School and Community Counseling FAQ

Program & Course Information

How long will it take to complete the program?
Students have five years to complete the program. Length of time to degree varies depending upon the number of credits taken per semester. However, students enrolled full time (12 credits per semester) are able to graduate within 2 years. Students enrolled with 9 credits per semester generally take 2 years, including summers.

How many credits are required for the M.S. in Educational Psychology Community and School Counseling concentrations?
Both concentrations require 48 credits. Students are admitted to their concentrations of choice. Advisors are assigned to students on the basis of their concentrations. Advisor approval is required for any changes in concentration.

When are courses offered?
Generally, courses are offered in the evening. Day sections of various courses are available from time to time. We also offer some courses online. The program is designed to maximize student access to courses. Please be aware that practicum placements are 20 hours per week and usually involve daytime hours.

Program Requirements

Is field experience required for completion?
Yes, both concentrations require two semesters of practicum experience. Students seek placements in sites appropriate to their concentrations. See the Counseling Program Student Handbook for more details.

May I complete my fieldwork/practicum requirements at my place-of-employment?
Yes, however, the Counseling faculty discourage this practice because of potential conflicts-of-interest between students, supervisors, and clients. Students who seek to complete fieldwork/practicum requirements at their places-of-employment need authorization from their advisors.

**Will I have to disclose personal information in course- or program-related activities?**
Yes, a number of our courses include experiential components in which students are expected to disclose personal information to some extent. Many courses also require personal exploration in papers and class exercises as part of the educational process. Although rare, students may also be encouraged to seek psychotherapy when their personal problems are judged to be preventing them from performing their training-related activities in a competent manner or posing a threat to the students or others.

**Is a background and criminal-history check required for the program?**
A background and criminal-history check is not required by the program, but some practicum placement sites may be required by the Wisconsin Caregiver Law to have such checks on file. Background checks will be conducted by the School of Education. If a student's records contain certain types of investigations, convictions, or arrests that involve harm to persons in vulnerable populations, the student's background check records will be sent to the placement site, and it is possible the student will not be able to participate in clinical placements.

**Cost and Financial Aid**

**How much does a 3-credit hour course cost? How much is full-time study?**
The Bursar's office can answer questions concerning cost at 414-229-4526.

**How can I get financial aid?**
Financial aid information can be obtained from the UWM Financial Aid Office at
Assistantships
For doctoral students, assistantships are available from the School of Education, as well as in other units on campus. In 2006-7 assistantship stipends were $10,549 for 50% (20 hours a week) assignments. In addition, all students working 33% or more receive tuition remission (meaning that tuition is waived). Students who receive assistantships may work as research assistants on faculty grants, as teaching assistants, or as project assistants. Click here for more information and to download the application for a Graduate Assistantship.

Fellowships
We also encourage prospective students to apply for scholarships and fellowships that may be available from other sources. The Graduate School offers several different fellowships options for students. These include: Dissertation fellowships, Graduate School Fellowships, & Advanced Opportunity Program Diversity Fellowships. For more information about important dates and application materials, please visit the Graduate School’s Fellowships webpage.

The Graduate School also maintains links to more than 250 external fellowships that are available to graduate students. In addition, UWM offers The Chancellor's Golda Meir Library Scholar Awards which are designed to provide graduate students with the resources necessary to pursue a year's intensive research in their chosen academic fields. Finally, numerous other internal funding sources exist including: loans, work study, student employment and overseas research funds.

Scholarships
The School of Education also offers a variety of scholarship opportunities. Visit the School of Education Scholarships webpage to find scholarship descriptions, as well as information on eligibility and important application dates.

Finally, the American Psychological Association offers a variety of fellowships and other funding resources.
After Applying to the Program

Once I apply for admission, how soon will I be notified about the decision concerning my application?
Notification will generally be within 4 weeks following the stated deadlines. All applications are held until that date. The date of an application's arrival does not influence admission decisions.

Of those who apply, what proportion of students are admitted?
Generally, about one-half of the applicants are admitted.

What happens if I am not admitted?
There are two primary reasons applicants are denied admission. First, our programs have many more applicants than we can accommodate. There is simply not enough space in our programs to admit all qualified applicants. Second, past academic performance is a very important consideration in the admissions process. Applicants who have satisfactory academic credentials and are not admitted can reapply and will be considered again during the next admissions cycle.

Already Have a Masters or Want to Transfer?

If I have a master's degree in a related area, must I complete the 48 credits?
Not necessarily. Your advisor can work with you to develop a course-of-study that will complete the certification requirements. Depending upon the Master's degree, 24-42 additional credits may be required.

Will classes taken before admission apply towards my degree?
Only graduate credits may be considered. However, there is no guarantee that graduate courses taken before admission will count towards one's degree. It is up to the individual's advisor to determine whether up to 18 credits taken within the
past 5 years are acceptable.

**How many units may be transferred from another graduate program?**
Eighteen graduate credits, or the equivalent, may be transferred if the credits are accepted by the Graduate School and are approved by one's advisor.

**Must I be a teacher to enter the program to become a school counselor?**
No, under the current school counselor certification standards, no teaching experience or internship is required. Please note that there are significant changes in the curriculum fieldwork/practicum requirements as a result of new Department of Public Instruction standards. All graduates of the school counseling track are eligible for certification as an Initial Educator: K-12.

**Is the program accredited?**
The program has full accreditation from The Masters in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council (MPCAC).

**As well as receiving a master's degree in Educational Psychology, what licenses are available to graduates?**
Two different licenses and/or certifications are available: 1) All graduates with a master's degree in Counseling meet initial criteria for the Licensed Professional Counselor (Department of Regulation & Licensing: for information visit www.drl.state.wi.us). Depending on the specific program-of-study, students may also be eligible for certification as: 2) Initial Educator: K-12, five-year license (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction: for information visit www.dpi.state.wi.us).