

# **Counselor Education Master's Program Handbook – 2022-2023**

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# Program Overview

## Description of Degree Programs

### School Counseling

The School Counseling concentration prepares graduates to work in school counseling programs, grades K through 12. The curriculum is informed by the standards of the American School Counseling Association providing a national focus. Certification as a school counselor by the **State of Texas** requires *two years of teaching experience as teacher of record in a public, charter or accredited private K-12 school, a Master's Degree in Counseling, and a passing score on the TExES exam*. Due to the teaching requirements for school counselors in the state of Texas, it is suggested that applicants with the goal of counseling in Texas have teacher certification and/or teaching experience prior to application. Applicants with the goal of counseling in other states are encouraged to explore the certification requirements of the specified state since not all states require teaching experience. Some students obtain teacher certification and/or gain teaching experience while also studying school counseling. Students completing this program are also eligible to pursue licensure in the state of Texas to become a Licensed Professional Counselor.

### Higher Education Counseling and Student Affairs

The Higher Education Counseling and Student Affairs (HECSA) concentration prepares graduates for work in institutions of higher learning, such as college counselors, career counselors, academic advisers, supervisors of resident advisers, and administrators of student services programs. Students completing this program are also eligible to pursue licensure in the state of Texas to become a Licensed Professional Counselor.

## Important Things to Keep in Mind

- If you plan to graduate in six semesters, be aware that **certain required courses are only offered every other year**. These courses include, but may not be limited to: School Counseling, Seminar in Academic and Student Affairs in Higher Education, and Overview of Psychoeducational Assessment. You will need to work closely with your advisor to ensure that these requirements are met.
- Be careful in selecting supporting courses for your degree plan, as some may require specific electives (these will be listed on your Program of Work). Some electives are not always offered.
- You **must** have taken or be co-enrolled in Helping Skills and Theories of Counseling to be eligible for practicum. You will also need to have completed 12 hours to be eligible for practicum. If you plan to do a practicum at a career center, Career Development is also a prerequisite.
- In order to apply for a license as a professional counselor in the state of Texas (LPC), a planned graduate program in counseling or a counseling-related field of at least 48

graduate semester hours is required. Most other states require a 60 hours degree program. Effective fall 2015, the University of Texas' program will require 60 hours to meet the national standards. Effective 2017, the state of Texas will require 60 hours. Some out-of-department courses might not qualify as "counseling courses", and therefore students should keep this in mind when planning their course of study. More information about the LPC in the state of Texas can be found here: [https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/counselor/lpc\\_apply.shtm](https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/counselor/lpc_apply.shtm)

# Standards for the Counselor Education Program

## Introduction

Beginning August 2006, these standards apply to all students enrolled in the Counselor Education program at The University of Texas at Austin.

Because of the nature of the counseling field, students in the Counselor Education Program are expected to meet both academic and professional standards that are linked to their abilities to become effective counseling professionals. These standards are outlined in the Handbook so that students and faculty can be clear about expectations for academic and professional performance, as well as procedures to address concerns. The ultimate goal of the standards is to help students have a successful experience and to prepare for their transition into the counseling profession.

Since becoming a professional counselor is a gradual process, these standards are considered to be a part of a developmental process. Instructors and supervisors, along with program coordinators, will assess student academic performance to determine if standards are being met during a student's educational career.

Professional judgment is the capacity to assess a situation by applying the values and knowledge of the Counselor Education program, combined with a professional's own experience and practice wisdom. It also represents the application of knowledge, values, and skills to making decisions in a helping process.

All the Counselor Education program students will be provided with and expected to read the Standards for the Counselor Education program.

## 2.0 Criteria for Evaluating Academic Performance

In order to meet its responsibilities to provide quality professional education and to ensure that its graduates are able to function in a broad variety of professional situations, faculty members of the Counselor Education program evaluates the academic performance of its students in four general areas:

- Basic Abilities to Acquire Professional Skills
- Mental and Emotional Abilities
- Professional Performance Skills
- Scholastic Performance.

Meeting the criteria for scholastic achievement is necessary but not sufficient to ensure continued enrollment in a program. Both professional behavior and scholastic performance comprise academic standards.

