



Stephen F. Austin State University
Department of Human Services

Community Counselor Education Program

Information Packet

Revised Spring 2005
www.sfasu.edu/hs

THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Stephen F. Austin State University, located in historic Nacogdoches, Texas, was established by the state legislature in 1921. Originally founded as a teachers college, it is now a regional university with approximately 440 full and part-time faculty, and an average enrollment of more than 11,000 students each regular semester and more than 5,000 students each summer semester. The University grants fifteen baccalaureate degrees and emphasizes master's level study in Arts, Business, Education, Forestry, Humanities and Sciences.

The Department of Human Services offers multifaceted programming. The Department of Human Services was established as a separate department in the College of Education in 1968. The Department offers undergraduate majors in rehabilitation services, orientation and mobility, generic special education and speech and language pathology. Teaching specialties are offered in deaf education and teacher of the visually handicapped. Graduate majors include Counseling, School Psychology, Communication and Speech Disorders and Special Education.

PROFESSION OF COMMUNITY COUNSELING

Community counseling is a multifaceted endeavor intended to provide both prevention and remediation by using a combination of direct services and environmental interventions to meet client needs within a community setting. A focus on primary prevention emphasizes lowering the incidence of emotional problems and promoting positive mental health among apparently well-functioning people within a community context. Remediation attempts to assist those with chronic and acute problems to resolve and/or reduce their problems and the effects of these problems.

Community counselors are aware of the individual's interaction with his or her social system and therefore seek change in both the individual and the community system. Community counselors provide 1) direct community services (preventative education); 2) direct client services (direct counseling services); 3) indirect community services (influencing public policy); and 4) indirect client services (advocacy for special groups and individuals).

Community counselors provide interventions for individuals, small and large groups, and families in their efforts to prevent and/or remediate problems. Community counselors begin the counseling process by learning about their counsees. Gathering information about the client's concern may include interviewing not only the client, but also school and employment personnel, appropriate medical personnel and family members and other relevant persons to determine the exact nature and possible solution to the problem.

Employment

Community counselors work in a variety of settings. Possible employment settings include state Mental Health and Mental Retardation centers, state and private psychiatric hospitals, probation and correctional institutions, various private, community based counseling settings, university counseling centers, and private practice. Other settings include private industry, including insurance companies and other commercial enterprises, consulting firms, and various employee assistance programs. Employment of community counselors is expected to grow at about the same average for all occupations through the year 2010.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

A 48 semester hour master's degree in community counseling, is generally considered the minimum educational requirement for community counselors. For most counseling positions, state licensure as a Professional Counselor or eligibility for licensure is required.

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) accredits graduate programs in community counseling. A minimum of two (2) years of study, including both a supervised practicum and internship is required for the master's degree. Master's degree programs generally offer courses in human development, social and cultural foundations, the helping relationship, group counseling, lifestyle and career development, appraisal and assessment, research and evaluation, and professional orientation.

COMMUNITY COUNSELING PROGRAM

A major part of the mission of the Community Counseling Program at Stephen F. Austin State University (SFASU) is to train counselors who can help to meet the growing demand for mental health services. Toward this goal, the Department of Human Services offers a concentration in Community Counseling. The program is fully accredited by the **Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)**. The curriculum combines academic theory and technique courses with hands-on practicum and field-site internship experiences. The faculty of the Community Counseling Education Program place great value on exposing students to a variety of theories and techniques of counseling, appropriate professional counseling organizations, and interdisciplinary professional activities.

The Community Counseling Program at Stephen F. Austin State University endorses the philosophy that counseling is an empowering process in which persons exercise control over their own lives. The program adheres to concepts of the holistic nature of people, self-responsibility for health promotion and wellness, the uniqueness of each individual, and equal opportunity for counseling services for all persons.

