

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Master of Education Counseling

(Revised: December, 2017)



This handbook was prepared based on the best information available at the time. The University Of Texas Rio Grande Valley Department Of Counseling reserves the right to change any information, including course offerings, admission and graduation deadlines and requirements without notice or obligation, in keeping with the policies of The University of Texas System Board of Regents and in conformance with the laws of the state of Texas. This handbook is a general information publication. It is not intended to nor does it contain all regulations that relate to students. The provisions of this catalog do not constitute a contract, expressed or implied, between any applicant, student or faculty member of The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley or The University of Texas System.

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Preface

The faculty and staff in the Counseling and Guidance Graduate Program at University of Texas at UTRGV welcome you.

This handbook is intended to provide master's level students with information about the Counseling and Guidance Program at the University of Texas at UTRGV. It is intended to supplement, not substitute, the graduate catalog. Because graduate procedures, course requirement, and prerequisites may change, students should be familiar with the latest copy of the graduate catalog and meet with faculty when necessary.

The requirements, number of hours and class offerings for the M. Ed. Program, Professional School Counselor Certification, and State licensure for Professional Counselors are subject to change. Changes may apply to both prospective and current students.

Although this handbook provides an overview of the policies, procedures, and requirements of the Counseling and Guidance Program, the handbook is not intended to be exhaustive. This catalog is a general information publication only. It is not intended to nor does it contain all regulations that relate to students. Instead, students must seek answers to questions from other sources, including, although not limited to, program faculty, College of Education, professional associations, state credentialing agencies, Graduate catalog, and the UTRGV Graduate Office. The primary responsibility for reading and following correct policies and procedures remains with the student, not the faculty.

In addition, students are expected to abide and stay current with laws and ethical codes set forth by the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors, the American Counseling Association, the American School Counselor Association, and other ethical standards relevant to their practice. Of particular importance is behavior related to confidentiality in groups, with clients, and with cases discussed in class. Students should take extra care with materials (DVD's, tapes, files, reports, etc.) related to clients. Violations of ethical standards are taken seriously by the program faculty and may affect your ability to continue in the program.

Responsibility for class attendance rests with the student. Regular and punctual attendance of all scheduled classes is mandatory. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and may be dropped from the course after excessive absences. Being tardy or leaving early ten (10) minutes or more will also be considered an absence. Should the student be allowed to remain in class after one absence because of extenuating circumstances, five (5) points will be taken off the final course grade for each additional absence after the first absence. This includes being tardy or leaving early before class is dismissed ten (10) minutes or more. In addition, two (2) points will be taken off for each tardy less than ten (10) minutes and five (5) points for tardies ten (10) minutes or more. Notifying a course instructor of an absence, being tardy, or leaving early does not guarantee the absence will be excused. It is important to note that course instructors make the ultimate decision regarding excusing absences for extenuating circumstances. UTRGV's attendance policy excuses students from attending class if they are participating in officially sponsored university activities, such as athletics; for observance of religious holy days; or for military service. Students should contact the instructor in advance of the excused absence and arrange to make up missed work or examinations.

INTRODUCTION TO THE COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

Welcome

Welcome to the UTRGV Department of Counseling. We the faculty hopes that each of you will have a successful and rewarding experience as you begin your journey toward professional counseling. We are committed to providing a learning environment that is both challenging and supportive. We believe that our mutual respect, collaboration, and commitment will provide you with the opportunities critical to the counseling profession.

While you will be assigned an advisor in the first semester, it is ultimately your responsibility to know the information contained in this handbook and to monitor your progress toward a degree. You are also expected to be familiar with information contained in the appropriate Field Experience Manual, in the Graduate Student Handbook, and in the degree plan. Review these manuals periodically, and when you have a question, contact your faculty advisor. Contact information for college and department faculty and staff is listed later in this handbook.

About The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) was created by the Texas Legislature in 2013 in a historic move that brings together the resources and assets of UT Brownsville and UT Pan American. There are two main campuses at UTRGV: Brownsville and Edinburg. Counseling classes are offered in Brownsville, Harlingen, and Edinburg. While most classes are offered in a face-to-face, on-campus format, it is not unusual for your professors to post assignments or hold some of their class time online.

The counseling programs offered at UTRGV are identical at each campus, although courses are may be taught by different faculty. The admissions, program, and graduation requirements apply to one program: the Master's Degree in Education Counseling.

