980 are field placement courses in service providing agencies. Supervisors will rate student knowledge and skill.

ADMISSION AND APPLICATION

Students are only admitted for Fall enrollment. For application assistance or questions regarding the acceptability of prerequisite courses, please contact the program director, Dr. Erika Harper. Additional information as well as program requirements and prerequisites can be found on our website: [MS in Counseling Psychology | California State University, Bakersfield \(csub.edu\)](https://www.csub.edu/psychology/mscounselingpsych/)

Application

The Master of Science in Counseling Psychology Faculty Committee (CPFC) reserves the right to admit those applicants they deem most qualified. Although the university admits international students using standardized criteria for English language competence, the CPFC reserves the right to evaluate students for program admission for oral English mastery needed for effective communication. Students seeking admission to the Master of Science in Counseling Psychology can begin the application process by following the instructions for material submission at [Graduate | CSU \(calstate.edu\)](https://www.csub.edu/psychology/mscounselingpsych/gradapp/index.html). All program-specific application materials must be submitted as a complete package. Application deadlines are also listed on the CSUB Counseling Psychology Program Home Page: <http://www.csub.edu/psychology/mscounselingpsych/gradapp/index.html>.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for admission, the student must fulfill the following minimum requirements:

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited university. (Students with an international degree must have U.S. equivalency determined.)
- A 3.2 GPA over the most recent 60 semester or 90 quarter units.
- A minimum of three undergraduate psychology courses in addition to the prerequisite courses listed below.
- Completion of all prerequisite courses with a grade of at least a "B-" (grading scale 2.7/4.0); (note that prerequisite courses must have been completed within five calendar years of intended admission date). Prerequisite courses:
 - Introductory statistics
 - Abnormal psychology
 - A developmental psychology course (i.e., child psychology, human growth and development, or lifespan development).
- Completion of the application materials to the MS in Counseling Psychology Program including official transcripts, a personal statement, and three letters of recommendation along with three rating forms attesting to suitability and promise.
- A separate graduate admission to the CSU system. Apply directly at Cal State Apply <https://www2.calstate.edu/Apply>

The CPFC reserves the option to request supplemental documentation and information to determine suitability and promise. After an initial screening, selected applicants will be invited for an interview. Accepted applicants will be selected from those who completed a successful interview. The CPFC reserves the right to make all decisions regarding admission to the program and all decisions are final.

Background Check Policy

A background check will be conducted on all applicants admitted to the CPSY program. This must be completed no later than the first week of the second semester for all first-year students. Conviction of a misdemeanor or felony will not necessarily preclude an applicant's matriculation into the program. We believe, however, that it is ethical practice to talk with students about any criminal history they may have and its potential impact on future employment or licensure.

STUDENT CLASSIFICATIONS

The CPFC determines students' initial classification level prior to admission as well as rendering decisions regarding all subsequent changes in classification. At any point of reclassification, the CPFC will evaluate academic and pre-professional development.

Conditionally Classified

Students who have completed most, but not all, of the requirements for admission at the Classified level and show promise of success may be admitted at the Conditionally Classified level (GRA1). Students admitted at this level who complete all admission requirements or alternate requirements specified in the offer of admission will be moved to the Classified level (GRA2) at the discretion of the CPFC and only if the CPFC determines that the requirements have been completed at a level satisfactory for movement.

Classified

Students who successfully meet all requirements for admission, as determined by the CPFC, will be eligible for admission at the Classified level (GRA2). Classified graduate students may take any graduate level course meeting the requirements of their Plan of Study provided the appropriate prerequisites or co-requisites have been met.

Graduate Candidacy

Classified level students will be eligible for advancement to Graduate Candidacy (GRA3) after successful completion of all courses in the first year of the program (CPSY 6110, 6120, 6130, 6140, 6310, and 6360). These individuals must have a minimum 3.0 GPA. Students must also have received positive faculty evaluations in pre-professional development. Advancement to Graduate Candidacy is required to enroll in a supervised clinical practicum and selected courses (see below).

