

# STUDENT HANDBOOK

2019-2020

## COUNSELING

Higher Education &  
Student Affairs



School of Education  
& Human Development

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER

CU IN THE CITY





## CONTENTS

PROGRAM INFORMATION	1
Program Description	1
Counseling Program Mission Statement	1
HESA Program Objectives	2
DEGREE REQUIREMENTS	2
Course Sequencing	2
Higher Education & Student Affairs Course Plan	3
Culminating Experience	4
Comprehensive Examination	4
Master's Thesis	4
Applying for Graduation	4
APPENDIX: MASTER'S THESIS GUIDELINES	6

## **PROGRAM INFORMATION**

### **Program Description**

The University of Colorado Denver, through the School of Education & Human Development, offers Master of Arts programs appropriate for counseling work in clinical mental health settings, school systems, higher education, couple and family settings, private practice, and business settings. The programs in Couple and Family Counseling/Therapy, Clinical Mental Health Counseling, and School Counseling are accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The program in Higher Education and Student Affairs aligns with the Council for the Accreditation of Standards. The overall philosophy of the Counseling program is to prepare master's level counselors/therapists with academic, professional, and personal credentials to perform effectively in their anticipated work setting. Individual, systems, and integrated training are emphasized with a focus on what research demonstrates as being essential in effective counseling.

### **Counseling Program Mission Statement**

The Mission of the Counseling program at the University of Colorado Denver is to educate competent counselors who value inclusion and prize diversity such that they are prepared to offer a continuum of mental health services across a variety of settings for the benefit of the community and society.

The Counseling Program faculty strives to train counselors:

1. Who are adept at providing high quality, contextually appropriate counseling and consultation services to individuals, couples, families and systems.
2. Who welcome and support diversity, including race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, spirituality, gender, age, ability and socioeconomic status among the faculty, peers, and clientele; who advocate on behalf of marginalized individuals and groups; and who are open to challenging the dominant paradigm by adopting multiple perspectives with the goal of becoming culturally responsive.
3. Who embody integrity and culturally sensitive ethics in their professional practice.
4. Who are committed to lifelong learning, self-care, and professional development; and who advocate on behalf of their professional identity as counselors.

Current objectives of the Counseling Program are reflected in the core requirements as dictated by national accreditation standards and licensure requirements. Through coursework, practicum, internship, and successful completion of the comprehensive examination, students are expected to satisfy overall program objectives and specific course objectives. Students should be prepared to meet course objectives and attend classes as scheduled. In addition, students must have access to computer technology in order to participate in online coursework and

communication within the program. Students will be expected to be able to use campus email, online learning management systems such as Canvas, word processing programs, and programs required to view course materials such as PDF files. Students are encouraged to contact the Office of Information and Technology (<https://www1.ucdenver.edu/offices/office-of-information-technology>) if they would like additional training, support, or resources regarding the use of technology.

**HESA Program Objectives**

Demonstrate knowledge of:

1. the history and philosophy of HESA
2. college student development theory
3. law and ethics in higher education
4. leadership and organizational management
5. research methods and program evaluation

Demonstrate appropriate skills in

1. utilizing basic helping skills in a culturally appropriate manner
2. collaborating with other professionals
3. developing data driven programs to address the needs of undergraduate populations
4. engaging in advocacy to assure that higher education environments are responsive to the needs of marginalized student groups

**DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

**Course Sequencing**

Courses in the graduate programs in Counseling at the University of Colorado Denver are designed to provide a gradual and stratified skill-building experience, beginning with the introductory course in your particular track, and culminating with the internship experience. Furthermore, course sequencing is utilized to maximize the learning and skill-building process. **Students are responsible for reviewing the catalog and schedule to be certain that all prerequisites for courses have been taken. Some courses may be offered only once per year, or every other year. Please consult the tables below for the information on courses not offered every semester.** Any student who has not followed the above procedure and has registered for a class out of sequence may be administratively dropped from the class. There are several courses in the Counseling/Therapy curriculum for which a limited enrollment is essential to maintaining a high quality learning experience for students. These courses include:

