

# UTSA Counseling

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Prospective 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)

#### Application Process

**1. How do I apply and what is the cost of application?**

The application is online: <https://future.utsa.edu/graduate/>

The cost of the application is \$50 for domestic students and \$90 for international students.

**2. What items do I need to submit?**

- An unofficial transcript from each institution you attended must be uploaded with the application. Even if you have submitted an official transcript to UTSA, we need your unofficial transcript to process your application.
- 2-page Narrative Statement that addresses the prompts: <https://future.utsa.edu/wp-content/uploads/Counseling-Narrative-Statement.pdf>
- 3 Applicant Rating Forms that recommenders fill out online (you must provide their email address in the designated area of the application)

Items not required:

- GRE scores
- Letters of Recommendation-the application system will allow a letter to be uploaded; please let your recommender know that a letter is not required, just the Applicant Rating Form. In order to submit your Applicant Rating Form, the system will make it seem like your recommender has to submit a letter, they do not. They may upload a blank page with the form. Letters of recommendation will not improve your chances of being accepted.

**3. What is the GPA requirement?**

The baseline for admission into the program is a 3.0 overall GPA.

**4. What if I do not meet the GPA for admission?**

Look at the GPA you have and take or re-take any undergraduate courses you are interested in, then make the best grades possible to aim for that 3.0 overall GPA.

Keep in mind that taking additional courses helps boost the overall GPA. If you re-take courses, they will not replace the original grade. Better to take courses you are likely to do well in.

**5. What are the application deadlines?**

Spring 2024 – September 1<sup>st</sup>

Fall 2024 – February 1<sup>st</sup>

Spring 2025 – October 1<sup>st</sup>

**6. I do not graduate with my bachelor's degree before the following year's application deadline? Can I still apply to Grad School without my completed degree?**

You can apply during your last semester of undergraduate coursework. If admitted, a transcript hold will go on your account, and you will need to turn in the final official transcript after your degree has been conferred.

**7. How soon will I receive the decision about acceptance in to the program?**

The Department of Counseling does not admit students on a rolling basis. It generally takes 4-6 weeks after the application deadline to receive a final decision.

**8. What are the start dates of the program?**

Please see the three-year academic calendar here:

[https://www.utsa.edu/registrar/files/AcademicCal.pdf#\\_ga=2.255703496.1976746094.1683051259-71602114.1682950585](https://www.utsa.edu/registrar/files/AcademicCal.pdf#_ga=2.255703496.1976746094.1683051259-71602114.1682950585)

**9. How many students are accepted into the program?**

Admission numbers depend on our CACREP accreditation ratios (that is our counseling body accrediting body). We have a strict faculty-to-student ratio that we must maintain so admissions vary based on the number of students enrolled and how many graduate per semester. For example, for Fall 2022, we received over 225 applications, and we accepted roughly 80 students. We usually accept fewer students in the spring semester.

**10. What makes an ideal candidate?**

The ideal candidate for our program is interested in pursuing a career in counseling. The admissions committee does a holistic admissions review including undergraduate GPA, recommendation checklists, and candidate responses to the 2 narrative prompts.

**Program Information**

**11. How is the program delivered? (in-person, online, hybrid)**

Pre-COVID-19, we were an in-person program located at the downtown campus. Currently, we offer a mix of modalities including in-person, online synchronous, online asynchronous, and online hybrid. We cannot predict how long these modalities will be offered. Currently, we are not designed as 100% online program.

**12. What is the length of the program?**

The Clinical Mental Health program is 60-hours; see the advising plan which outlines the required courses and suggestions for full and part-time course sequence.

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

**13. How long does the program take to complete?**

The M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and the M.Ed. in School Counseling are roughly 3-year programs that build on core content and end in the 700-hour clinical sequence. All students complete a 100-hour practicum and two 300-hour internships. Most of our CMHC graduates go on to pursue their LPC (Licensed Professional Counselor) licensure in TX. Those who complete the 60 hours school counseling program can also pursue their LPC. The degree program advising forms can be found here: (under Helpful Links for Students)

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

**14. Do I need to live in San Antonio?**

Currently, it is possible to begin the program online; however, there is no guarantee that this will continue because modalities change each semester. You will likely need to live in San Antonio or within 60 miles for both your practicum and internship. Currently, we are not designed as 100% online program.

**15. What is the cost of tuition or the total cost? Does the admissions process require admission or application deposit?**

Click here to learn about tuition and fees:

<https://www.utsa.edu/financialaffairs/services/fiscal-services/tuition-fees/index.html>

There is no deposit required but you will have to pay a \$50 application fee for domestic students and \$90 for international students.

**Program Accreditation, Skills, and Certifications**

**16. Is the program accredited? If so, by who?**

Yes, we are accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs. <https://www.cacrep.org/>

**17. Do you accept transfer credit?**

Upon admission, we can review up to 9 hours of transfer coursework.

