

# Stephen F. Austin State University

Department of Human Services



## School Counselor Education Program Information Packet

Revised Fall 2006

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUBJECT	PAGE
The Department of Human Services	3
Profession of School Counseling	3
The School Counseling Program	4
The Master of Arts Degree in School Counseling	5
Curriculum Plan for School Counseling Students	6
Application and Admissions Procedures	7
Admission to the Master Degree Program	7
Financial Assistance	8
Professional Organizations	9
School Certification	9
Licensure	10
Counseling Faculty	10
Recommendation Forms	12
Guide for Graduate Counseling Students	14

## **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 5,500 students each summer semester. The University grants fifteen baccalaureate degrees and emphasizes master's level study in Arts, Business, Education, Forestry, Humanities and Sciences. Doctoral degrees are offered in Forestry and Educational Leadership.

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, Speech and Language Pathology, School Psychology, Low Vision and Special Education.

### **PROFESSION OF SCHOOL COUNSELING**

The faculty of the Department of Human Services believe the mission of the department is to produce competent members of the counseling profession; one of the areas of emphasis within this broad framework is the profession of school counseling. School counseling is a multifaceted endeavor intending to educate the whole child encompassing academic, social, and emotional growth, and career development through a comprehensive developmental guidance and counseling program.

The four main components of a school guidance program include, individual planning, responsive services, guidance curriculum, and system support. The professional school counselor manages the program in order to assist all students in achieving their academic potential in order to lead fulfilling lives as responsible members of society.

It is imperative that school counselors have a strong professional identity and a commitment to the profession. School counselors can provide a valuable service not only to the students, but to the parents, the school and to the community. Within this framework, the school counselor acts as the link in providing an avenue to positive, healthy communication and helps to provide an atmosphere that will enhance the well being of his/her client.

#### **Employment**

Qualified school counselors are currently in great demand in Texas. According to Texas Education Agency (TEA) during the 2001-2002 academic year, there was a total growth in school counseling jobs of 685. This growth has continued and there are currently over 8000 school counselors in the state of Texas. The job market is extremely positive at this time, and graduates of this program can feel confident in their potential for success in the school counseling market.

#### **Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement**

A master's degree from a school counselor preparation program, two years of classroom teaching experience, and successful completion of the state certification exam are required in order to be certified as a professional school counselor in the state of Texas. In addition to school certification, school counselors may choose to complete the requirements to be licensed as a professional counselor.

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) accredits graduate programs in school counseling. A minimum of two (2) years of study, including 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.

## **SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM**

A major part of the mission of the School Counseling Program at Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA) is to train counselors who can help to meet the growing demand for counseling services. Toward this goal, the Department of Human Services offers a concentration in School Counseling. The program was designed based upon criterion established 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 School Counseling 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 School 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 academic programming and counseling services for all persons.

The program and course of study in School Counseling are organized to meet the following objectives:

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.

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.

To provide opportunities to develop an ethical and legal responsibility toward the counseling profession through appropriate readings and personal experiences.

To provide opportunities for self-development through course work, research, laboratory experiences, group interaction and facilitation, and supervised practicum and internship experiences.

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.

To provide, through classroom and clinical activities, opportunities to develop, identify, and articulate a personal philosophy and orientation for counseling.

To provide a working knowledge of the community social service system.

To provide opportunities to conduct appropriate assessments and develop treatment plans based on DSM-IV diagnostic procedures.

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, TSCA, ACA, and ASCA), and clinical and classroom experiences.

To provide the didactic and clinical experiences necessary to become a competent Certified School Counselors, Licensed Professional Counselors and Nationally Certified Counselors (NBCC).

The primary focus of the master's program in School 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 SCHOOL COUNSELING**

The Master of Arts Degree in School 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 9 undergraduate hours in a combination of education, psychology, sociology, and/or rehabilitation coursework. Included in these 9 hours must be a course in Abnormal Psychology, General Psychology, and Educating Exceptional Children. The curriculum is comprised of the following courses:

**CORE CURRICULUM**

Course	Title	Semester Hours
COU 520	Introduction to Counseling	3
COU 522	Family Counseling or	3
COU 529	Child and Adolescent Therapy	
COU 524	The School Counselor	3
COU 525	Vocational and Educational Information	3
COU 528	Group Counseling	3
COU 531	Theories of Counseling	3
COU 533	Counseling Skills and Techniques	3
COU 535	Multicultural Counseling	3
COU 591	Mental Health Counseling	3
EPS 550	Research Methods or Seminar in Rehabilitation Research	3
EPS 559	Tests and Measurement	3
EPS 585	Advanced Human Growth and Development	3
<b>CLINICAL EXPERIENCE</b>		
COU 594	Practicum in Counseling	3
COU 595	Internship in Counseling	6
COU XXX	Counseling Electives	3
	Total	48

## CURRICULUM PLAN FOR SCHOOL COUNSELING STUDENTS\*

### BACKGROUND COURSES

PSY 275	Abnormal Psychology
SPE 329	Survey of Exceptionalities
	or
SPE 567	Trends in Educating Exceptional Children
PSY 133	General Psychology

### FIRST YEAR

COU 520	Introduction to Counseling
COU 531	Theories of Counseling
COU 533	Counseling Skills and Techniques
COU 535	Multicultural Counseling
EPS 585	Advanced Human Growth and Development
EPS 550	Research Methods
COU 528	Group Counseling
COU 525	Vocational and Educational Information

### SECOND YEAR

COU 591	Mental Health and Psychopathology
EPS 559	Tests and Measurements
COU 524	School Counseling
COU 594	Practicum in Counseling
COU 522	Family Counseling
	or
COU 529	Child and Adolescent Therapy
COU XXX	Specialization Course - with advise of graduate advisor
COU 595	Internship in School Counseling

**48 Semester Hours** \_\_\_\_\_ **Degree Requirements**

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

For a working professional, six hours is the maximum recommended course load per semester. For educators who are not working during the summer, additional courses can be taken during that time. The semester that a student is enrolled in Practicum, a lighter course load is recommended in order to provide maximum flexibility in scheduling clients.