About the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

- ☐ We value ethical conduct based on honesty, integrity, and mutual respect in all interactions and relationships.
- ☐ We value student access to higher education, recognizing their diversity and needs.
- ☐ We value student success fostered through the commitment of faculty and staff.
- ☐ We value a diversity of perspectives, experiences, and traditions as essential components of a quality education.
- ☐ We value curiosity, exploration, inquiry, innovation, creativity, and an entrepreneurial spirit.
- ☐ We value collaboration with internal and external constituent groups.
- ☐ We value active involvement in shared governance, consensus-building, teamwork, and open communication.
- ☐ We value our relationship as a united community of scholars, students, and staff, enriching each other's work and lives through our commitment to the advancement of UTRGV.

College of Education and P-16

Mission Statement

The College of Education and P-16 Integration's mission is to

- provide rigorous programs of study founded on the belief that scholarship and life experience are strengthened when integrated, that diversity in all its manifestations is a fundamental component of excellence in education, and that partnerships that foster authentic social and community engagement are vital;*
- engage in continuous improvement through curricular and technological innovation in order to remain responsive to the changing educational and global reality;*
- develop highly qualified, multi-culturally responsive and sustaining, innovative scholars, learning leaders, and education professionals who challenge the status quo and serve as change agents who make a difference by promoting social justice, embracing diversity in its broadest definition, inspiring thought leadership, and pursuing lifelong learning; and*
- lead through evidence-based decision making and data literacy in order to share our story with the academic and broader research communities, as well as our public school partners, families, and policy makers.*

Vision Statement

The vision of the College of Education and P-16 Integration is to be the catalyst for educational success for individuals, families, communities, the region, and our society at large through thoughtful, culturally sustaining partnerships with our schools and communities, demonstrating responsiveness to a growing bilingual and biliterate population.

Department of Counseling

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Master of Education (MEd) in Counseling is to prepare a highly competent professional who can respond to the life span mental health needs of a multicultural community. Preparation of the profession counselor is accomplished through completion of a 60-hour track in School Counseling and/or Clinical Mental Health.

Department of Counseling

Vision Statement:

The vision of the Department of Counseling is to be the catalyst for the education and mental health well-being for individuals, families, communities, the region, and our society at large through thoughtful, culturally sustaining partnerships with our schools, communities, mental health facilities, demonstrating responsiveness to the mental health needs to the people of the Rio Grande Valley.

Student Recruitment

The Department of Counseling at UTRGV is committed to recruiting students from a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and cultural influences that reflect the multicultural society in which we live. We provide a rich, diverse cultural experience through course offerings, workshops, and faculty seminar events. Faculty are active in professional counseling organizations and strive to introduce students from around the country to the programs we offer. The faculty does not discriminate based on a student's gender, age, race, sexual orientation, disability, or national origin.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Students are admitted to the Department of Counseling.

There are two tracks offered by the Department of Counseling:

Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC)

School Counseling (SC)

Clinical Mental Health Counseling

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling program prepares students for licensure in professional counseling. Upon graduation, the graduate is eligible to sit for the National Counselor's Examination and the Texas Jurisprudence Examination. With these requirements completed, the graduate will apply with the state of Texas for a temporary license, becoming a Licensed Professional Counselor Intern. Interns are required to complete 3000 hours of direct and indirect service under the supervision of a Texas State Board of Examiner of Licensed Professional Counselors approved supervisor. After 3000 hours under supervision, the LPC Intern will submit the necessary paper work to the state to receive his or her permanent license. It is the graduate's responsibility to complete all of the necessary steps toward licensure post-graduation.

School Counseling

Upon completion of the School Counselor program, the graduate is prepared to be an integral part of the academic services in public schools, trained to facilitate the growth and learning of students by providing services in guidance curriculum, responsive services, individual planning and systems support. The counselor also provides direct services to students as a counselor and coordinates services with programs and agencies within the school and in the community.

Students who wish to receive School Counselor Certification from TEA must meet the following guideline.