## **2.1 Basic Abilities Necessary to Acquire Professional Skills**

### **2.1.1 Communication Skills**

Demonstrates sufficient written and oral skills to comprehend information and communicates ideas and feelings.

- **Written:** Writes clearly, uses correct grammar and spelling, and applies appropriate writing style, including American Psychological Association (APA) referencing, appropriate source citation, and documentation. Demonstrates sufficient skills in written English to understand content presented in the program and to complete adequately all written assignments, as specified by faculty.
- **Oral:** Communicates effectively and sensitively with other students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals. Expresses ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrates a willingness and an ability to listen to others. Demonstrates sufficient skills in spoken English to understand content presented in the program, to complete adequately all oral assignments, and to meet the objectives of field placement experiences, as specified by faculty.

### **2.1.2 Interpersonal Skills**

Demonstrates the interpersonal skills needed to relate effectively to other students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals and to fulfill the ethical obligations of the profession. These include developmental maturity, compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, and demonstration of respect for and consideration of others. Takes appropriate responsibility for own actions and considers the impact of these actions on others.

### **2.1.3 Cognitive Skills**

Exhibits sufficient knowledge of the Counselor Education program and clarity of thinking to process information and apply it to appropriate situations in classroom and field. Demonstrates grounding in relevant social, behavioral and biological science knowledge and research—including knowledge and skills in relationship building, data gathering, assessment, intervention, and evaluation of practice. Exhibits ability to conceptualize and integrate knowledge and apply that knowledge to professional practice.

### **2.1.4 Physical Skills**

Exhibits sufficient motor and sensory abilities to attend and participate in class and practicum placement, with or without accommodations. (See section on Accommodations for Disabilities in the All Students Handbook for clarification.)

## **2.2 Emotional and Mental Abilities Necessary for Performance in the Program and Professional Practice**

### **2.2.1 Stress Management**

Demonstrates the ability to deal with current life stressors through the use of appropriate coping mechanisms. Students will handle stress effectively by using appropriate self-care and developing supportive relationships with colleagues, peers, and others.

### **2.2.2 Emotional and Mental Capacities**

Uses sound judgment. Seeks and effectively uses help for medical or emotional problems that interfere with scholastic and professional performance. They will engage in counseling or seek out support and help if personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties do any of the following:

- Compromise scholastic and other performance,
- Interfere with professional judgment and behavior, or
- Jeopardize the best interests of those to whom the Counselor Education program student has a professional responsibility (as outlined in the relevant codes of ethics, including those of the American Counseling Association (ACA)).

## **2.3 Professional Performance Skills Necessary for Work with Clients and Professional Practice**

### **2.3.1 Professional Commitment**

Exhibits a strong commitment to the goals of the Counselor Education program and to the ethical standards of the counseling profession, as specified in the ACA Code of Ethics. Students will demonstrate a commitment to the essential values of the Counselor Education program that include the respect for the dignity and worth of every individual and his/her right to a just share of society's resources.

### **2.3.2 Professional Behavior**

Exhibits behaviors that are in compliance with program policies, institutional policies, professional ethical standards, and societal laws in classroom, field, and community.

Appearance, dress, and general demeanor reflect a professional manner. Shows potential for responsible and accountable behavior by knowing and practicing within the scope of counselor education, respecting others, being punctual and dependable, prioritizing responsibilities, attending class regularly, observing deadlines, completing assignments on time, keeping appointments or making appropriate arrangements, and accepting supervision and criticism in a positive manner. Students will work effectively with others, regardless of level of authority. Advocates for him or herself in an appropriate and responsible manner and uses proper channels for conflict resolution. Shows a willingness to receive and accept feedback and supervision in a positive manner, as well as use such feedback to enhance professional development.

### **2.3.3 Self Awareness**

Exhibits knowledge of how one's values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions and past experiences affect thinking, behavior and relationships. Accurately assesses one's own strengths, limitations, and suitability for professional practice. Shows awareness of self and how one is perceived by others. Reflects on one's own limitations as they relate to professional capacities. Is willing to examine and change behavior when it interferes in working with clients and other professionals.

