

THE MASTER OF ARTS IN COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY DEGREE PROGRAM (MACP)

Program Description

A Master's degree in Counseling Psychology allows a graduate to work with individuals, couples and families in a variety of settings such as private practice, hospitals and clinics. Forest Institute's Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology (MACP) program is designed to meet the educational requirements for the Licensed Professional Counselor in Missouri. The MACP provides students with the necessary education in a flexible format that is designed for students with busy schedules.

Program Goals and Objectives

Graduates of the MACP program will demonstrate requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes in the following competency areas to practice effectively as professional counselors:

Helping Relationships

- Demonstrate an ability to form and successfully maintain a therapeutic relationship.
- Understand and demonstrate successful professional roles, functions and relationships with other human service providers.
- Demonstrate and apply an understanding of group work.
- Understand and use career development theories and decision-making models for planning and counseling.

Human Growth and Development

- Demonstrate an understanding of the factors that affect normal and abnormal human behavior.
- Know and understand theories of individual and family development.

Appraisal

- Understand strategies for selecting, administering and interpreting assessment and evaluation instruments and techniques in counseling.
- Understand and distinguish different types of testing and assessment.

Research

- Have knowledge of and use methods of research to improve counseling effectiveness.

Social and Cultural Diversity

- Demonstrate an understanding of theories of multicultural counseling, theories of identity development and multicultural competencies.
- Understand and demonstrate strategies for working with diverse populations and ethnic groups.

Ethics

- Demonstrate an understanding and application of ethical standards of the American Counseling Association (ACA) and related entities.

** The administration of assessments is limited to those that are appropriate for a Master's level licensed professional. Assessments should not be administered without appropriate education, training and experience. The Assessment course (MACP 501) within the MACP curriculum is not sufficient to meet the training and experience requirements set forth by the State of Missouri. Rather, its purpose is to provide students with an understanding of commonly used assessment tools. Administering assessments without training and experience is considered practicing outside one's professional competence boundaries, which is in violation of the ethical standards and principles as specified by the Committee for Professional Counselors (Missouri) in the Missouri Code of State Regulations, Title 20, Rule: 20 CSR 2095-3.010.*

Curriculum Requirements

The MACP requirements completion of the following 48 credit hours:

MACP Curriculum Requirements	
Core Courses	Credit Hours
Capstone Seminar	3
Career Development	3
Child and Adolescent Therapy	3
Elective	3
Ethics and Professional Issues	3
Fundamentals and Techniques of Assessment	3
Group Intervention	3
Health Psychology	3
Human Diversity	3
Lifespan Development	3
Practicum	6
Psychopathology	3
Relationship and Interview	3
Research Methods	3
Theories of Counseling	3

Practicum Requirements for MACP

Information related to MACP practicum requirements is contained in the Clinical Training Manual (Appendix B)

Candidacy Status

Subsequent to the completion of at least twelve (12) credit hours and prior to the completion of twenty-one (21) credit hours, MACP students must petition for candidacy status. The purpose of this process is to ensure a student's fitness to continue in the program, evaluate the sufficiency of academic progress and evaluate the student's writing aptitude. To begin the candidacy process, the student must submit a Candidacy Portfolio which consists of the following two components:

1. Petition Form which includes a requirement of signatures from two (2) program faculty with whom the student has had contact; and
2. Candidacy Essay, which is an integrated reflection of the student's career goals, concerns attaining those career goals and perceived progress toward completion of program goals and objectives thus far. The typical essay is 8-10 pages in length (following APA style) and must include references.

The Candidacy Portfolio is submitted to the Program Director after successful completion of the required credit hours. Following submission of the portfolio, students are notified in writing of their status in the program within thirty (30) days. Students are not eligible to begin practicum until candidacy has been achieved; therefore, students are strongly encouraged to submit the Candidacy Petition and Portfolio to the MACP Program Director at least one term prior to the expected start date of their practicum and to keep in mind that Candidacy must be achieved prior to the completion of twenty-one (21) credit hours. Students are not allowed to register for more than twenty-one (21) credit hours until Candidacy has been achieved.

Capstone Process

The Capstone Project is an original, scholarly project. The MACP student is expected to identify a problem, then review and critique the theoretical and empirical literature surrounding that problem. The written document should include both a description of the available literature in that area and a critical evaluation of that literature. The literature review should systematically evaluate the premises that logically support a particular research question or testable hypothesis related to the identified problem.

Although students should be generating ideas upon commencement into the program, the requirement for the Capstone Project is met within two different courses. As a graded requirement of Research Methods, students must submit an acceptable outline of their Capstone Project. Subsequent to the successful completion of Research Methods, students may enroll in Capstone Seminar. A graded requirement of Capstone Seminar is that students successfully complete the Capstone Project.

Graduation Requirements for Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology Degree

To be eligible to receive an MACP degree, a candidate must:

- Satisfactorily complete the required program hours (48 credit hours) and courses as specified in the curriculum requirements;
- Earn a grade of "B" or better for each course attempted;
- Successfully complete the Candidacy Process;
- Successfully complete the Capstone Project;
- Successfully complete the required practicum hours and experiences;
- Pay for all tuition, fees, debts or other property owed to Forest; and
- Demonstrate professional attitude, decorum and ethics commensurate with the profession.

Note: Students are not allowed to graduate while on probation or under any other administrative action.

Student Professional Organizations

MACP Students are strongly encouraged to participate in national, state and regional counseling psychology organizations to experience the personal growth and networking opportunities provided from such experiences. Although students are responsible for selecting extracurricular experiences that meet their own career and service objectives, the following organizations may be a good fit with MACP student interests:

American Counseling Association

www.counseling.org

American Mental Health Counselors Association

www.amhca.org

American Psychological Association

www.apa.org

Missouri Mental Health Counselors Association

www.mmhca.com

Licensure and Employment

Licensure in the state of Missouri is granted by the Committee for Professional Counselors and is not guaranteed upon graduation from the Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology. Education is only one of three components necessary for licensure. Applicants must also pass an exam and obtain experience prior to licensure. Further information on licensure requirements is available on-line at www.pr.mo.gov/counselors.asp.

Students who wish to obtain licensure in a state other than Missouri should contact the appropriate licensing board to become aware of state-specific requirements.

The professional duty of the MACP faculty and administration is to endorse or recommend a student or graduate for employment opportunities, licenses, certifications and/or other credentials to which the individual is adequately prepared through knowledge, training and experience. It is not within the professional role or responsibility of any program faculty, administration or staff to recommend or verify training, experience or expertise that a student does not possess or to which the faculty do not have personal knowledge. Program representatives are required to follow the procedures and agreements of the licensing and certifying bodies. Students and graduates are also expected to become familiar with these procedures prior to requesting endorsement.