Group	Type of Certificate	Admission to Certification Program (reported on ASEP)	TEXES Representative	TEXES Approval Process and Timeline	TAC Rules/TEA Requirements	Recommendation for Certification Requirements
All New Admits Fall 2017 Graduate Counselor	Professional Certificate	At admission to master's program. Prior to enrollment in practicum COUN 6365, students will declare certification track to remain on ASEP report by completing practicum application.	Required when enrolled in COUN 6344 – School Counseling	1) Submit a Preregistration Form for approval Passing the representative exam with an 80%. Having met all requirements to be enrolled in Internship I COUN 6369	TAC §228.20	Verify: 1) admission 2) master's degree 3) complete all program requirements 4) 160-hour practicum with 3 formal observations that must be at least 135 minutes in duration in total 5) pass certification exams 6) 2 years of teaching experience

UTRGV Professional Certification Policy

Students in professional certification programs will have two years after program completion to take their certification exam. Within this two year period, program completers who are requesting test approval will be reviewed by the department chair/program coordinator before approval is granted to ensure that all TAC requirements have been met. After the two-year period, program completers requesting testing approval will be reviewed by the department chair/program coordinator so that a new certification plan can be created as needed. This certification plan may include additional coursework or professional development and must be completed before testing approval is granted.

Change in State Standards and Teacher Certification

If TEA certification standards change between the time that the program is complete and the time that certification is sought, the new standards must be met. This may mean taking additional courses or completing additional requirements in the form of a certification plan.

Program Objectives

Research and Program Evaluation - To train and prepare counselors who have knowledge of research design and program evaluation as well as skills to analyze, understand, and utilize counseling-related research

Professional Orientation and Identity - To train and prepare counselors who have a strong counseling identity through understanding of counselors' roles and responsibilities related to advocacy, membership in counseling organizations, and professional counseling credentialing

Social and Cultural Diversity - -To train and prepare counselors who have awareness, knowledge, and skills to work with diverse populations

Human Growth and Development - -To train and prepare counselors who have knowledge of human behavior and development

Career Development - -To train and prepare counselors who knowledge and skills in career theory and development to help individuals make career decisions

Helping Relationships - -To train and prepare counselors who have knowledge of theories to inform treatment planning with diverse populations in various settings

Group Work - To train and prepare counselors who have knowledge and skills of group theory, process, and techniques

Assessment - -To train and prepare counselors who have knowledge and skills to use assessment in individual and group counseling to inform treatment planning

Accreditation of Counseling Program

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award baccalaureate, masters', and doctorate degrees. SACSCOC-accredited degrees are fully recognized by the Texas Education Agency for school counseling certification and by the State of Texas for professional counseling licensure.

Counseling programs accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) adhere to the highest standards in counselor education and accept their responsibility to provide quality training programs. Accreditation from CACREP for the newly-formed counseling programs at UTRGV is in progress.

Benefits to students of CACREP-accredited programs include:

- Students can become National Certified Counselors (NCC) eligible after passing the National Counselor Exam (NCE) without the two-year post master's experience.
- Students in CACREP accredited programs are eligible to take the NCE prior to graduation.
- "CACREP Accreditation provides recognition that the content and quality of the program has been evaluated and meets standards set by the profession. The student, as a consumer, can be assured that appropriate knowledge and skill areas are included and that the program is stable, professionally and financially" (cacrep.org; retrieved November 15, 2011).
- Many doctoral programs require CACREP-graduate status for admissions.
- The Office of Veteran's Affairs and TriCare (serving all currently and retired military personnel and their families) approve reimbursement for mental health services only to professionals with CACREP-graduate status.

Course Requirements

Both the School Counseling and Clinical Mental Health Counseling tracks require 60 semester credit hours (SCH), with one course difference (COUN 6344 for school counseling or COUN 6367 for clinical mental health counseling):

COUN 6301	Introduction to Research Methods in Counseling
COUN 6304	Human Growth & Development for the Counseling Professional
COUN 6310	Introduction to Counseling and Guidance
COUN 6311	Professional, Ethical, & Legal Issues in Counseling
COUN 6313	Personal/Social Development of the Counselor
COUN 6314	Assessment in Counseling
COUN 6327	Counseling Theories, Methods, & Techniques I
COUN 6328	Counseling Theories, Methods, & Techniques II
COUN 6340	Diagnosis & Treatment Planning in Counseling
COUN 6345	Career Developmental Theories
COUN 6347	Addictions Counseling
COUN 6349	Child & Adolescent Counseling
COUN 6351	Crisis Counseling
COUN 6361	Introduction to Marr & Family Therapy
COUN 6364	Multicultural Counseling
COUN 6365	Practicum
COUN 6367 OR	Foundations of Community & Agency Counseling OR
COUN 6344	School Counseling & Guidance
COUN 6368	Group Counseling
COUN 6369	Internship I
COUN 6370	Internship II

Course Description

COUN 6301 - Intro Research in Counseling - Introduction to research methods and statistical analysis in counseling. Emphasizes data-gathering techniques in social and behavioral science databases; critical review of literature used in clinical assessment, intervention and evaluation; planning and design of research proposal; and instruction in APA style. Prerequisite: None

COUN 6304 – Human Growth & Development - Advanced study in the application of life span developmental theories to human behavior, learning, and personality. Includes understanding the nature and needs of all people at all developmental levels from prenatal through old age.