#### **2.3.4 Ethical Obligations**

Current behavior and classroom performance demonstrate adherence to the ethical expectations and obligations of professional practice, noted in the ACA Codes of Ethics. Ethical behaviors include:

- Adherence to the ACA Code of Ethics.
- No history of charges and/or convictions of an offense that is contrary to professional practice.
- Systematic evaluation of clients and their situations in an unbiased, factual way. Suspension of personal biases during interactions with others.
- Comprehension of another individual's way of life and values. Empathic communication and support of the client as a basis for a productive professional relationship.
- Appreciation of the value of diversity. Effective and nonjudgmental relation to and work with others who are different from oneself. Appropriate service to all persons in need of assistance, regardless of the person's age, class, race, religious beliefs, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and/or value system. No imposition of personal, religious, sexual, and/or cultural values on clients.
- Demonstration of respect for the rights of others. Commitment to clients' rights to freedom of choice and self-determination.
- Maintenance of confidentiality as it relates to human service, classroom activities, and field placement.
- Demonstration of honesty and integrity by being truthful about background, experiences, and qualifications; doing one's own work; giving credit for the ideas of others; and providing proper citation of source materials.
- Demonstration of clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries. Does not sexually harass others; make verbal or physical threats; become involved in sexual relationships with clients, supervisors, or faculty; abuse others in physical, emotional, verbal, or sexual ways.
- Demonstration of clear and appropriate professional boundaries by not participating in dual relationships where conflicts of interest may exist. Avoids dual relationships through communication systems such as social networking sites.

#### **2.3.5 Statement of Cultural Awareness and Competency**

Practices within the scope of the cultural awareness and competency statement for the Counselor Education program which states:

As counselor educators and counselor education students, we place a high priority on the development of cultural awareness and competence in our faculty and students. We stress the importance of developing personal awareness of one's own culture and one's biases which may stem from experiences in a society that has perpetuated inequities based on group membership. We therefore provide training, experiences, and practice that help all members of our learning community develop knowledge and skills to provide counseling that meet the needs of all of our clients. Students in the Counselor Education program will be expected to develop these competencies in working with all groups, even if the group is unfamiliar or represents a value conflict for the counselor in training. We support the American Counseling Association Ethics Code that states, "Counselors do not condone or engage in discrimination based on age, color, culture, disability, ethnic group, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, or socioeconomic status" (ACA Ethics Code, A.2). We recognize that becoming culturally competent is a life-long process and encourage our faculty and students to maintain a focus on cultural competence throughout their careers. Students are expected to promote a culture of belonging.

## **2.4 Scholastic Performance**

Students are evaluated in the Counselor Education program with formal coursework, through supervisor evaluations while on practicum, and by supervisors of the master's report. The Counselor Education faculty will consider feedback from these various sources. Students' performance in all aspects of the program, including courses, practica, master's reports, relationships with faculty and students, and professional conduct will be discussed whenever indications of concerns or need for improved performance are encountered. Students will be given feedback about areas of concern. Corrective action, such as academic probation, may be taken if students exhibit unsatisfactory progress in the program and will automatically be taken under the following conditions:

- A student receives a C, or no credit, in any class in her or his program of work. Probation for a no credit grade is automatic only in the case of organized classes. In the case of no credit for individual instruction courses, the program faculty will place a student on probation if the no credit resulted from unsatisfactory performance by the student.
- A student receives an unsatisfactory evaluation from a practicum supervisor or practicum seminar instructor.
- A student's master's report supervisor has serious concerns about the student's lack of progress or ability to complete the master's report.

Students being considered for academic probation will be given feedback via the [Three Levels of Review](#).

## **2.5 Sources of Information for Academic Performance Criteria**

Information about students meeting academic performance criteria in the Counselor Education program may include but is not limited to the following:



- Feedback or reference letters from faculty, work supervisors, or supervisors of volunteer human service activity or other practica.
- Feedback from agency-based field instructors.
- Observation of classroom, volunteer, or field behaviors.
- Performance in oral and written assignments, examinations, the Counselor Education program skills labs, or other appropriate coursework.
- Student personal statements or self-assessments.
- Interviews with faculty or other professionals.
- Taped interview situations (audio or video).
- Feedback from students, staff, university (UT or other colleges and universities), helping professionals, or community.
- Feedback from faculty in other programs that students may have attended.