Course	Max. per Section
COUN 5100 Counseling/Therapy Techniques	20
COUN 5940 Internship in Counseling/Therapy	15

**These maximum enrollments are monitored very closely. Students are expected to register early in order to secure a place in these classes.**

**Higher Education & Student Affairs Course Plan**

*(39 semester hours)*

<b>COURSE NUMBER</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>TYPE</b>	<b>SEMESTER OFFERED</b>	<b>PREREQUISITES</b>
<b>COUN 5070</b>	Law and Ethics in Higher Education	HESA	SPRING odd years	
<b>COUN 5010</b>	Counseling Theories	Core	FALL SPRING	
<b>COUN 5050</b>	Foundations of Student Affairs	HESA	SPRING even years	
<b>COUN 5100</b>	Techniques of Counseling	Core		COUN 5010, COUN 5810
<b>COUN 5130</b>	Student Development Theory	HESA	FALL odd years	
<b>COUN 5400</b>	Career Counseling	Core	FALL SPRING	
<b>COUN 5500</b>	Diversity in Higher Education	HESA	FALL even years	
<b>COUN 5810</b>	Multicultural & Diversity Issues in Counseling Individuals and Families	Core	FALL SPRING	
<b>HDFR 5003</b>	Leadership and Organizations	HESA	FALL	
<b>RSEM 5110</b>	Introduction to Measurement	Core		
<b>RSEM 5120</b>	Introduction to Research	Core		
<b>COUN 5940</b>	Internship in Higher Education and Student Affairs (6 credit hours)	HESA	SPRING	

**\*\*\*This track does not lead to licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor**

## **Culminating Experience**

All students must complete a culminating experience in the form of a comprehensive exam or thesis. The majority of students choose to take the comprehensive exam. Student generally choose the thesis if they intend to conduct research after graduation and/or pursue a PhD degree. It is recommended students discuss their culminating experience options with their faculty mentor.

## **Comprehensive Examination**

Students in the HESA track complete a take home, case study based comprehensive exam. It is recommended that students take the comprehensive exam after completing all HESA specialty courses (students are allowed to take the exam while being enrolled in their final course). The comprehensive exam covers Law and Ethics in Higher Education, Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education, and Student Development Theories. Students are required to complete an online application. The exam is offered in the Spring (April). The application to take the Comprehensive Exam is available online at <https://education.ucdenver.edu/academic-services/student-resources/comps> and is due by Census Date for the semester that the student wants to take the exam. Census date is available on the Academic Calendar at <http://www.ucdenver.edu/student-services/resources/Registrar-dev/CourseListings/Pages/AcademicCalendar.aspx>.

Students who do not pass the comprehensive exam will be required to retake the exam before graduating. If a student fails the exam the first time, they may choose to complete a thesis in lieu of retaking the comprehensive exam. If the student fails the exam a second time it will result in dismissal from the program and failure to earn the Master's degree.

## **Master's Thesis**

Students may choose to complete a thesis in lieu of the comprehensive examination. This option requires a thesis committee, an examination on the thesis material as well as any other material, and registration for COUN 6950 Master's Thesis for four (4) semester hours. Students interested in completing a thesis should review the Master's Thesis Guidelines ([Appendix](#)) and touch base with their faculty mentor.

## **Applying for Graduation**

Graduation upon completion of the course requirements is NOT automatic. Students are responsible for ensuring they have met the all graduation requirements. Once registration is available for the semester students intend to graduate, including summer, they may apply for graduation online in the UCDAccess student portal. An application for graduation is due by Census Date for the semester that the student intends to graduate. Census date is available on the Academic Calendar at <http://www.ucdenver.edu/student-services/resources/Registrar-dev/CourseListings/Pages/AcademicCalendar.aspx>

Students who submit an online application for graduation and do not graduate that semester will need to submit another online application for the semester they plan to graduate. Graduation ceremonies are held twice a year (May and December), at the completion of the spring and fall semester.

## **APPENDIX: MASTER'S THESIS GUIDELINES**

In lieu of taking a comprehensive examination, students may write a thesis as the culminating exercise of their program of study.