The program and course of study in Community Counseling is organized to meet the following objectives:

1. To provide a comprehensive base of knowledge in the areas of human growth and development, social and cultural foundations, counseling relationships, group processes, consultation skills, lifestyle and career development, appraisal, research and evaluation, professional orientation, and family counseling.
2. To provide a theoretical and experiential background for conceptualizing and implementing strategies, techniques and therapeutic procedures for individual, group, and family counseling within a multicultural and developmental context.
3. To provide opportunities to develop an ethical and legal responsibility toward the counseling profession through appropriate readings and personal experiences.
4. To provide opportunities for self-development through course work, research, laboratory experiences, group interaction and facilitation, and supervised practicum and internship experiences.
5. To provide support for professional development through inservice and continuing educational programs, ready access to current professional literature, and information on counseling employment trends and opportunities.
6. To provide, through classroom and clinical activities, opportunities to develop, identify, and articulate a personal philosophy and orientation for counseling.
7. To provide a working knowledge of the community social service system.
8. To provide opportunities to conduct appropriate assessments and develop treatment plans based on DSM-IV diagnostic procedures.
9. To provide opportunities to develop a strong sense of professional identity as a counselor through appropriate readings, membership and participation in the state and national counseling associations (TCA and ACA), and clinical and classroom experiences.
10. To provide the didactic and clinical experiences necessary to become a competent Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC) and Nationally Certified Counselors (NCC).

The primary focus of the master's program in Community Counseling is the development of a counseling practitioner. Although the program emphasizes the evaluation and use of counseling research, the program's aim is to produce practitioners who can provide high quality counseling and counseling related services.

MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN COMMUNITY COUNSELING

The Master of Arts degree in Community Counseling requires a minimum of 48 semester hours of academic preparation. The degree includes a required core curriculum of 36 hours, 9 hours of practicum and internship, and 3 hours of elective counseling or counseling related courses.

Students must have a minimum of 18 undergraduate hours in a combination of education, psychology, sociology, and/or rehabilitation coursework. Included in these 18 hours must be a course in Abnormal Psychology and two of the following courses or their equivalents: General Psychology, Psychology of Adjustment, or Developmental Psychology. The curriculum is comprised of the following courses:

CURRICULUM PLAN FOR COMMUNITY COUNSELING STUDENTS BACKGROUND COURSES

PSY 275 Abnormal Psychology

With Two of the Following

PSY 133 General Psychology
PSY 143 Psychology of Adjustment
EPS 485 Human Growth and Development

FIRST YEAR

COU 520 Introduction to Counseling
COU 531 Theories of Counseling
EPS 585 Advanced Human Growth and Development
COU 525 Vocational and Educational Information
COU 522 Family Counseling
COU 529 Community and Agency Counseling
COU 533 Counseling Skills and Techniques
COU 535 Multicultural Counseling

SECOND YEAR

COU 591 Mental Health and Psychopathology
EPS 559 Tests and Measurements
EPS 550 Research Methods
COU 528 Group Counseling
COU 594 Practicum in Counseling
COU XXX Specialization Course - with guidance of graduate advisor
COU 595 Internship in Community Counseling

Some of these courses may be taken during the summer sessions.

Total 48 hrs.

APPLICATION AND ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES

IMPORTANT! All graduate students in the Community Counselor Education Program should take special care to carefully read the guidelines outlined in the Stephen F. Austin State University Graduate Bulletin for the year in which they entered their program. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with and adhere to the regulations for admission, academic policies, application for graduation, and general requirements for the Master's degree--especially the Checkpoints for the Master's Candidate.

ADMISSION TO THE MASTER'S PROGRAM IN COMMUNITY COUNSELING

Admission to the Master's degree program in community counseling is contingent upon admission to the Graduate School; therefore, students applying to the Graduate Community Counselor Education Program (www.sfasu.edu/hs) must first apply to the Stephen F. Austin State University Graduate School. Details

regarding Graduate School application are contained in the Graduate Bulletin (<http://www.sfasu.edu/bulletin/>). Criteria for clear admission to the Graduate School includes a 2.8 GPA on the last 60 hours of undergraduate work and a 2.5 on all undergraduate work. Further, the applicant must present General Test Scores on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). **All admission materials must be received by the Counselor Education Admissions Committee Thirty (30) days prior to the end of the semester to be considered for the following semester admission.**