Requirements for the Master of Science in Counseling Psychology

To graduate with the MS degree in Counseling Psychology, a student must meet the following requirements:

- Complete the 66-semester unit program in accordance with the approved Plan of Study
 - Be in Good Standing in the MS in Counseling Psychology program: A student must maintain, at the end of each term of enrollment, a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher in courses taken to meet degree requirements and receive satisfactory evaluations of preprofessional development from faculty and field placement supervisors. Students not in Good Standing must formally request permission (and receive written approval) to enroll in additional graduate courses. The CPFC will review the explanations and plans set forth in the petition and decide whether to permit continued enrollment and what conditions must be met for a return to Good Standing. (See Academic Probation and Academic Disqualification under Division of Graduate Programs within the CSUB Catalog).
 - Be advanced to Graduate Candidacy.
 - Receive an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher for the entire 66-unit program. (Any course with a grade lower than B- will not count toward graduation.)
 - Take and pass the Master Comprehensive Examination. This is the culminating activity for the M.S. in Counseling Psychology program completed at the conclusion of the Master Comprehensive Examination course (CPSY 6460). All students must take and pass this exam to graduate.
- This three-year course sequence is for full-time students and requires attendance four late afternoons or evenings a week for the duration of the program. In addition, students are required to be available three afternoons (1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.) per week during the second year (Practicum I and II) and 20 hours per week during regular business hours (Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) for agency field placement (Traineeship I and II) during the third year. **Students who are employed full-time upon entering the program will likely need to modify their work schedule, especially during years two and three, to assure availability for mandated clinical and field work.**

Graduate Courses

CPSY 5350 Crisis and Trauma Counseling (3)

Includes trauma theory, impact of trauma and loss on children, adolescents, adults, and families. Therapeutic considerations include assessment, diagnosis, treatment planning, and current treatment approaches. Consideration of vicarious trauma and self-care for counselors. Does not count toward requirements for the MS in Counseling Psychology. Prerequisite: Graduate Candidacy standing in the MS in Counseling Psychology.

CPSY 5771 Orientation to Counseling (1)

This course is an introduction to the profession of counseling. The course is designed to acquaint individuals who are preparing to enter the counseling profession with a broad overview of the profession's historical and theoretical foundations, as well as to begin the development of a professional identity. This course must be taken the first semester following matriculation.

CPSY 5772 Self-care for Mental Health Professionals (1)

This course is designed to prepare individuals who are entering the counseling profession with information as it pertains to compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, burnout and self-care. The

course will provide didactic and experiential learning opportunities while exploring the various theories and research-supported counseling strategies and techniques to aid in the treatment of compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma.

CPSY 6110 Counseling Skills (3)

Interpersonal processes fundamental to the development of psychotherapeutic counseling strategies, with an emphasis on processes underlying verbal and nonverbal communication and the use of clinical skills applicable to interviewing, assessment, and intervention. Practice in simulated laboratory situations. Prerequisite: Admission to the MS in Counseling Psychology.

CPSY 6120 Psychopathology and Diagnostic Interviewing (3)

Examination of major types of psychopathology. Techniques of intake interviewing and determining mental status to formulate a differential diagnosis based upon the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Prerequisite: Admission to the MS in Counseling Psychology.

CPSY 6130 Adult and Family Development (3)

Exploration of the biological, psychological, and social developmental tasks and life events of the adult years from an individual, family, couple, and vocational perspective. Focus on sociocultural, gender and family issues salient to relationships, separation, nontraditional and blended families, and geropsychology. Issues of aging and long-term care are included. Prerequisite: Admission to the MS in Counseling Psychology.

CPSY 6140 Clinical Ethics and Law (3)

This course focuses on contemporary professional law and ethics related to counseling practice. Professional codes of ethics (ACA, AAMFT/ CAMFT, and APA) will be reviewed. California law that is relevant to the practice of counseling will be examined including goals and objectives of professional organizations, standards of training, licensure, and the rights and responsibilities of professional counselors. Case examples will be discussed. Prerequisite: Admission to the MS in Counseling Psychology.

CPSY 6210 Research Methods in Counseling Psychology (3)

Methods and issues associated with the conduct and use of research concerning phenomena relevant to counseling psychology. Overview of hypothesis generation, research design, data collection and interpretation, and utilization of research findings in clinical practice. Prerequisite: Classified standing in the MS in Counseling Psychology.

