

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN COUNSELING PROGRAM

- Can the program be completed on a part-time basis? What is the minimum number of courses (credit hours) that must be taken?
- You have 6 years to complete the program. As long as you finish in that time, you can move at the pace you choose.
- Are there any prerequisites for the program?
- A major or minor in Psychology or the social sciences is recommended. Students with no social science background must begin their studies in the Counseling program by taking two electives as preparation. Students with some social science hours will be evaluated on an individual basis.
- Are there any research requirements to be completed each semester in addition to coursework?
- No. This is an applied program so there is no research component.
- Would I be assigned to a specific advisor/administrator to assist in my program development throughout my studies?
- Yes, an advisor is assigned when you are admitted and works with you through graduation.
- Is the internship a full- or part-time requirement? Is it set up through SMU or is it the responsibility of each student?
- Internships I and II are designed to fulfill Texas LMFT and/or Texas State Board of Education School Counselor certification. Students who are able to fulfill Internship requirements on a fulltime basis will obviously complete sooner than those who must accrue hours while working or meeting other responsibilities. In any case, students are expected to set a completion goal with the Director of Practica, make steady progress, maintain weekly communication through submission of log sheets, attend monthly meetings, and complete course and hour requirements within one calendar year of enrolling in practica. Any extension past one year must be requested in writing through the Department Chair with justification for extended time and an anticipated completion date.

The Director of Practica will assist with field site recommendations and placement and must approve the site but obtaining a satisfactory field site is the responsibility of the student.

- There are a number of track options under the counseling degree. Does completing an individual course plan satisfy all the requirements for licensure for that track? Or is there an additional test that will be required?
- Each track provides the necessary coursework (and a master's degree upon graduation) that is required prior to taking the state licensure exam. School counselors in the public system must have teaching credentials and must have been a classroom teacher for a minimum of two years.
- Does SMU provide any career placement assistance upon graduation?
- Good planning and soul searching during your program and careful placement decisions for practicum and internship are the best things you can do to ensure good direction and, hopefully, successful placement following graduation.
- What is the maximum number of courses that can be taken each term?
- The maximum number of classes a student may take each term is two (3 credit hours each). Students borrowing monies from the government must maintain full-time status (6 credit hours). The total amount of financial aid for which a student qualifies is divided equally into four terms.
- Does this mean I cannot borrow money for summer classes?
- Since the summer term is only five weeks long, it can be difficult to find two classes you need that do not have a scheduling conflict. Since summer term is not federally audited for full time status, it means you can take only one class during that term and not endanger your compliance. Students are encouraged to set aside enough money from each of their other disbursements to pay for one class in summer on their own. Of course, if you want to spread your allotment across five terms, you can. You can apply separately for financial aid for the summer term, but you jeopardize your compliance status if you do not enroll in and complete two courses during that term.
- Are there any scholarship opportunities available?
- Full time teachers in K-12 and permanent/full-time substitute teachers receive a tuition reduction because we are part of the Simmons School of Education and Human Development. This is the only scholarship in place at this time.