COUN 6310 – Introduction to Counseling - Students will be introduced to the role of counselors in a variety of settings including their role in advocacy and social justice. They will become familiar with the history of

counseling, preparation standards, professional organizations, ethical standards and legal issues pertaining to counseling, and the dynamics of the counseling process. Prerequisite: None.

COUN 6311 – Prof Ethics & Legal Issues - This course focuses on the ethical codes of professional organizations (APA & ACA) with a major emphasis on professional standards, ethical principles, and legal considerations in the counseling profession. Prerequisite: None.

COUN 6313 – Personal/Social Development - Discussions and practical application of group dynamics within a framework of group therapy. Prerequisite: None.

COUN 6314 – Assessment Counseling & Development - This course explores the theory and techniques of administering, scoring, and interpreting educational and psychological tests. Includes test selection, administration, and the dynamics of test interpretation to enable the counselor to synthesize, integrate, and evaluate appraisal data for use in guidance and counseling. In the last segment of the course, students will practice taking, administering, and interpreting a variety of educational and psychological tests. Prerequisite: COUN 6301.

COUN 6327 – Theories/Methods/Techniques I - A survey of prominent theories in psychotherapy and counseling. Specialized approaches such as group therapy, play therapy, and family therapy will be studied. Prerequisite: COUN 6310, COUN 6304.

COUN 6328 – Theories/Methods/Techniques II - Primary focus is on techniques and interviewing skills utilized during counseling sessions. In addition, this course addresses how these techniques are applied to special topics and issues such as career counseling, group counseling and family counseling. Prerequisite: COUN 6310, COUN 6304, COUN 6327.

COUN 6340 – Diagnosis & Treatment - This course in counseling introduces students to the concepts of psychopathology and to major diagnostic categories of the current DSM. Emphasis is placed on differential diagnosis and understanding of how cultural, biological, social, psychopharmacology, and psychological factors are necessary when developing a holistic and ethical model of assessment and treatment planning. Prerequisite: COUN 6310, COUN 6304, COUN 6327, COUN 6328, COUN 6368.

COUN 6344 – School Counseling - Students will learn the essential roles and responsibilities of school counselors as they relate to planning, implementation, and evaluation of counseling and guidance programs. Students learn research-based practices in school counseling. Ethical, legal, and multicultural issues are emphasized. Prerequisite: None.

COUN 6345 – Career Development Theories - A survey and analysis of the processes of assisting people to choose, prepare for, enter, and progress in an occupation. The course trains leaders who can help people make decisions and choices in planning a future and building a career. Prerequisite: None.

COUN 6347 – Addictions Counseling - This course will prepare individuals to counsel drug users, addicts and family members using various preventive strategies and treatment regimes. Includes instruction in outreach, patient education, therapeutic intervention methods, diagnostic procedures, and addiction symptomology. Prerequisite: None.

COUN 6349 – Child & Adolescent Counseling - This course is an introduction to counseling theories and techniques applied to children and adolescents. Appropriate developmental and cultural issues will be presented. The course is designed to teach students about current research and approaches for working with this population. Prerequisite: None.

COUN 6351 – Crisis Counseling - The course provides an overview of the psychology of crisis and contemporary theory, and practice of crisis intervention. Special emphasis is given to basic features of normative and extreme psychological reactions to crisis and trauma, to the process of successful crisis resolution counselors, and to emergency first-responders actively promote. Prerequisite: None.

COUN 6361 – Marriage & Family Therapy - This course introduces students to the study of individual and family development, family dynamics, interpersonal relationships, and marriage and family systems. The course will include selected theories, methods, and techniques of marriage and family therapy with particular emphasis on multicultural, legal, and ethical issues in the practice of marriage and family counseling. Prerequisite: None.

