

# UTSA Counseling

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Current Students

Complete information about the CMHC program is available in the *Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Handbook* here:

[https://education.utsa.edu/images/counseling-pdfs/ms\\_handbook\\_cmhc.pdf](https://education.utsa.edu/images/counseling-pdfs/ms_handbook_cmhc.pdf)

#### Preliminary Questions

##### **1. Where can I find my ID number?**

Your myUTSA ID (abc123) is your primary student ID at UTSA. You'll need it to log into almost everything including ASAP, the Air Rowdy wireless network, on-campus computers, Blackboard Learn and more. After applying to UTSA, you should receive an email from myUTSAaccount@utsa.edu with a link and instructions to activate your myUTSA ID account. Once activated, you will use your myUTSA ID and passphrase to log into just about everything here, including your student portal called "ASAP" (pronounced "a-sap"). More information about your ID is available here: <https://onestop.utsa.edu/registration/student-records/myutsaid/>

##### **2. What is the difference between my banner number and myUTSA ID? When will I use each?**

You will use your myUTSA ID alphanumeric number when signing into UTSA and all affiliated accounts. Occasionally you may need it as another identifying feature within Blackboard or a teacher may ask for if you are applying to be a TA or any other position within the department. Include your myUTSA ID, sometimes referred to as your abc123, any time you email Kristina Talamantez, our Student Development Specialist, for help. Many students add it to their signature line. Your Banner ID is located on your ID card and begins with @. You will use your banner ID number on many forms such as travel requests, grants, scholarship applications, when applying for practicum and internships.

##### **3. How will I receive information and updates from the department and the university?**

It is important that you set up and regularly check your UTSA email. All official correspondence from UTSA can only be conducted via a student's my.utsa.edu email account. Once you receive official notification of acceptance, activate your new email here:

<https://www.utsa.edu/techsolutions/O365/Student-O365.html>

The UTSA Office of Financial Aid and Enrollment Services will use only the UTSA e-mail address to contact students regarding registration deadlines, financial aid status, and other important information. Failure to check UTSA e-mail does not excuse a student from meeting all required

deadlines and obligations related to registration, enrollment, financial aid, and other university requirements.

#### **4. What is regularly when it says to check email regularly?**

We recommend you check your UTSA email daily.

#### **5. I'm a new student, should I contact my advisor?**

You do not need to contact your advisor. You will receive an email with a suggested course sequence and an advising sheet. We will have a new student orientation in the first session of your Introduction to CMHC class. We will also have an advising session in your Introduction class about two weeks into the course. Each semester we will offer walk-in advising days in person and virtually.

#### **6. Who should I contact first when I have a problem?**

- **For questions regarding the CMHC program**, please see the CMHC handbook here: [https://education.utsa.edu/images/counseling-pdfs/ms\\_handbook\\_cmhc.pdf](https://education.utsa.edu/images/counseling-pdfs/ms_handbook_cmhc.pdf)
- **If you need help with your course selection or program plan**, please contact your academic advisor. A list of advisors by last name is located on the department website. <https://education.utsa.edu/departments/counseling/advisor-contacts.html>
- **For questions regarding HOLDS on your account**, contact the department that placed the hold. You can see this information on **ASAP under "Holds."**
- **For help with registration problems, other than holds, and for most other matters**, please contact our Student Development Specialist, Kristina Talamantez. [Kristina.talamantez@utsa.edu](mailto:Kristina.talamantez@utsa.edu)

#### **7. What is the difference between an official and unofficial transcript?**

**Unofficial transcript-** is a transcript that the student can access through either their institution's on-line "unofficial transcript" option or opening a sealed envelope from the institution's Registrar that contains the transcripts. UTSA students can access their unofficial transcripts through ASAP.

**Official transcript-**is a transcript that comes from an institution (either electronically or paper copy). Institutions will give you an official transcript in a sealed envelope-this is official. The moment that envelope is opened, it becomes unofficial.

After admission, you **MUST** submit official transcripts from your universities. These are sent directly from university to university either electronically or in sealed envelopes. Failure to provide official transcripts will result in a HOLD on your account.

#### **8. I have submitted an official transcript, but ASAP says you don't have it. What do I do?**

It takes at least one week for UTSA Graduate Admissions to remove the hold. A week after you receive confirmation, you may email: [graduate.admission@utsa.edu](mailto:graduate.admission@utsa.edu) to inquire the status.

### **9. For how long are my courses valid?**

Courses in our program are only valid for 6 years. Contact Kristina to petition for approval of expired courses.

