

# COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY, MS

Social Sciences and Education (sse) (<https://catalog.csub.edu/general-information/csub-information/school-social-sciences-education/>)

Department of Psychology (<https://catalog.csub.edu/general-information/csub-information/school-social-sciences-education/department-psychology/>)

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<http://www.csub.edu/psychology/mscounselingpsych/>

Program Maps for Social Sciences and Education (<https://programmmap.csub.edu/academics/interest-clusters/a94a03c6-bc7d-471f-b602-cfefa852c1aa/>)

## Program Description

The three-year, 66-semester unit Master of Science in Counseling Psychology Program at CSUB trains students to meet the community need for ethical, competent, and adaptable mental health professionals. It is designed to satisfy the academic requirements of the California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) statutory requirements, Section 4980.36 of the Business and Professions Code (BPC), for the California License in Marriage and Family Therapy (LMFT) as well as 4999.33 for the Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC). Students receive broad training that prepares them for work in diverse and changing settings. The well-trained counselor will understand that:

- counseling involves the application of intervention techniques based on the best theory and empirical research available;
- the counseling relationship is central to effective therapeutic intervention;
- counselors creatively use their knowledge, skills, and personal experiences to create an environment where clients can make positive change;
- clients' adaptive and maladaptive functioning is determined by multiple factors including individual, familial and cultural influences; and
- training and education in counseling is a lifelong process that begins in graduate school and continues throughout the counselor's professional career.

The CSUB Counseling Psychology program particularly values personal exploration in training and supervision. The curricular objectives of the Master of Science in Counseling Psychology therefore emphasize:

- a foundation in the theory and research upon which clinical practice is based;
- development of self-awareness and relationship-building skills that contribute to strong therapeutic alliances with clients;
- experiential learning, through which students learn and practice relevant skills and come to trust their own experience in work with clients;

- an understanding of and a sensitivity to the effects of diverse individual, familial, and cultural factors; and,
- development of skills needed for lifelong learning and continued professional growth.

## Experiential Learning Requirements

The Master of Science in Counseling Psychology Program is sequentially arranged and includes an emphasis on principles of experiential learning. Students are expected to participate from both counselor and client perspectives in individual, dyadic, and group exercises. Enrollment in the program implies student consent to engage in individual and group experiential learning activities in various courses.

## Ethical and Professional Conduct

Throughout the program, it is important for students to remember that they are enrolled in a program designed to train professional counselors. The use of case vignettes, live clients, and student experiences are essential to this process. It is, thus, expected that students will conduct themselves as professionals and maintain the confidentiality of all client or student material generated or presented in any program class. A violation of this ethical requirement of confidentiality will result in faculty review of students' conduct and subsequent progress in the Program.

The Code of Ethics of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) and the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics each stress the importance of confidentiality in counseling relationships. These codes apply not only to licensed therapists, but also to students in the MS Counseling Psychology program who are expected to maintain the confidentiality of all information disclosed by, and related to, both clients and peers in the various experiential activities throughout the program.

While the preservation of confidentiality is only one aspect of professional conduct, the faculty takes seriously the ACA Code of Ethics to endorse for a degree and/or licensure only those candidates that exemplify high standards of ethical and personal conduct; and Standard F.1.a that asks faculty to ensure that students are able to provide competent service. We refer to these concepts as pre-professional development.

## Pre-Professional Development

Throughout the program students must provide evidence of the ability to interact competently and ethically with others from a variety of backgrounds. The student must engage in behaviors that:

- Demonstrate positive, consistent, and effective contributions to the classroom learning and atmosphere.
- Exhibit harmonious and collegial relationships with peers and faculty.
- Reflect professionalism and responsibility in areas such as attendance, timely completion of assignments, and attention to regulations and expectations.

Students must also demonstrate, by conduct and academic performance, achievement of curricular goals (listed above) appropriate to their progress in the program. Such evidence also may come from practicum and technique-based courses, courses with an experiential focus, or from supervised experiences. Students will be evaluated by the Counseling Psychology Faculty Committee (CPFC) at each point of reclassification and will be given feedback on their preprofessional development. The

Graduate Studies section of the CSUB Catalog describes the procedures for student Appeals and Grievances.

Code	Title	Units
CPSY 6110	Counseling Skills	3
CPSY 6130	Adult and Family Development	3
CPSY 6360	Techniques of Individual Counseling	2
CPSY 6410	Theories of Family Counseling	3
CPSY 6420	Theory and Practice of Group Counseling	3
CPSY 6460	Techniques of Group and Family Counseling	3
CPSY 6810	Practicum I	2
CPSY 6820	Practicum II	2

are clinical process classes. These are experiential in nature and require the use of live clients and video recording of sessions. Because of the additional time needed for supervision, and to move people from room to room and to change digital recordings, the class schedule may indicate more time than mandated for clinical process classes.

CPSY 6910 Traineeship I, CPSY 6920 Traineeship II, and CPSY 6980 Clinical Extension are field placement courses in service providing agencies. Supervisors will rate student knowledge and skill.