### **3.0 Policies and Procedures for Review of Academic Performance**

Three levels of review can occur at the Counselor Education program in reviewing student's academic performance. The level of review depends upon the potential severity of the concern. Information disclosed during student meetings with faculty, program coordinators, or school administrators will not be kept confidential if the information raises concerns about professional performance. Faculty and/or program coordinators will share pertinent information with each other for the professional purpose of identifying student issues and enhancing problem solving about the concerns. They will follow university procedures related to student performance issues.

#### **3.1 Performance that May Result in a Review, Academic Probation, and/or Possible Dismissal From the Counselor Education program**

Student reviews can occur under any of the following circumstances:

- Failure to meet or maintain academic requirements as stated under Scholastic Performance.
- Scholastic dishonesty, including cheating, lying, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, or any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student (Faculty must adhere to university guidelines. For complete University policy and procedures, see General Information Bulletin, [Appendix C, Section 11-802](#)).
- Behavior judged to be in violation of the current codes of ethics.
- Any threat or attempt to harm oneself or someone else.
- Commission of a criminal act that is contrary to professional practice, occurring during the course of study or occurring prior to admission to the program and becoming known after admission.
- Consistent pattern of unprofessional behavior

#### **3.2 The Three Levels of Review**

## **Level 1**

A level 1 review involves a faculty member and a student. When a faculty member has concerns about a student enrolled in the Counselor Education program meeting any of the academic criteria, whether related to professional behavior or scholastic performance, the concerned faculty member will:

1. Discuss those concerns directly with the student and seek to work with the student to resolve the difficulties.
2. Apprise the program director of the concerns in order to identify potential patterns and issues related to the student.
3. Document dates and content of meetings with students.

If a problem arises in field, the agency-based field instructor (practicum supervisor) will discuss concerns directly with the student and with the faculty liaison. It is the responsibility of the faculty liaison to apprise the appropriate coordinator of the concerns.

In many instances, meetings between faculty and students resolve the concerns and do not necessarily lead to further reviews, pursuant to this section. Typically, a Level 1 review will result in corrective feedback to the student, either informally or through written feedback. Academic probation is not usually a consequence of a Level 1 review.

## **Level 2**

A Level 2 review involves the faculty member, student, and program director. Faculty and program director will meet with the student when the student is not meeting or following program or university standards, policies, and procedures or when concerns have not been resolved at Level 1. If a problem arises in a practicum setting, the agency-based field instructor and faculty practicum instructor will conduct the review with the student.

In this information gathering process, the program director will determine the nature of the concern and gather sufficient information to develop a plan to address that concern, if one is needed. No further action may be required, or the student may be asked, in writing, to modify his or her behavior and/or seek appropriate help. This process is designed to assist students in dealing with identified concerns that have an impact on their performance.

A Level 2 review may result in a student being placed on academic probation by the counseling faculty, particularly in the case of problems described in Section 2.4 Scholastic Performance (i.e., receiving a grade of C or lower, unsatisfactory evaluation on practicum, significant problems in developing a master's report). When a student is placed on academic probation, they will receive written feedback about the reasons for being placed on probation, the length of the probation, and the criteria for lifting probation.

Whether or not a Level 2 review results in a student being placed on academic probation, the program director will assess the nature of these concerns with appropriate faculty, consult with

the graduate advisor and with the program chair, maintain documentation, and decide if it is necessary to conduct a more comprehensive review, pursuant to Level 3.

### **Level 3**

A Level 3 review involves the faculty member, student, program director, and other faculty who have had direct experience with the student in classroom or field. Generally, this level of review is called when problematic patterns are identified with students or when the issues are serious enough to require formal consultation with other faculty and the student. A Level 3 review more often is conducted when concerns have not been resolved in prior reviews; when issues related to a student not meeting the criteria for academic performance (often involving professional or ethical behaviors); when the student has not met the conditions of academic probation; or when the student is being considered for withdrawal or discontinuance in the program.