### APPLICATION AND ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES

**IMPORTANT!** All graduate students in the School Counselor Education Program should take special care to read carefully the guidelines outlined in the Stephen F. Austin State University Graduate Catalogue 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 SCHOOL COUNSELING**

Admission to the Master's degree program in school counseling is contingent upon admission to the Graduate School; therefore, students applying to the Graduate School Counseling Education Program must first apply to the Stephen F. Austin State University Graduate School. Details regarding Graduate School application are contained in the Graduate Catalog. **All admission materials must be received by the Counselor Education Admissions Committee 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
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.
8. **Current Resume.**

**The Counselor Education Program has enacted a rolling admission policy. Candidates for admission will be considered the month following a completed application packet. The packet is not complete until all admission criteria is 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 rehabilitation counseling. **No student will be unconditionally 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 counseling program only allows 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 departments mission
- < Letters of reference
- < 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 may be considered. 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 Counseling Admissions Committee;
- < The recommendation by the Counseling 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 Department Chair and by the College of Education Dean

Applicants are not guaranteed admission even though they meet these minimum requirements, because some graduate programs have limited space and facilities.

## **Financial Assistance**

Students have the opportunity to apply for financial assistance through the Stephen F. Austin State University Financial Aid Office, located on the first floor of the Austin Building. The Department of Human Services has one source of financial assistance for students in the graduate program:

A limited number of Graduate Assistant positions are available in the Department of Human Services. Applications are available from the Department Secretary. Occasionally, mid-year graduate assistantships are available and require the same application (Appendix C) requirements. Students must meet the following criteria:

1. Must have received clear admission to Graduate School.
2. Must be admitted in a graduate program offered in the Counseling and Special Education Programs Department.
3. Must be enrolled as a full-time student (minimum nine semester hours graduate studies)

Full-time stipend is set at \$8,600.00 for nine months. Stipends are also available for half time work. All applications must be accompanied by a current student transcript before consideration can be given.

## **PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

### 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](http://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, Texas 78701  
Ph. 512-472-3404  
[www.txca.org](http://www.txca.org)

Emerging School Counselors should also consider membership in the American School Counseling Association (ASCA) and the Texas School Counseling Association (TSCA). Additional information regarding these organizations can be found on their websites:

[www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org)  
[www.geocities.com/txsca](http://www.geocities.com/txsca)

## SCHOOL CERTIFICATION

To be certified as a school counselor, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) requires a masters degree and at least two years of TEA-approved teaching experience. TEA's professional school counselor **TEXES** examination must be passed. Information regarding the TEXES for school counselor certification and registration materials are available from SFA certification office (Education Bldg. Rm. 212 Telephone # 468-2903) or on the web at <http://www.education.sfasu.edu/coe/ExCET/index.html> .

## 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 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:

Executive Director  
Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors  
1100 West 49th Street  
Austin, Texas 78756-3138  
(512) 834-6658

[http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/hcqs/plc/lpc/lpc\\_def.htm](http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/hcqs/plc/lpc/lpc_def.htm)

## **GRADUATE FACULTY**

### **Professors**

William F. Weber, Ed.D.	University of Northern Colorado
Robert O. Choate, Ed.D.	University of Nevada, Reno
Chris Ninness, Ph.D.,	University of North Texas, Texas Woman's University
David L. Lawson, Ph.D.	University of North Texas

### **Assistant Professors**

Wendy Enochs, Ph.D.,	University of Arkansas
Le'Ann L. Solmonson, Ph.D.	Sam Houston State University

### **Instructors**

Alan Larson, M.A.	Western Washington University
-------------------	-------------------------------

### **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**

<b>What Action to be Taken:</b>	<b>What Action Should be Taken:</b>	<b>Where to Secure Forms/Information:</b>	<b>Whom to See:</b>
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 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor, Rusk Bldg <a href="http://www.gre.org">www.gre.org</a>	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 Human Services Room 302, Human Services Bldg	<b>Rehabilitation</b> - Dr. Bob Choate <b>Community-</b> Dr. Wendy Enochs <b>School-</b> Dr. Le'Ann Solmonson
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. Le'Ann Solmonson	Dr. Le'Ann Solmonson, Room 218, Human Services Building, 468-1150
8. Get on List for COU 528 - Group Counseling	During First Semester in Program	Graduate Program Advisor or Dr. Le'Ann Solmonson	Dr. Le'Ann Solmonson, Room 218 Human Services Building, 468-1065
9. Complete Degree Plan	Before the end of your second semester in program and no later than completing 12 hours of graduate work.	Counseling Program Advisor	Counseling Program Advisor
10. Apply for Admission to Candidacy	After <b>completing</b> 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. Wendy Enoch Counseling Program Handbook	Graduate Program Advisor Candidacy Coordinator Dr. Wendy Enochs

11. Petition for changes in degree plan as needed or desired	When changing degree plan	Graduate Program Advisor	Major 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	Mr. Robert Patterson
18. Study the Graduate School Bulletin and Graduate Counseling Handbook	Frequently	Admissions or Registrar Counseling Clinic	Counseling Clinic