## Admission Requirements

### Admission and Application

Students are only admitted for Fall enrollment. For application assistance or questions regarding the acceptability of prerequisite courses, please contact the program director, Dr. Erika Harper. Additional information as well as program requirements and prerequisites can be found on our website: [MS in Counseling Psychology | California State University, Bakersfield \(csub.edu\)](https://www.csub.edu/psychology/mscounselingpsych/) (<https://www.csub.edu/psychology/mscounselingpsych/>)

### Application

The Master of Science in Counseling Psychology Faculty Committee (CPFC) reserves the right to admit those applicants they deem most qualified. Although the university admits international students using standardized criteria for English language competence, the CPFC reserves the right to evaluate students for program admission for oral English mastery needed for effective communication. Students seeking admission to the Master of Science in Counseling Psychology can begin the application process by following the instructions for material submission at Graduate | CSU ([calstate.edu](https://www.calstate.edu/apply/graduate/)) (<https://www.calstate.edu/apply/graduate/>). All program-specific application materials must be submitted as a complete package. Application deadlines are also listed on the CSUB Counseling Psychology Program Home Page: <http://www.csub.edu/psychology/mscounselingpsych/gradapp/index.html> (<http://www.csub.edu/psychology/mscounselingpsych/gradapp/>). (<http://www.csub.edu/psychology/mscounselingpsych/gradapp/>)

## Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for admission, the student must fulfill the following minimum requirements:

1. A bachelor's degree from an accredited university. (Students with an international degree must have U.S. equivalency determined.)
2. A 3.2 GPA over the most recent 60 semester or 90 quarter units.
3. A minimum of three undergraduate psychology courses in addition to the prerequisite courses listed below.

4. Completion of all prerequisite courses with a grade of at least a "B-" (grading scale 2.7/4.0); (note that prerequisite courses must have been completed within five calendar years of intended admission date). Prerequisite courses:
  - a. Introductory statistics
  - b. Abnormal psychology
  - c. A developmental psychology course (i.e., child psychology, human growth and development, or lifespan development).
5. Completion of the application materials to the MS in Counseling Psychology Program including official transcripts, a personal statement, and three letters of recommendation along with three rating forms attesting to suitability and promise.
6. A separate graduate admission to the CSU system. Apply directly at Cal State Apply <https://www2.calstate.edu/Apply> (<https://www2.calstate.edu/Apply/>)

The CPFC reserves the option to request supplemental documentation and information to determine suitability and promise. After an initial screening, selected applicants will be invited for an interview. Accepted applicants will be selected from those who completed a successful interview. The CPFC reserves the right to make all decisions regarding admission to the program and all decisions are final.

## Background Check Policy

A background check will be conducted on all applicants admitted to the CPSY program. This must be completed no later than the first week of the second semester for all first-year students. Conviction of a misdemeanor or felony will not necessarily preclude an applicant's matriculation into the program. We believe, however, that it is ethical practice to talk with students about any criminal history they may have and its potential impact on future employment or licensure.

## Student Classifications

The CPFC determines students' initial classification level prior to admission as well as rendering decisions regarding all subsequent changes in classification. At any point of reclassification, the CPFC will evaluate academic and pre-professional development.

### Conditionally Classified

Students who have completed most, but not all, of the requirements for admission at the Classified level and show promise of success may be admitted at the Conditionally Classified level (GRA1). Students admitted at this level who complete all admission requirements or alternate requirements specified in the offer of admission will be moved to the Classified level (GRA2) at the discretion of the CPFC and only if the CPFC determines that the requirements have been completed at a level satisfactory for movement.

### Classified

Students who successfully meet all requirements for admission, as determined by the CPFC, will be eligible for admission at the Classified level (GRA2). Classified graduate students may take any graduate level course meeting the requirements of their Plan of Study provided the appropriate prerequisites or co-requisites have been met.

### Graduate Candidacy

Classified level students will be eligible for advancement to Graduate Candidacy (GRA3) after successful completion of all courses in the first year of the program

Code	Title	Units
CPSY 6110	Counseling Skills	3
CPSY 6120	Psychopathology and Diagnostic Interviewing	3
CPSY 6130	Adult and Family Development	3
CPSY 6140	Clinical Ethics and Law	3
CPSY 6310	Theories of Individual Counseling	3
CPSY 6360	Techniques of Individual Counseling	2

These individuals must have a minimum 3.0 GPA. Students must also have received positive faculty evaluations in pre-professional development. Advancement to Graduate Candidacy is required to enroll in a supervised clinical practicum and selected courses (see below).

## Program Requirements

To graduate with the MS degree in Counseling Psychology, a student must meet the following requirements:

- Complete the 66-semester unit program in accordance with the approved Plan of Study
- Be in Good Standing in the MS in Counseling Psychology program: A student must maintain, at the end of each term of enrollment, a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher in courses taken to meet degree requirements and receive satisfactory evaluations of preprofessional development from faculty and field placement supervisors. Students not in Good Standing must formally request permission (and receive written approval) to enroll in additional graduate courses. The CPFC will review the explanations and plans set forth in the petition and decide whether to permit continued enrollment and what conditions must be met for a return to Good Standing. (See Academic Probation and Academic Disqualification under Division of Graduate Programs within the CSUB Catalog).
- Be advanced to Graduate Candidacy.
- Receive an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher for the entire 66-unit program. (Any course with a grade lower than B- will not count toward graduation.)
- Take and pass the Master Comprehensive Examination. This is the culminating activity for the M.S. in Counseling Psychology program completed at the conclusion of the Master Comprehensive Examination course (CPSY 6460 Techniques of Group and Family Counseling). All students must take and pass this exam to graduate.

This three-year course sequence is for full-time students and requires attendance four late afternoons or evenings a week for the duration of the program. In addition, students are required to be available three afternoons (1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.) per week during the second year (Practicum I and II) and 20 hours per week during regular business hours (Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) for agency field placement (Traineeship I and II) during the third year. **Students who are employed full-time upon entering the program will likely need to modify their work schedule, especially during years two and three, to assure availability for mandated clinical and field work.**