In most instances, a Level 3 review is sufficient to deal with student performance and is the last decision-making step in the review process at the Counselor Education program.

When a Level 3 review is called, the program director will convene a meeting with the appropriate faculty and the student to gather information, determine the nature of the problem (if one is confirmed to exist), and identify alternatives for its remediation. Appropriate faculty to be involved in a review will include but are not limited to those who have direct knowledge of and experience with the student.

The student will be notified in writing of the concerns and meeting date, with sufficient time to prepare for and attend the meeting.

After the review meeting has occurred, the program director will consult with the chair of the Educational Psychology Department and/or the graduate advisor to discuss the problem situation and make recommendations regarding the student. Based on this review and conference, and an objective assessment of the information provided, the graduate advisor and the program director will inform the student of the decisions, which can include one or more of the following actions:

- Continue the student in the program with no conditions. In these situations, the concern has been addressed and no further action by the student or program is required.
- Establish formal conditions for the student's continuance in the program. In these situations, specific conditions must be met in order for the student to remain in the program. Action may include establishing goals, a plan, a timeline, and appropriate monitoring; providing mentoring and support; placing the student on probation and monitoring the student during the probationary period; referring the student to counseling and/or advising services; allowing the student to follow a reduced course load or delay entry to the field practicum; or requiring the student to withdraw from the program with the option of reapplying.
- Consult with and/or refer to the Dean of Students. In some instances, depending on the nature of the problem, the University's Office of the Dean of Students may be consulted. If a referral is made to that office after consultation, the student will be

notified in writing about the nature of the concern and the fact that the referral is taking place. Examples of situations that may result in referral to the Office of the Dean of Students include scholastic dishonesty, hazing, racial or sexual harassment, possession or use of firearms or other weapons on University property, damage or destruction of University property, and conduct that endangers the health or safety of any University student, employee, or campus visitor.

- Counsel the student to change majors/degree programs and/or discontinue the student in the program. In some situations, it will be recommended that the student no longer continue in the Counselor Education program. The student will be counseled to voluntarily change majors or degree programs. If that does not occur, the student will be discontinued from the program. In either case, the student will be provided with documentation regarding the specific reasons for their dismissal and the conditions, if any, under which they may re-apply.

In any Level 3 review, there must be clear, concise documentation of the problem areas as well as verification that these concerns have been discussed with the student and attempted to be ameliorated, where appropriate. Students must be notified of the decision in writing within ten business days of the review. It is the responsibility of the program director or graduate advisor to communicate the decision to the student.

# 4.0 Sample Forms for Evaluating Performance

## 4.1 Professional Development Evaluation Completed by Faculty

### Copy of Student Evaluation Form Completed by Faculty

#### Professional Development Evaluation

Counselor Education  
Department of Educational Psychology  
The University of Texas at Austin

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The rating scale below is adapted from the key components from the Standards for the Counselor Education Program in the *Counselor Education Student Handbook*. A brief list of key words is provided under each domain. For greater clarification, please refer to the appropriate standard in the Student Handbook (excerpt attached).

#### Rating Scale

As graduates of this program, it is expected that the student ratings will be a "3" at the satisfactory level, meaning the student has met the standard of competence. Students rated above a "3" exhibit exceptional skills in that specific domain. **Raters will provide a statement documenting any rating that falls either above or below a rating of 3.**

1	3	5
Poor for a person of his/her training and experience	Satisfactory for a person of his/her training and experience	Highly skilled for a person of his/her training and experience

1. Effective communication skills

a. Written

(Key phrases: writes clearly, correct grammar, ability to use citations, adequately completes all written assignments)

Not Observed    1                    2                    3                    4                    5

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b. Oral

(Key phrases: expresses ideas clearly, listens to others, sufficient skills in spoken English, adequately completes all oral assignments)

Not Observed    1                    2                    3                    4                    5

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2. Interpersonal Skills (Standard 2.12)