CPSY 6220 Psychological Testing (3)

Survey of assessment procedures applicable to MFT/PCC practice and their theoretical and applied characteristics. Consideration of the role of various kinds of assessment in typical clinical situations, as well as the impact of cultural orientation, age, and other client characteristics in ethically selecting and using assessment procedures. Prerequisite: Classified standing in the MS in Counseling Psychology.

CPSY 6240 Cultural Intersectionality in Counseling (3)

Focus on the intersection and convergence of culture, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, socioeconomic status, religion, acculturation, and chronological age. Attention also is given to issues of privilege, marginality, and oppression, including sexism, racism, classism, ableism, ageism, and heterosexism. Theoretical perspectives on multicultural counseling will be examined as well as strategies for intervention, advocacy, and promotion of social justice. Fulfills instruction in the areas of study specified in Business and Professions Code for LMFT and LPCC, Sections 4980.36 and 4999.33. Prerequisite: Classified standing in the MS in Counseling Psychology.

CPSY 6250 Psychopharmacology (3)

Fulfills the California Board of Behavioral Sciences requirement for surveying the use of pharmacological agents in patient care. Mechanisms of action, indications for referral and monitoring, common interactions and iatrogenics will be introduced. Prerequisites: Classified Standing in the MS in Counseling Psychology.

CPSY 6260 Addictions Counseling (3)

Fulfills the California Board of Behavioral Sciences requirement for surveying the treatment of substance-related and addiction disorders. This course focuses on understanding clinical issues related to addictions counseling and will address etiology, diagnosis, and treatment of addictions. Additional focus will be placed on developing understanding of recovery, co-occurring mental health issues, social and psychological implications of socioeconomic position, and cultural awareness and competencies. Prerequisites: Classified Standing in the MS in Counseling Psychology.

CPSY 6270 Career Development Counseling (3)

Focuses on the process of career development through the life span, including an emphasis on theory, resources and application, the interface between the individual and the work world, and the interactions of work and family. Special attention to adjustment to disability, and the role of contextual variables including gender, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation and identity. Prerequisite: Classified standing in the MS in Counseling Psychology.

CPSY 6280 Couple and Sexuality Counseling (3)

Focus on the couple relationship from intrapsychic, interpersonal, and systems perspectives. Emphasis on the dynamics of couple interaction through the adult lifespan, including such issues as gender, ethnicity, health discordance, desire discrepancy, monogamy, and fantasies. Special attention given to the relationship between issues of sexuality and intimate interpersonal relationships, as well as therapist dynamics in the therapeutic triad. Prerequisite: CPSY 6130, 6410 and Graduate Candidacy standing in the MS in Counseling Psychology.

CPSY 6310 Theories of Individual Counseling (3)

Examination of several contemporary individual intervention approaches based on specific behavioral, cognitive, humanistic/experiential, and psychodynamic frameworks. Consideration of

how each approach is used in clinical, school, and marriage and family counseling applications. Prerequisite: Admission to the MS in Counseling Psychology.

CPSY 6360 Advanced Counseling Skills (2)

Exploration of counseling skills used in supportive, insight-oriented, and process-oriented psychotherapies. Involvement in experiential activities designed to relate the observation, demonstration, and practice of psychotherapy to case formulation. Prerequisite: CPSY 6110, 6310 and admission to the MS in Counseling Psychology.

CPSY 6410 Theories of Family Counseling (3)

Focus on major systemic and nonsystemic orientations in relationship, couples, and family counseling. Attention to the psychodynamics of relationships and transcultural family systems, communications theory, and the role of family of origin in individual and family functioning. Students will relate their own family dynamics to the literature. Prerequisite: Graduate Candidacy standing in the MS in Counseling Psychology.

CPSY 6420 Theory and Practice of Group Counseling (3)

Focus on the major approaches to group counseling and group therapy. Importance is given to developmental process and dynamics, leadership responsibilities and skills, and ethical and cultural considerations. Emphasis on small and large group processes and involvement in experiential activities designed to relate the clinical process to theoretical explanations. Prerequisite: Graduate Candidacy standing in the MS in Counseling Psychology.

CPSY 6430 Theories and Techniques of Developmental Counseling with Children and Adolescents (3)

Focus on the major approaches to therapeutic interventions with children and adolescents. Attention to developmental issues and tasks necessary for competent counseling with children and adolescents, including biological, psychosocial, social and cultural processes that influence or disrupt normal development. Focus on the development of clinical skills necessary for effective preventive, therapeutic and consultative interventions with and related to children and adolescents. Laboratory experiences will be provided through observation, demonstration, and/or practice. Prerequisite: Graduate Candidacy standing in the MS in Counseling Psychology.