**18. What can you do with this degree?**

Career opportunities are available in education, non-profit organizations, the private, state, and federal sectors including juvenile justice, drug/substance abuse, marriage and family counseling, and as a general Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC).

**19. What are faculty research interests or things I may be able to learn about?**

Our faculty is actively involved in research. Master students often have the opportunity to assist faculty with their research. You can read more about our faculty interests here:

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

**20. How do students develop their skills throughout the program? What is practicum and internship?**

Students begin learning about counseling skills in their introductory classes and continue to learn and develop skills throughout the program. Our clinical training sequence consists of four courses:

COU 5393 Counseling Skills - As the foundational course in the department's sequence of experiential clinical courses, Development of Counseling Skills offers students the opportunity to master basic skills of professional counseling.

COU 5683 Practicum in Counseling - As the second course in the department's clinical training sequence, Practicum in Counseling provides students with an initial opportunity to transition knowledge and skills gained in prior coursework into professional practice settings. Students accrue 100 hours; 40 hours direct service to clients.

COU 5713 Clinical Mental Health Counseling Internship I & COU 5723 Clinical Mental Health Counseling Internship II - As the third and fourth courses in the clinical training sequence, Internships reflect the comprehensive work experience of a professional counselor in community settings. Students accrue 300 hours each internship; 120 hours direct service to clients.

**21. What are the special certifications or extra training I may be able to get while in the program?**

- Bilingual Counseling (certificate) - <https://future.utsa.edu/programs/graduate-certificate/bilingual-counseling/>
- Integrated Behavioral Healthcare (certificate) – <https://catalog.utsa.edu/graduate/educationhumandevlopment/counseling/#certificatext>
- Neurofeedback (training) - <https://education.utsa.edu/departments/counseling/neurofeedback.html>

**Financial Aid, Scholarships, Work Opportunities, and Housing**

**22. What financial aid is available (e.g., Fellowships, TA, RA, GA)? Are any scholarships available?**

Graduate students at UTSA may qualify for funding opportunities through a variety of sources. These funds may come in the form of grants, loans, and scholarships.

The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is a free application provided by the federal government to help students pay for college. The FAFSA application requires a federal school code or for you to select what school(s) you want your application to be sent to. The UTSA federal school code is 010115. For more information regarding financial aid, please see:

<https://onestop.utsa.edu/financialaid/apply/fafsa/>

The university has Graduate Assistant (GA) positions across the University in different departments. The positions' duties and pay will vary but these are part-time jobs and do not assist with tuition and fees.

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

**23. Can graduate students work at the university and get the tuition covered?**

Employees of the university do have a course tuition option.

**24. Does the university offer to house graduate students?**

Not at this time.

### **International Students**

**25. Where can I find information for international student candidates?**

This website has information for all international graduate students applying to UTSA. Please review the website closely.

<https://graduateschool.utsa.edu/international/>

**26. What testing for TOEFL will UTSA accept?**

Information regarding TOEFL scores can be found here. Currently we are accepting paper based or internet-based scores. See the website for requirements regarding those scores.

<https://catalog.utsa.edu/policies/admission/graduate/internationalgraduatestudents/>

**27. How do I convert my GPA or what service should I use for a foreign transcript evaluation?**

We are currently accepting ECE and FCSA. Any applicants, including non-U.S. citizens (International), U.S. Citizens, and permanent residents, who have earned university-level credit from foreign institutions are required to submit a detailed course-by-course credential evaluation along with transcripts. Summaries will not be accepted. Please note the following:

- [Foreign Credential Services of America](#) (FCSA). Please note you must upload the required evaluation and unofficial transcripts to the UTSA application portal as a single file. The application form for FCSA can be found on [this link](#). FCSA can be reached at (512)459-8428 or [info@foreigncredentials.org](mailto:info@foreigncredentials.org).
- Students applying for Fall 2023, Spring 2024, and Summer 2024 are required to submit a course-by-course credential evaluation from [Educational Credential Evaluators](#) (ECE). You will be able to request the credential evaluation through the UTSA application portal. ECE can be reached through their [live chat](#). For UTSA application portal (CAS) ordering instructions, please visit this page: [UTSA Graduate Admissions CAS Instructions](#)
- Foreign credential evaluations must be received by the application deadline for your application to be processed. Processing time may take up to three weeks, and

students should plan accordingly with the admission deadlines of the programs for which they are applying.

- WES Evaluations are not a UTSA-approved agency and will not be accepted.

## **VA Students**

### **28. How do I go about accessing my VA Benefits?**

Veteran benefits at UTSA are processed via UTSA's Center for Military Affiliated Students (CMAS). They can be reached at [cmas@utsa.edu](mailto:cmas@utsa.edu)

### **29. What forms might I need in addition to the forms already required?**

Some students may need a Vocational Rehabilitation Academic Worksheet - this form should be completed by the student's academic advisor and/or UTSA's certifying officials.

### **30. Where can I find more information for Veterans?**

<https://catalog.utsa.edu/policies/veteransassistance/>