### **Minimum eligibility requirements include:**

- Successful completion of all core courses; consultation with thesis advisor should begin as soon as student is considering the thesis option
- Demonstrated ability to pursue research work, as evidenced by research papers developed in other Counseling/Therapy Program coursework.
- Preliminary identification in discussion with student's faculty mentor of a thesis topic or area of interest
- Agreement from two Counseling/Therapy faculty members to serve on the thesis committee; the third required member can be another Counseling/Therapy faculty member as well, or the third member can be an outside member (see below for requirements regarding outside members)

### **Thesis Process for Master of Arts in Counseling Students**

Eligible students will be expected to follow a prescribed process in completing the requirements of the thesis. An overview of the process is provided below.

1. **Consultation with Thesis/Faculty Advisor:** When students are thinking about writing a thesis, they should contact their faculty advisor or another faculty member to establish whether or not the eligibility criteria are satisfied (see eligibility above) and to determine whether or not a thesis fits within the student's overall academic program. The student should select a thesis advisor who is knowledgeable about the research topic. The thesis advisor must be a full-time member of the Counseling/Therapy faculty. The student should be sure that the thesis advisor is interested in the topic, has time available, and is willing to assume advisor responsibilities. The thesis advisor will serve as Chairperson of the Thesis Committee. The following should be discussed:
  - a. Possible research topic
  - b. Approach to studying the research topic
  - c. Time frame for completion
  - d. Possible committee members
2. **Selection of Thesis Committee:** The Thesis Committee must have three members: thesis advisor, a second member, and a third member. The thesis advisor must be a full-time member of the Counseling/Therapy faculty; the second committee member may hold adjunct faculty status, and the third committee member may be a faculty member of another department, school, or college at the University, at another University or a professional or community member with expertise related to the thesis. The purposes of the Thesis Committee is to:
  - a. Assist the student in completion of the thesis proposal
  - b. Formally approve the thesis proposal
  - c. Assist the student in implementing the thesis plan

- d. Review drafts of the thesis; and
  - e. Approve the final copy of the thesis
3. **Development of Thesis Proposal:** After identifying a research topic, the student must prepare a thesis proposal. All sections of the proposal should comply with **APA format** & contain the following:
- a. Concise statement of the problem area to be investigated
  - b. Statement of the purpose of the thesis as well as the research hypothesis or question/s, & a statement of the thesis' significance
  - c. The proposal should include three chapters: (1) Rationale and overview; (2) Literature review; and (3) Methodology
  - d. All sections must comply with APA format
  - e. Brief discussion of the most important contributing resources, i.e., books, journals, etc.
  - f. Discussion and justification of the methodology to be employed, including data sources
  - g. Outline of the organization of the thesis; and
  - h. Timetable for completion
4. **Approval of Thesis Proposal:** Committee approval of the thesis proposal is obtained through an oral presentation of the proposal in collaboration and consultation with the Thesis Committee. If applicable, the Colorado Multiple Institutional Review Board (COMIRB) approval process will be initiated after the Thesis Committee has approved the thesis proposal.
5. **Registration for COUN 6950 Master's Thesis:** Students completing a thesis must register for four (4) semester hours of thesis credits. **This requirement is in addition to the 63 credits required for the degree.**
6. **Conduct of Research:** Research and data collection/analysis may begin only after COMIRB approval has been secured.
7. **Preparation of Thesis Draft and final Thesis copy (in compliance with APA format):** With guidance from the Committee, the student prepares a thesis draft in accordance with the timetable. The student should expect that several drafts will typically be required before the Thesis Committee provides formal approval of thesis and final thesis oral defense process. Overall page length of the final thesis will be expected to be 60-100 pages; in addition to the original three chapters developed for the thesis proposal, the final thesis documents will include additional chapters (4 & 5) that will describe the project/study, the outcomes/results, the analysis, discussion, implications, and conclusions. Relevant appendices may also be part of the final master's thesis.

Students completing the Master's thesis are also required to adhere the thesis guidelines, dates, and deadlines set for students in the School of Education & Human Development, as described at <https://education.ucdenver.edu/academic-services/student-resources/master-s-thesis>.