The Department of Human Services Counselor Education Program admission procedures require:

1. Application to graduate school
2. Official Transcript(s)
3. Verbal and Quantitative Graduate Record Examination Scores
4. For clear admission, the student must have a composite score of a student's last sixty (60) undergraduate hours GPA multiplied by the GRE Scores which **equals at least 2400**. For provisional admission a minimum score of 2000 necessary for initial consideration by the Counseling Program admissions committee.
5. Three (3) letters of recommendation - of which one should be from a professional in the field of study (See Attached recommendation forms)
6. Autobiographical letter of application to the department - Your responses to the following questions should total 2-4 pages, typed and double spaced.
 - A. **Why did you choose counseling as a possible career and what life experiences have led you to your decision to enter the helping profession?**
 - B. **Each person has people who are important and whose feelings and opinions are valued. Tell something about your "reference group" (those people who are valued), and indicate who they are and how they have affected you.**
7. Current Resume.

The applicant's file is reviewed by the Counseling Program Admissions Committee, which makes recommendations for acceptance or rejection of individual applicants to the program. Students are notified by letter of the committee's recommendation on their application.

The Counselor Education Program has enacted a rolling admission policy. Candidates for admission will be considered in the 30 days following a completed application packed. The packed is not reviewable until all admission criteria are completed.

Students who do not have their GRE scores in by the time they make application to the program will not be provisionally accepted to the Graduate School for study in community counseling. No student will be accepted to the Master's program in Community Counseling unless they have obtained the minimum factor score of 2000. Although the Graduate School allows students to take up to 12 semester hours of coursework under "Post-Baccalaureate Student" status prior to their being formally accepted into one of the school's recognized degree programs the **counselor education program only allows six (6) semester hours before formal admission** to the program. Attending classes under the Post Baccalaureate student status does not imply admission to the program.

NOTE: Student's who have not met all of the requirements for clear admission into the Master's degree program in Community Counseling may not apply for financial aid with any of the Federal stipend or local scholarships available through the department.

The Review of all graduate applicants involves consideration of multiple factors. In addition to criteria set by the Graduate School, the Department considers the following:

- < GPA
- < Match between professional goals and the Counselor Education Program's mission
- < Letters of recommendation
- < Professional development, experience and accomplishments
- < Bilingual/multilingual proficiency
- < GRE scores
- < Evidence of leadership potential
- < Personal interviews

Other factors, including quality of prior educational opportunities (high school and undergraduate), family's educational background, disability, socio-cultural experiences, English language proficiency (for international students, measured by the TOEFL score), and any other factors which may have significantly influenced the applicant's academic and professional record to-date. Program areas may use additional factors in the review process, as appropriate (e.g., minimum number of years of teaching or field experience, adequate professional preparation in the chosen area of specialization).

Steps in the graduate admissions review process:

- < The completed application file is forwarded to the chosen program area for review;
 - < The program area makes a recommendation to the Counselor Education Admissions Committee;
 - < The recommendation by the Counselor Education Admissions Committee is then submitted to the department chair who then forwards the recommendations to the College of Education and to the Graduate School.
 - < The applicant is notified of the final decision by the Human Services Department Chair and by the College of Education Dean, The Dean makes the final decision on admission to graduate status
- Applicants are not guaranteed admission even though they meet these minimum requirements, because some graduate programs have limited space and facilities.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The American Counseling Association (ACA) is the predominant organization in the field of counseling. It is comprised of several divisions.

American Counseling Association (ACA)

Purpose of ACA: To serve its members and the public through programs designed to advance the educational and practical aspects of counseling in all settings.

Benefits of ACA Membership:

1. Receipt of the Journal of the American Counseling Association
2. Participation in the supported liability, disability and life insurance programs.
3. Receipt of the GUIDEPOST.
4. Placement services
5. Access to the National Career information center.
6. ACA's Professional information and reference service.
7. Workshop and conference information.