### **10. How do I find the email address of my professor?**

When using your UTSA email account, if you have the name of your professor, you can start to type it in and UTSA will autofill or suggest email accounts within the system. Additionally, the faculty page of our department has faculty bios and contact information here:

<https://education.utsa.edu/departments/counseling/faculty.html>

### **11. What types of scholarships or funding can I apply for?**

There are several avenues of funding as follows:

UTSA Scholarships General Information - <https://onestop.utsa.edu/scholarships/>

Scholarship HUB - <https://onestop.utsa.edu/scholarships/hub/>

Limited scholarships are available through the Counseling Department. If admitted, you will be notified of these opportunities by email as they are available.

### **12. What happens if I need to drop a class I am enrolled in?**

Refer to the academic calendar for deadlines for withdrawal from courses. Withdrawal forms are available here: <https://onestop.utsa.edu/wp-content/uploads/WithdrawalForm.pdf>

## **Course Sequence and Advising**

### **13. How many hours is the Master Program?**

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program is 60-hours; see the next question about the advising form which outlines the required courses and recommendations for full and part-time course sequence.

### **14. What is the suggested course sequence and where is the advising plan?**

You can find the suggested course sequence and a blank advising form here:

<https://education.utsa.edu/departments/counseling/forms-and-helpful-links.html>

### **15. Who is my advisor?**

Advisors for CMHC are assigned alphabetically by last name. Please see this link on our website to determine who your advisor is: <https://education.utsa.edu/departments/counseling/advisor-contacts.html>

### **16. How do I prepare to meet with my advisor?**

When meeting with your advisor prepare a list of questions or concerns you have and fill in the advising form with your completed classes and semester completed. If you schedule a time to meet with your advisor by phone, zoom, or in person, send them this list of questions and your completed advising form. This will give your advisor a chance to prepare for the meeting, find answers to your questions, and resolve concerns.

**17. Degree works in not displaying my courses correctly. What do I do?**

Do not use degree works. Keep your own record on your advising plan or look to your unofficial transcript as found on ASAP for the best recording of your completed and current work.

**Registration**

**18. Why can I only take 9 credits a semester? Is there any way to take more?**

Due to CACREP standards and to ensure our students have the best fit for academic success, we must maintain a certain student to teacher ratio. Based on our current number of students and faculty we have found that 9 credits are the maximum any student can take within our department and still maintain those ratios. Please note, that you are still able to take classes in other departments in addition to the 9 hours in counseling, but you will need to email Kristina Talamantez for clearance. [Kristina.Talamantez@utsa.edu](mailto:Kristina.Talamantez@utsa.edu)

**19. What electives can I take?**

Electives can be any graduate course related to counseling from our department or others. These may include Educational Psychology (EDP), Social Work (SWK), Bicultural/Bilingual Studies (BBL), or others as they relate to counseling. Kristina sends a list of available electives each semester to both faculty and students.

**20. What do I need to do to ensure I can register on the day it opens?**

There are several things that could create a hold on your account. If there is a hold on your account you will be unable to register until that hold item is resolved. Some common reason for holds include: outstanding bills, a need for documents, transcripts, or vaccines, and other requirements. Please go to your HOLDS in your ASAP account under Student Services> Student Records> View Holds before Registration Day to determine if you have any holds and work to clear them so that you can register on time.

When preparing for registration, have a list of the CRN numbers for the classes you want to register for and log in at precisely 7:00 am on the day of registration. Many of our classes are filled within minutes. Veterans may have the opportunity to register early, so be sure and take advantage of this option if you can.

**21. If I add my name to a waitlist, how likely am I to get into the class?**

As class schedules change often all the way through the first week of class, always add your name to any class waitlist you are interested in taking. Although we cannot ensure you will be able to take the class, we often add classes if waitlists are long.

**22. How will I know if a spot has opened for me if I am on a waitlist?**

You will receive an email. Be sure to check your UTSA email EVERYDAY because you will only have 24 hours to register if you are offered a spot.

**23. Is there a limit to how many times I can take a Special Topics (COU6973) Course?**

Students who take Special Topics more than two times must petition the Graduate School to count the additional courses towards their program of study. Please contact Kristina for more details after you register for your third special topics course.