(Key phrases: develops mental maturity; demonstrates compassion, empathy, and integrity; demonstrates respect and considerations of others; responsibility for one's actions and effects on others)

Not Observed      1                      2                      3                      ●                      5

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3. Emotional and Mental Abilities (Standards 2.1.3, 2.2.2.3.3)

(Key phrases: sufficient knowledge of skills of a counselor; ability to manage stress; seeks assistance for problems that might interfere; open to feedback demonstrates self-awareness of strengths, limitations and sets goals for growth)

Not Observed      1                      2                      3                      ●                      5

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4. Professional Behavior (Standard 3.31 and 2.32)

(Key phrases: compliance with program policies and professional ethical standards; professional appearance; punctual and dependable, works effectively with peers and authority; advocates for him or herself)

Not Observed      1                      2                      3                      ●                      5

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S. Ethical Obligations (Standard 2.3.4)

(Key phrases: Adherence to ACA Code of Ethics; maintenance of confidentiality; truthfulness; representation; doing one's own work; avoid dual relationships)

Not Observed      1                      2                      3                      4

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6. Multicultural Sensitivity (Standard 2.34)

(Key phrases: suspension of personal biases during interactions with others; understand other's lives and values; awareness, knowledge, and skills of both self and others' who are different from oneself; respects others' preferences, faculty, staff, clients and supervisors >with appropriate interactions regardless of group membership according to age, class, race, religious beliefs, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and/or value system; appropriately provide services for all persons in need of assistance regardless of group membership)

Not Observed      1                      2                      3

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Acuity Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## 4.2 Handbook Receipt and Acknowledgement Form

### Handbook Receipt and Acknowledgement Form

#### Counselor Education Program

By signing below, I have acknowledged that I have received and agree to read the University of Texas at Austin Counselor Education Student Handbook in its entirety. After reading this document, it is my responsibility to ask questions to the chair if I do not understand a section.

I'm also aware that I will be evaluated on the dimensions of standards of competence as outlined in the Counselor Education Student Handbook. I understand that this evaluation will be based upon competencies appropriate to my level of training.

Finally, I'm aware that some changes may be made to this handbook and my training requirement. Any such changes will be brought to my attention by the chair. I understand the importance of staying abreast to these changes along the path of my graduate career.

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Print Student Name

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Signature

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Date

*Please ensure that this signature page is on file with the chair by the second week of school of your first academic year.*



# Master's Report (CE)

## Purpose

The master's report serves several functions in the overall program of work for the M.A. in Counselor Education. It is an opportunity to develop greater understanding of a topic related to the field of counseling. During a student's progress throughout the program, problems and issues are encountered that require in-depth review and analysis. The report can be a vehicle for extending knowledge about such an area. Finally, the report demonstrates that the student is an insightful consumer of research, possessing the ability to evaluate theory and research in the field and develop applications to a significant problem. Former students have reported that having an area of specialization has been helpful in job interviews.

## Selecting a Topic

Typically, the topic will focus on some important counseling theory or procedure or address a critical issue in the practice of guidance and counseling. It is also possible for the topic to be drawn from a non-counseling discipline or body of research and practice, as long as applications can be made to counseling. Sources of topics may include the following:

- Ideas, theory, and research encountered in courses and readings.
- Current research conducted by a faculty member.
- Problems and issues arising during a practicum.
- Past experiences re-conceptualized.
- Professional activities.
- Emerging or on-going areas of interest represented in journals, other scholarly publications, or professional meetings.

## Nature of the Report

Although master's reports may vary in length and number of chapters, all should have at least the following three sections (though the specific wording need not be used in chapter headings):

1. **Introduction and Statement of the Problem.** This section should provide an overview, laying out the big picture and indicating its importance. The specific focus of the report should also be identified and related to the general area of inquiry, along with the plan or organization of the report.
2. **Review of the Literature.** The review should include general and up-to-date research addressing the topic of the report. In most cases, pertinent theory or conceptualizations of the topic should also be described. If they are available, published reviews on the topic should also be examined. Depending on the nature of the topic, this review may include theoretical articles and/or empirical studies. Your critical evaluation of such literature is also important.