COUN 6364 – Multicultural Counseling - This course will provide an understanding of the characteristics and needs of culturally diverse clients. The course will include issues related to ethnic groups, gender, family systems, differing lifestyles, and the impact of social, political and economic factors on specific populations. Techniques for counseling culturally diverse populations will also be covered. Prerequisite: None.

COUN 6365 – Practicum - A study of selected counseling theories and supervised experience in individual counseling. Cases assigned off campus in schools and community agencies. This course must be taken within last nine hours of program. Prerequisite: COUN 6367 or COUN 6344, 6310, 6311, 6313, 6314, 6327, 6328, 6340, 6368, COUN 6304, and program approval.

COUN 6367 – Community/Agency Counseling - This course helps students gain knowledge and understanding of community counseling issues including historical foundations, the role and function of the community counselor, and working with specific populations. The administration and function of community counseling agencies are studied with emphasis on the ethical issues confronting various agencies. Prerequisite: None.

COUN 6368 – Group Counseling - This course develops an understanding of group processes, theories and techniques. Demonstrated competence in this knowledge and in applying group procedures will be required. Prerequisite: COUN 6310, COUN 6304, COUN 6327, 6328.

COUN 6369 – Internship I - Supervised internship in counseling in an approved agency or school setting. Prerequisite: COUN 6310, 6304, 6327, 6328, 6340, 6368, 6365, and program approval.

COUN 6370 – Internship II - Supervised internship in counseling in an approved agency or school setting. Prerequisite: COUN 6310, 6304, 6327, 6328, 6340, 6368, 6365, 6369 and program approval.

Degree Plan

All UTRGV students in the Counseling and Guidance program must work with their faculty advisor to complete a degree plan and submit it to the Graduate College in the first semester of enrollment in the program. The Degree Plan includes the catalog year of record, all course requirements, and the projected semester and year of completion for each course. This form will be completed during the “New Student Orientation”.

The Degree Plan is an official record of the student’s projected time to graduation. It is approved by the faculty advisor, the Department chair, and the College associate dean.

Plan of Study

Students are required to meet with their faculty advisor every semester for planning and registration clearance. Students will confirm or revise the courses on their Plan of Study. Faculty advising is mandatory and must be completed prior to registration in the Fall and Spring semesters.

The Plan of Study is an agreement between the faculty advisor and the student regarding approved courses each semester. The Plan of Study is approved at the faculty advisor level only and submitted to the Department chair for registration purposes. The Plan of Study is renewed every semester in a mandatory advising session with the faculty advisor prior to the registration period for each upcoming semester. Advising for the summer and fall semesters occurs in April, while advising for the spring semester occurs in October. Students who do not complete a Plan of Study with their faculty advisor in spring and fall of each year the student is enrolled in the Counseling program will not be cleared for registration.

Students must complete all graduate work for a degree within seven years of the time of their first graduate course registration. Graduate courses more than seven years old will not be accepted for credit toward a degree program.

*Transfer credits see page 21



College of Education and P-16 Integration Graduate Degree Plan
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

Student: This is your approved degree plan which lists all required courses for your degree. You should have a signed degree plan by the end of your first semester as a student. Any changes to this degree plan must be approved with the use of the *CEP Change of Degree Plan* form. There may be additional program requirements to meet before graduation. It is your responsibility to know catalog requirements.

Student Name: _____ SID: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

Degree Program: Counseling M.Ed. Concentration: School or Clinical Mental Health

Semester Beginning Coursework: _____ Catalog: _____

Courses on Degree Plan	Courses Taken
COUN 6310	
COUN 6301	
COUN 6313	
COUN 6304	
COUN 6327	
COUN 6311	
COUN 6364	
COUN 6328	
COUN 6314	
COUN 6368	
COUN 6344 (School Coun) or COUN 6367 (Community Coun)	
COUN 6340	
COUN 6345	
COUN 6349	
COUN 6365	
COUN 6361	
COUN 6369	
COUN 6351	
COUN 6370	
COUN 6347	
Total: 60 hours	

*Courses taken more than seven years before your graduation date will not count toward degree requirements.

**A maximum of nine appropriate graduate hours may be transferred to UTRGV from another institution. Transfer credits must be approved and must meet all the requirements listed in the Graduate Catalog.