CPSY 6460 Techniques of Group and Family Counseling (3)

Focus on the development of clinical skills necessary for effective group, family, and relationship counseling. Importance is given to process dynamics, leadership responsibilities and expertise, and ethical and cultural considerations. Involvement in experiential activities designed to relate observation, demonstration and practice to theoretical explanations. Prerequisites: CPSY 6410, CPSY 6420, and Graduate Candidacy standing in the MS in Counseling Psychology.

CPSY 6810 Practicum I (2)

A supervised clinical practicum within the scope and practice of a Marriage and Family Therapist or Professional Clinical Counselor. Application of counseling procedures, with a focus on assessment, diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment of familial and relationship dysfunctions. Also

covered will be issues of development, adjustment, and maladjustment, and health and wellness promotion. Counts toward the MFT/PCC practicum requirement (Business and Professions Code, Chapter 1054, Section 4980.43, a-d; and 4999.33-36). Limited to 6 students per section. Prerequisite: Graduate Candidacy standing in the MS in Counseling Psychology, background check, and professional liability insurance.

CPSY 6820 Practicum II (2)

A continuation of CPSY 6810. A supervised clinical practicum within the scope and practice of a Marriage and Family Therapist or Professional Clinical Counselor. Application of counseling procedures, with a focus on assessment, diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment of familial and relationship dysfunctions. Also covered will be issues of development, adjustment, and maladjustment, and health and wellness promotion. Counts toward the MFT/PCC practicum requirement (Business and Professions Code, Chapter 1054, Section 4980.43, a-d; and 4999.3336). Limited to 6 students per section. Prerequisite: Graduate Candidacy standing in the MS in Counseling Psychology, CPSY 6810, background check, and professional liability insurance.

CPSY 6910 Traineeship I (3)

A supervised clinical practicum in settings designed to facilitate the professional goals of the trainee within the scope and practice of a Marriage and Family Therapist or a Professional Clinical Counselor. Advanced experience in assessment, professional writing, application of theory, use of community resources, and treatment, including trauma and prevention. [Business and Professions Code, Chapter 1054, Section 4980.36 (d-e); and 4999.33 (d,6)]. Counts towards the MFT/PCC practicum requirement (Business and Professions Code, Chapter 1054, Section 4980.03 (h), 4980.36 and 4980.43, a-d; and 4999.33-36). Prerequisites: Graduate Candidacy standing in the MS in Counseling Psychology, CPSY 6820, professional liability insurance, and placement in an approved setting.

CPSY 6920 Traineeship II (3)

A continuation of CPSY 6910. Counts towards the MFT/PCC practicum requirement. A focus on systems and aspects of care for the severely mentally ill and collaborative treatment [Business and Professions Code, Chapter 1054, Section 4980.36 (d-e); and 4999.33 (d,6)]. Counts towards the MFT/PCC practicum requirement (Business and Professions Code, Chapter 1054, Section 4980.03 (h), 4980.36 and 4980.43, a-d; and 4999.33-36). Prerequisite: Graduate Candidacy standing in the MS in Counseling Psychology, CPSY 6910, professional liability insurance, and placement in an approved setting.

CPSY 6970 Counseling Psychology Master's Examination (1)

Comprehensive examination as the culminating activity in the MS Counseling Psychology program. Offered on a credit no-credit basis only. Prerequisite: graduate candidate standing in the MS Counseling Psychology program and approval of the Program Coordinator.

CPSY 6980 Clinical Extension (1-3)

Additional supervised clinical experience for students requiring more than two semesters to complete the required hours for Practica or for Traineeships. May be repeated for credit. Does not

count toward requirements for the MS in Counseling Psychology. Offered on a credit, no-credit basis only. Requires approval by the sponsoring faculty member and the CPSY Program Coordinator.

CPSY 6990 Independent Graduate Study (1-3)

Individual supervision of counseling or investigation of an approved project leading to a written report. May be repeated for credit. Offered on a credit, no-credit basis only. Requires a petition for individual study approved by the sponsoring faculty member and the CPSY Program Coordinator.