3. **Applications to Counseling.** This section should present an integration of theory/research and practice. If the topic is drawn primarily from the non-counseling literature, special attention should be paid to exploring and evaluating implications of the topic for counseling. Recommendations for practice should be given. It is also possible for the master's report to be primarily concerned with developing a specific application: e.g., preparing a special guidance curriculum; evaluating a new counseling procedure being used in a school setting. In such cases, the report will need to present the application or procedure, and, if appropriate, the evaluation data that support its use. It would be expected that the literature review would be appreciably shorter for such a report, while the application section would be longer.

## **Nuts and Bolts**

- You will need two “readers” for your report, at least one of whom should be a member of the Counseling faculty. Your supervisor for the report is the primary adviser for the report and must be a member of a Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) for the Department of Educational Psychology, although it is not required that she/he be on the counseling faculty. The second reader may be any other faculty member and may be an adjunct faculty in Educational Psychology or a faculty from a different department.
- It is extremely difficult to write a quality master's report in one semester. Therefore, before being cleared to register for EDP 398R in the semester prior to your graduation, you will be required to have already arranged for a supervisor, a reader, and a topic for the report. Please consult with the academic adviser if you need assistance in finding a faculty member who has expertise in your area.
- You must enroll for 398R (Master's Report) during the semester in which the degree is awarded, although you may enroll more than once if you don't complete it on time.
- Students should begin working on the report before they begin their final semester, as most students find it takes more than one semester to complete it.
- You should select an adviser as soon as you have a firm idea of the content area, and you will be asked to have an advisor and topic selected before you can register for the Master's Report course.
- A specific page length is not required. Approximately 30 to 35 pages is typical.
- The Graduate School publishes [an official description of the acceptable format for the report](#) and information about applying for graduation. Consulting it before you get too far along in the project might save you some time.
- Please consult the All Students Handbook for more information on the Department's procedures for submitting the report.

# FAQs - Counselor Ed

## **How do I subscribe and unsubscribe to the UT Counselor Education listserv?**

Send an email to the program chair or the program TA and you will be added or removed from the listserv.

## **How long will it take me to complete the Counselor Education program?**

Most people attending the Counselor Education program full-time will be finished within 2 years (summer start + four semesters and usually several summer classes). It is also common for students to take longer than 2 years.

## **When should I start thinking about practicum?**

We will begin considering placements for the spring semester in September and October. Research and interviews for the fall or summer semesters will begin in January.

## **How can I find out more about a particular practicum site?**

The best way to find out more about a particular practicum site is to talk to someone who has done a practicum there before. There is always an up-to-date list of where current students are placed in a binder in Suite 262 of the Sanchez building. In addition, by attending the Practicum Ice Cream Social in the fall, you can learn more about the sites from your classmates.

## **What is the difference between the master's thesis and the master's report? Is one better than the other? Why? Are we given only the option of doing the report?**

The main difference between the master's thesis and the master's report is that with the thesis, students collect data to answer a research question, while in the report, students review and synthesize the existing literature to answer a research question. Students have the option of doing either, but most students choose the master's report because a thesis usually takes two semesters (as opposed to one for the report), and most Counselor Ed. students find it hard to pull off a thesis in their second year with practicum and courses. Also, since the faculty members are actively involved in research, students who want to get involved in data collection are sometimes better served by joining a research group rather than doing their own thesis. The choice is up to each student.

## **How do I get involved in faculty research?**

Counselor Education students are encouraged to seek out research opportunities with faculty. Detailed information the research interests of the faculty are posted on the departmental website. Students should always feel free to contact faculty about such opportunities. Independent study course credit is available to students who would like course credit for research.

## **How do I get certified as a school counselor?**

PLEASE DO NOT CALL SBEC OR TEA. YOU WILL BE CERTIFIED THROUGH UT.

