

Comparison of MA Degrees in Clinical Psychology, Clinical Mental Health Counseling & School Counseling

Area	Clinical Psychology	Clinical Mental Health & School Counseling
Graduation Requirements, Accreditation, and Credentials		
Tracks	Clinical Psychology	Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) or School Counseling (SC)
Accreditation	The American Psychological Association (APA), the accrediting body in psychology, does not offer accreditation for its MA programs. Only Ph.D. and Psy.D. programs are accredited by the APA. There are no accreditation agencies for MA Psychology Programs.	The SC program is accredited by Texas Education Agency (TEA) and nationally through the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Both tracks are CACREP equivalent programs, which allows graduates to transfer their licensure to 25+ states. Faculty will seek full accreditation in 2022-2023.
Degree Requirements	60-credit hour program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 51 credits (17 classes) ▪ 6 credits of practicum (300 hrs. over two semesters that includes a total of 150 direct service contact hours with clients), and ▪ 3 credit hours of Thesis (data driven) or Thesis Project (theory driven) 	60-credit hour program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 51 credits (17 counseling classes) ▪ 9 credits of clinical experience (700 hrs. over three semesters; 280 direct client hours): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Practicum: 100 hrs. (40 direct client) – Internship I: 300 hrs. (120 direct client) – Internship II: 300 hrs. (120 direct client) ▪ Pass the Comprehensive Counselor Exam (CCE) ▪ Pass the Practice TExES Exam (SC only) ▪ Meet counseling “fitness to practice” standards ▪ Thesis Option (data driven)
Clinical Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practicum occurs in the UTPB counseling & psychological services clinic, supervised by a Licensed Psychologist (Ph.D) ▪ Students will lead individual, family, and/or couple’s with a variety of populations (child, adolescents, adults). ▪ Students conduct formal evaluations and gain experience in testing procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practicum occurs in the UTPB Counseling Training Clinic under live supervision of counseling faculty (Ph.D.) and/or LPC/LPC-S. ▪ Internships I & II are completed off-campus, at an approved site, and under the supervision of a credentialed mental health professional.
Obtaining Credentials	<p><u>Licensed Psychological Associate (LPA)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pass the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP) ▪ Pass Texas Jurisprudence Examination ▪ Complete 3000 hours of supervised hours under a Licensed Psychologist (LP) ▪ The LPA may practice independently. <p><u>Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pass: National Counselor Examination, NCE ▪ Pass: Texas Jurisprudence Examination ▪ Apply to become an LPC-Associate ▪ Complete 3000 post-grad hours under LPC-S ▪ The LPC may practice independently 	<p><u>Licensed Professional Counselor (CMHC Track)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pass: National Counselor Examination, NCE ▪ Pass: Texas Jurisprudence Examination ▪ Apply to become an LPC-Associate ▪ Complete 3000 post-grad hours under LPC-S ▪ The LPC may practice independently <p><u>Certified School Counselor (SC Track)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Service record of two years of teaching ▪ Pass: TExES 252 School Counselor Exam ▪ Obtain certification through the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) ▪ Are eligible to obtain state licensure as LPC <p><u>Play Therapy Certificate</u></p> <p>Student may complete the required coursework to seek credentials as a Registered Play Therapist.</p>
Doctoral Study	Successful completion of a thesis may enable students to be competitive in gaining acceptance to Ph.D. or Psy.D. programs	Graduates are eligible to pursue a Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision, Educational Psychology, & various specializations in Education and Counseling.
Focus	The science of psychopathology and psychological theories relevant to social-cognitive development, culture, and social justice. Application of psychological evidence and theory to mental health.	The application of counseling theory and evidenced-based practice used to assess, diagnose, and treat a culturally diverse society.
Model	Scientist-Practitioner	Holistic and Wellness Model
Clinical Practice	Assessment and treatment of specific mental disorder, including severe mental disorders allowing students to work in in-patient and out-patient treatment settings.	Assessment and diagnosis are two metrics of the many variables used to measure a client’s mental health and to tailor treatment.

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Faculty		
Education & Training of Students	Involves training in the application of science-based principles to the provision of psychological services. Coursework includes research methods and statistics. Students learn about psychological science and theory, how to counsel patients, and how to assess intelligence, achievement, and other clinically relevant factors.	Students develop the knowledge, skills, and disposition to counsel individuals, groups, and families using a multicultural and social justice lens to address clinical issues across the life span through the application of quantitative and qualitative research, assessment, and evidence-based practices.
Faculty Training	Clinical, Cognitive, Developmental, Health, and Social Psychology	Counselor Education and Supervision, School Counseling, Clinical Mental Health Counseling, and Educational Psychology
Professional Credentials of Faculty	Ph.D. Psychologists, Ph.D. holding Licensed Psychologists & a LPC-S	Licensed Professional Counselor-Supervisor (LPC-S), Certified School Counselor (CSC), National Certified Counselor (NCC), Registered Play Therapist (RPT), & Legal & Ethical Counseling Specialist
Faculty Research	Psychology department faculty are active in research involving clinical, cognitive, health, developmental, social, and legal psychology. See faculty webpages for specific research interests.	Counseling faculty are active in research involving play therapy, counselor education, ethics and legal issues in counseling, autism, and the mental health and wellness needs of marginalized and underserved populations.

Note. Both programs require 60 credit hours and provide a path toward license as a Professional Counselor (LPC). **Both programs** require at least 150 direct client contact hours as part of practicum, and both enable students to pursue a doctoral degree (in psychology or counseling respectively).