For further information and applications for ACA, contact your advisor or write:

ACA Membership Division
5999 Stevenson Avenue
Alexandria, Virginia 22304
www.counseling.org

For information and applications for the state affiliate of ACA, TCA (Texas Counseling Association), write:

Texas Counseling Association
316 West 12th Street, Suite 402
Austin, TX 78701
Ph. 512-472-3403
www.txca.org

LICENSURE

The Texas Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors has been designated by the Texas Legislature as the licensing body for counselors in Texas who want to pursue a career as a Licensed Professional Counselor.

Any person practicing counseling activities and/or claiming the credentials of a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) is required by law to submit appropriate credentials for evaluation and take an examination before recognition is granted. The Board may initiate requirements over and beyond those one might satisfy in any given degree program. It is wise to contact the Board to gain specific information on requirements that may be applicable at the time one applies for licensure.

Applications and additional information on the LPC may be obtained by contacting:

Bobbie Alexander, Executive Secretary
Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors
P.O. Box 12197, Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711
(512) 834-6658

http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/hcqs/plc/lpc/lpc_def.htm

GRADUATE FACULTY

Professors

Dale E. Fish, Ph.D., University of Arizona
David L. Jeffrey, Ed.D., Oklahoma State University
William F. Weber, Ed.D., University of Northern
Robert O. Choate, Ed.D., University of Nevada
H. A. Chris Ninness, Ph.D., University of North Texas, Texas Woman's University

Associate Professors

David L. Lawson, Ph.D., University of North Texas

Assistant Professors

Wendy Enochs, PH.D., University of Arkansas

Clinic Director/Lecturer

Robert Patterson, MA., Stephen F. Austin State University

Recommendation Form



Stephen F. Austin State University Counselor Education Program Recommendation Form

To the Applicant: This form should be given to: (a) a professor, outside the SFA Counselor Education program, with whom you have studied; (b) an employee supervisor under whom you have taught or worked; and/or (c) a practicing counselor. The recommender should be able to comment on your qualifications for graduate study and as a participant in the counseling profession.

1. Are you applying for the school, community or rehabilitation counseling program? (Check one)

School

Community

Rehabilitation

Applicant		Recommender	
Your Name:		Your Name:	
Social Security #		Organization and address	
Your Address		Your Title	
City, State, Zip		Relationship to Student	

You may wish to retain your right to review information provided by the recommender you choose. Some persons prefer not to complete recommendation forms unless they can be assured of the confidentiality of their comments. It is our opinion that comments provided on a confidential basis are likely to be of more help to us in judging important characteristics such as creativity, originality, independence and research capability. Therefore, the Stephen F. Austin State University Counselor Education Faculty are affording you the opportunity to waive your right of subsequent access to this reference statement. In any event, your application for admission and/or financial support will be given full consideration based on all the information accumulated in your application file, including this form, regardless of your decision on waiving your right of future review. It is our policy to shred recommendation forms and letters following the admission decision.

I do waive my right to subsequent access to this recommendation form

I retain my right of subsequent access to this recommendation form.

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

PLEASE MAIL DIRECTLY TO:

*Counselor Education Admissions Committee
 Box 13019, SFA Station
 Nacogdoches, TX 75962-3019*

Applicant Name _____ Date: _____

To the Recommender: the above named individual has applied for admission to our Masters degree program in either school, community or rehabilitation counseling. We are asking you to provide information and evaluation concerning this applicant's ability to complete graduate study in counseling and/or their potential for success in the counseling profession.