The requirements for becoming a certified school counselor in the State of Texas include:

1. the completion of a master's degree in a counseling field (or a related field)
2. two years teaching experience (teacher of record in a k-12 public or charter school or regionally accredited private school).
3. a passing score on the TExES (Texas Examination for Educator Standards),

Upon completion of your coursework and satisfactory completion of the TExES exam, file for certification. Instructions for filing for certification in Texas are available [here](#). Reference the sections: The Application Process and Additional Information. Certification requirements for every state can be found on the [American School Counselor Association's website](#).

## **How do I get certified as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)?**

The following is the current process for obtaining your LPC-Intern license in Texas. This is subject to change.

### **Step 1: Graduate!**

- **Note: Before you complete your practicum, ask your supervisor to sign the Practicum Documentation form. The practicum /internship will be for an approximate total of at least 100 clock hours (40 direct client service hrs, 60 indirect hrs) of experience for Practicum. 300 hours (120 direct client service hrs, 180 indirect hrs) of experience for Internship in each semester (Internship I and Internship II). For internship I/II, the minimum for UT graduation is 100 direct client contact hours and a maximum of 240 direct client contact hours. The direct hour requirement is included in the calculation of the 600 clock hours for Internship I/II. The 40 clock hours is also included in the 100 clock hours for practicum.**

**TEA requires that the school counseling students attend the site for 160 clock hours during their Internship I/II class. The 160 TEA requirement is also included in the calculation of the 600 clock hour requirement for Internship I/II. If you are seeking licenser in another state, you must contact that state.**

**CACREP (2014) requires the following for Professional Practice:**

- **After successful completion of the practicum, students complete 600 clock hours of supervised counseling internship in roles and settings with clients relevant to their specialty area.**
- **Internship students complete at least 240 clock hours of direct service.**
- **Internship students have weekly interaction with supervisors that averages one hour per week of individual and/or triadic supervision throughout the internship, provided by (1) the site supervisor, (2) counselor education program faculty, or (3) a student**

**supervisor who is under the supervision of a counselor education program faculty member.**

- **Internship students participate in an average of 1½ hours per week of group supervision on a regular schedule throughout the internship. Group supervision must be provided by a counselor education program faculty member or a student supervisor who is under the supervision of a counselor education program faculty member.**

Step 2: Apply to take the [National Certification Exam \(NCE\)](#).

- You have to graduate before you can apply to take the NCE.
- Apply to take the NCE online. Print and fill out the application. Send this in with a check for \$185.00 and your official sealed transcript (Note: Your transcript must say “graduated.” Make a copy of the application for your records.
- After approximately 3 weeks, you will then receive a letter that you are approved to take the exam. The NCE exam is offered for the first week of every month.

Step 3: Take the [Jurisprudence Exam for Professional Counselors](#). The exam costs \$40.00. After completion, print your certificate to include in your application packet.

Step 4: After you take and pass the NCE, gather the following documentation for your LPC-Intern application packet:

- Official sealed transcript
- Jurisprudence Certification of Completion

- Practicum Documentation Form
- Supervisor Agreement Form (You will need to find a supervisor if one is not available through your place of work; *Good Supervision* provides a variety of articles regarding finding and making the most of supervision)
- The LPC-Intern Application Fee

Step 5: Mail the completed packet (Certified Mail recommended) to:

Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors – Mail code 1982, P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347

If you have questions, you may contact NBCC at 336-547-0607 and the LPC Board at 512-834-6658. Once you have submitted your application for license, expect 3 to 4 weeks to get your license number.

### **How do I register for the TExEs?**

The exam can be taken after your core courses are completed.

- 1) The study guide questions for the TExES can be found [here](#). The page will list TExES study guides. Click on School Counselor which is test #152. Download, print, and study!
- 2) The [ETS website](#) contains information about testing dates, registration, and deadlines.
- 3) During your final year in school, your program chair will contact [Jazminne Bailey](#) at SZB 216 or at 471-3485 so that she may give you a barcode number that acts as your approval to take the examination. You will need the barcode to register. Contact Jazminne at least 10 days before the regular registration deadline so that she may consult with Dr. Moore concerning your approval for proceeding on to testing.
- 4) There are two methods of registration – the written form or by internet. You will need your barcode in either case. Paper forms are available in SZB 216 and internet registration is available through the [ETS website](#).