**24. What is the difference between online synchronous and asynchronous?**

Classes that are held online can be performed in a synchronous, asynchronous, or hybrid fashion. Within UTSA an asynchronous class is any class where work is completed without meeting via zoom or in person for any specified times or periods. Classes that are synchronous occur online but still have specific times that they meet, and you are expected to be present at those time as if the class was in person. Attendance policies apply as they would in a traditional class. See your course syllabus for attendance policies for a specific course.

**25. My class states it is hybrid. What does that mean?**

Hybrid classes have a combination of some work performed within a time frame without meeting, while sometimes you will still meet together as assigned. Typically, these classes alternate every other week, but ultimately that is at the discretion of the professor. Please be aware of the nature of the class when registering to ensure academic success.

**Grades and Academic Probation**

**26. What is the exact grade that will make a B- or a C-?**

Please take notes that in terms of course completion and credit there are specific grade requirements. Classes stating you must have a C or higher for credit, and a B or higher for movement to the next course, do not include those grades at the minus level. Each course syllabus will list the specific point requirements for alpha grades.

**27. Am I allowed to make a C in my courses?**

Only two courses with the grade of “C” will be accepted toward this degree. Also, Students must earn a “B” (3.0) or better in all clinical courses (COU 5393, COU 5683, COU 5713, & COU 5723). Students who receive a B- or lower must retake that course and earn a “B” or better before progressing in the clinical course sequence.

If you receive a third “C”, you will have to re-take one of the courses you received a “C” in and make a “B” or better.

**28. What is academic probation?**

Academic probation describes the standing of a student at the graduate level who is in one of the following categories:

1. A student who fails to achieve a grade point average in any term at UTSA of 3.0 or higher, irrespective of level of courses taken.
2. A student who received a grade of “D+,” “D,” or “D-” in any course in a term and a grade point average of 3.0 or higher.
3. A student who has been reinstated following academic dismissal.

Academic probation is cleared only when none of the above criteria apply and when the student achieves an overall grade point average of 3.0 as a graduate student at UTSA. More information is available here:

<https://catalog.utsa.edu/policies/generalacademicregulations/academicstanding/>

**29. I was reinstated after academic dismissal and completed my semester, but I'm blocked from registration. What do I do?**

After reinstatement, you must wait for grades to post before you can register. This is to verify you have met the 3.0 requirement.

**30. Can I take Internship if I am on Academic Probation?**

Students on academic probation cannot take Internship because you do your portfolio in Internship. The portfolio replaces the Comprehensive Exam, which is required for master's programs; students cannot take their Comprehensive Exam while on probation. There is a question on the Internship application asking if you are in good academic standing.

**31. What does "good academic standing" mean?**

Good standing means you are not on academic probation and have not been academically dismissed.

**32. What GPA do I need to graduate?**

A minimum of a 3.0 overall grade point average is required for graduation.

**Fitness to Practice**

**33. What is FTP?**

The purpose of the FTP review process is to regularly monitor students' professional and personal development (CACREP, 2009) to ensure that students demonstrate appropriate progress toward developing the necessary behaviors, attitudes, and professional competencies to practice as a counselor-in-training. Refer to the Department of Counseling's website for the FTP policy.

[https://education.utsa.edu/images/counseling-pdfs/Fitness to Practice Policy 2012-2.pdf](https://education.utsa.edu/images/counseling-pdfs/Fitness_to_Practice_Policy_2012-2.pdf)

**34. When do the evaluations take place?**

FTP evaluations occur on a regular basis throughout the program. Your course professor will complete an evaluation after Intro, Skills, and Practicum. You may not receive a copy of this form unless there is a problem. An evaluation may also occur any time a professor has a concern about your performance in one or more of the competencies.

**35. How will I know if I have a fitness to practice concern?**

If at any time a professor has concerns about your demonstration of one of more of the FTP competencies, the professor will notify you and provide you with a copy of the FTP evaluation.

The professor will typically set a meeting to the evaluation with you. See the FTP policy for more information about this process and your rights.

## **Clinical Experience**

### **36. How can I find out more about practicum and internship requirements?**

Please read the **Clinical Training Manual** provided for master's level students at the website below. This will help prepare you for practicum and internship experience and answer many questions you may have.

[https://education.utsa.edu/images/counseling-pdfs/ms\\_handbook\\_cmhc.pdf](https://education.utsa.edu/images/counseling-pdfs/ms_handbook_cmhc.pdf)

### **37. How do I apply for my Practicum or Internship Course?**

In the long semester before you are ready to take practicum or internship, please read the emails from Kristina. She will send an application to apply for practicum and internship classes. You must apply before the deadline, as this is how we determine the number of seats to offer in these courses. You do not need to have a secure internship site in place to apply.