1. **How long and under what circumstances have you known the applicant?**
2. **Please rate the applicant with others with whom you have worked in a similar capacity by placing a check (T) in the appropriate box.**

Qualities	Lower Third	Middle Third	Upper Third	Top 10%	Not Able to Judge
Ability to collaborate with others					
Creativity					
Emotional maturity and stability					
Ethics/Personal integrity					
Flexibility					
Friendliness					
Initiative and self-direction					
Intellectual ability/critical thinking					
Interpersonal skills					
Leadership					
Observed competence					
Potential as a Counselor					
Psychological health					
Quality of Work					
Response to feedback					
Tolerance for ambiguity					
Writing ability					

3. **On a separate letterhead, please attach a letter which includes a description of the applicant's particularly relevant strengths, limitations, and other pertinent information that might help in making our decision.**
4. **At what level of overall confidence would you recommend the applicant?**

- Not Recommend
 Recommend with Reservations
 (Please specify below)
 Recommend
 Strongly Recommend

Recommender Signatures and Information

 Name (PRINT) Date

 Signature of recommender Email address

Stephen F. Austin State University does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national or ethnic group, religious preference, disability, or sex in any aspects of its operations.

GUIDE FOR GRADUATE COUNSELING STUDENTS ADMITTED TO EARN GRADUATE DEGREE

What Action to be Taken:	What Action Should be Taken:	Where to Secure Forms/Information:	Whom to See:
1. Take Aptitude Test of Graduate Records Exam	Preferably at least 12 weeks prior to March 1 and October 1 admission deadlines or 3 weeks for computer-based testing	Counseling and Career Services	Send application to Princeton, N.J. office
2. Apply for Admission to the Graduate School	Prior to application to the Counseling Program	Graduate Office, Room 310, Austin Building	Graduate Office
3. Apply for admission to the Counseling Program	Rolling Admission - 30 days after receipt of completed application materials	Graduate Office and Department of Counseling and Special Educational Programs, Room 213, Birdwell Building	Rehabilitation - Dr. Bob Choate Community- Dr. Jane Holland Dr. Tom Caffery School- Dr. Jan Stalling
4. Develop class schedule	After notice of admission and before each registration period	Graduate Program Advisor	Graduate Program Advisor
5. Join Texas Counseling Association	Prior to completion of first semester in program	Graduate Program Advisor	Graduate Program Advisor
6. Request assignment of advisor	Before first registration	Graduate Program Advisor in Major	Graduate Program Advisor in Major Department
7. Get on List for COU 533 Skills and Techniques	During First Semester in Program	Graduate Program Advisor or Dr. Dale Fish	Dr. Dale Fish, Room 114, Birdwell Building, 468-1150
8. Get on List for COU 528 - Group Counseling	During First Semester in Program	Graduate Program Advisor or Dr. Jan Stalling	Dr. Jan Stalling, Room 121 Birdwell Building, 468-1366
9. Complete Degree Plan	Before the end of your second semester in program and not later than completing 12 hours of graduate work.	Graduate Program Advisor	Major Program Advisor
10. Apply for Admission to Candidacy	After completing 15 semesters of graduate work to include COU 520 or COU 505, COU 531 and 533, EPS 559 and 585.	Graduate Program Advisor Candidacy Coordinator Dr. Tom Caffery Counseling Program Handbook	Graduate Program Advisor Candidacy Coordinator
11. Petition for changes in degree plan as needed or desired	When changing degree plan either major or minor programs	Graduate Program Advisor	Major Program Advisor Minor Program Advisor
12. Apply for Practicum	Oct. 17, for Spring, Summer March 15 for Fall	Practicum, Internship Coordinator	Graduate Program Advisor

13. Apply for Internship	Oct. 17, for Spring, Summer March 15 for Fall	Practicum, Internship Coordinator	Graduate Program Advisor
14. Pay Malpractice Liability Insurance fee	End of semester prior to Practicum and Internship	Practicum, Internship Coordinator	Graduate Program Advisor
15. Apply for degree, pay graduation fee, and arrange for cap and gown	By deadline in current Graduate School Bulletin	Graduate Office	Graduate Office
16. Pay for Thesis binding and microfilming	Before scheduling thesis examination	Library	Library
17. Arrange to complete comprehensive examination	During final semester before graduation	Graduate Advisor Dr. Jane Holland	Dr. Jane Holland
18. Study the Graduate School Bulletin and Graduate Counseling Handbook	Frequently	Admissions or Registrar Counseling Clinic	Counseling Clinic