### **38. Do I need to find my own practicum and internship sites?**

Yes. On the Department of Counseling Page, there is information regarding our affiliated sites for CMHC and School. These lists can be found under Helpful Links on this page:

<https://education.utsa.edu/departments/counseling/forms-and-helpful-links.html>

### **39. How do I apply for a practicum or internship site?**

There is a comprehensive training video named **Counseling Practicum/Internship Site Application Workshop** on the department website under Helpful Links:

<https://education.utsa.edu/departments/counseling/forms-and-helpful-links.htm>

### **40. How do I know if a site is approved?**

Please see question 39 for how to access the most up to date list of approved sites for the Department of Counseling. If you have questions about those sites, please feel free to do your own independent research or contact the site. Always look for the most updated copy of the affiliated list because it is updated regularly.

### **41. What if a site isn't approved?**

If you are interested in interning at a site that is not on our affiliated list, there is an application process to try and have your site approved and put on our list. The application can be found here under Helpful Links:

<https://education.utsa.edu/departments/counseling/forms-and-helpful-links.html>

### **42. How can I find out more about what to expect in Practicum and Internship?**

There is a video named **Orientation for Practicum and Internship** on the department website under Helpful Links: <https://education.utsa.edu/departments/counseling/forms-and-helpful-links.html>

#### **43. What is the difference between individual, triadic, and group supervision?**

Supervision is a requirement of practicum and internships. Each student will receive group supervision and either individual or triadic supervision. Your practicum/internship class will act as group supervision and this is why those classes remain small, 12 or less. Each student will also be assigned an individual supervisor at your site. As that supervisor will have more than one supervisee, they may opt to meet two supervisees at once on some weeks, this is known as triadic supervision, but counts as individual supervision hours on your log. You may not meet regularly for individual supervision with one supervisor and 3 or more students. This is considered group supervision and is optional at your site, in addition to one hour a week of required individual/triadic supervision.

#### **44. Can I take Internship I two times?**

Internship I may be taken a second time in lieu of Internship II.

#### **45. What if I don't complete all my hours in practicum or internship?**

You may be eligible for an incomplete if these conditions are met:

- Monitor your hours throughout the semester and consult frequently with your professor and your site supervisor if you are short on hours. Be available an adequate number of hours to ensure completion of all hours. (In other words, if you are at your site for adequate hours to be accrued, but clients are not assigned or do not show up, this is beyond your control.
- Complete all your assignments (both tapescripts, your case presentation, and your portfolio, and any other required assignments.)
- Complete more than 50% of your direct hours.
- Adequate site supervisor evaluations.
- Approval of your instructor.

If you receive an incomplete, you may not register for the next clinical course. You may not accrue hours between semesters. You may continue to accrue hours the following semester and you will be assigned to a course for group supervision. You must attend that course until you complete your hours. Your course instructor and your previous instructor will consult and assign your grade.

### **Professional and Additional Experience and Expertise**

#### **46. What if I'm interested in helping with research?**

There may be opportunities to partner with specific professors or with research projects and groups within our department. If you are interested in helping with research, please seek out those professors you might be interested in working with or with similar research interests and ask them how you can get involved.

#### **47. How can I attend or present at professional conferences?**

Membership in professional counseling organizations is encouraged but not required. You will learn more about these organizations in your Intro to Counseling course. Members will receive



emails from their organization about conferences and how you can attend. For those interested in presenting at a professional conference, please consider consulting with professors who may be working on topics of interest.

### **NCE and Graduation**

#### **48. How do I know when I need to take the NCE?**

Determining the exact timing of when you want to take the NCE's is a personal choice. There are some requirements that are necessary, but most people take them in their final year of their master's level program. Kristina will send emails about how to register with and through the University, which is the easiest way to register. You may also register through NBCC here: <https://www.nbcc.org/licensure/examregistration>

#### **49. What do I do when I'm ready to graduate?**

You must apply for graduation early in the semester that you plan to graduate through ASAP. Log into ASAP:

- Click on Student Services
- Click on Student Records
- Click on Graduation
- Click on Graduation Application/Survey
- Read all instructions very carefully. Your application will not be processed unless you complete the application in its entirety and receive a confirmation number on the last page. Print the confirmation page and keep it for your records.

#### **50. What are the deadlines for applying for graduation?**

More information about graduation, including a checklist and the deadlines for applying can be found here:

<https://onestop.utsa.edu/graduation/>