Student Signature Date

Advisor/Program Coordinator Date

Department Chair Date

CEP Associate Dean for Academic Affairs Date

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Plan of Study (POS)

Name: _____ Student ID#: _____
 Email: _____ Phone: _____
 Home Campus: _____ School/Clinical Mental Health Track: _____
 Birth Month: _____ Assigned Faculty Advisor: _____

COURSE SEQUENCE REQUIREMENTS

Required sequence:

COUN 6310-Intro to Guidance and Counseling
 COUN 6304-Human Growth and Development
 COUN 6327-Counseling Theories/Methods & Techniques I
 COUN 6328-Counseling Theories/Methods & Techniques II
 COUN 6368-Group Counseling
 COUN 6340-Diagnosis and Treatment Planning in Counseling Adv. Studies in Mental Disorders, aka DSM
 COUN 6365- Practicum
 COUN 6369-Counseling Internship I
 COUN 6370-Counseling Internship II
The above courses cannot be taken concurrently with other sequenced courses. In other words, each required sequence course must be successfully completed within one semester before registering for the next sequenced course.

Remaining courses:

COUN 6313-Personal Social Development of the Counselor (recommended to be taken first semester)
 COUN 6301-Introduction to Research Methods in Counseling (recommended to be taken second semester)
 COUN 6311-Professional, Ethical, and Legal Issues in Counseling
 COUN 6364-Multicultural Counseling
 COUN 6314-Assessment of Counseling and Development
 COUN 6344-School Counseling & Guidance
 or COUN 6367-Clinical Mental Health Counseling
 COUN 6345-Career Developmental Theories
 COUN 6349-Child and Adolescent Counseling
 COUN 6361-Introduction to Marriage and Family Counseling
 COUN 6351-Crisis Counseling
 COUN 6347-Addictions Counseling

CPCE Exit Exam: You are required to successfully complete the Counseling Program exit exam—the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam in order to graduate. You will have three opportunities to pass the CPCE beginning in the semester you are enrolled in COUN 6365-Practicum. The exam will be administered on both Edinburg and Brownsville campuses on (Fall) last Saturday in October, (Spring) last Saturday in March, and (Summer) second Saturday in July.

Semester Began Program _____ Following Suggested POS for their Cohort: **Yes** or **No**
 Proposed Exit Exam _____ Expected Graduation Semester: _____

 Student Signature

 Date of Signature

 Faculty Advisor's Signature

 Date of Signature

Home Campus _____

UTRGV COUNSELING SUGGESTED SEQUENCE OF COURSES

GR = grade, LS= long summer

FALL ADMISSION

Top row courses are required sequence

Block 1 FALL Year	Block 2 SPRING Year	Block 3 SUMMER Year	Block 4 FALL Year	Block 5 SPRING Year	Block 6 SUMMER Year	Block 7 FALL Year	Block 8 SPRING Year	Block 9 SUMMER Year	Block 10 FALL Year	Block 11 SPRING Year	Block 12 SUMMER Year
COUN 6310 (Intro G&C) GR: _____	COUN 6304 (Human Gwth) GR: _____ & COUN 6301 (Rsch) GR: _____	COUN 6327 LS (Theories I) GR: _____ & COUN 6311 (Prof.Leg.) GR: _____ & COUN 6364 LS (Multi) GR: _____	COUN 6328 (Theories II) GR: _____ & COUN 6314 (Assess) GR: _____	COUN 6368 (Grp) GR: _____ & COUN 6367 (CMH) GR: _____ or COUN 6344 (Sch) GR: _____	COUN 6340 LS (DSM) GR: _____ & COUN 6345 LS (Career) GR: _____ & COUN 6349 (Child & Adols) GR: _____	COUN 6365 (Prac) GR: _____ & COUN 6361 (M&F) GR: _____ CPCE Exit Exam (3 rd Sat in Sept)	COUN 6369 (Intern I) GR: _____ & COUN 6351 (Crisis) GR: _____ CPCE Exit Exam (2 nd opp- 1 st Sat in Feb)	COUN 6370 LS-15wks (Intern II) GR: _____ & COUN 6347 (Addic) GR: _____ CPCE Exit Exam (3 rd opp- 3 rd Sat in July)	•	•	•

Student Printed Name

Student ID

Student Signature

Date

Advisor Printed Name

Advisor Signature

Date

Proposed Exit Exam (CPCE)

Proposed Graduation Date

Sch/CMH Track

*I understand that if I do not follow the sequence, I will not be guaranteed the courses needed to graduate in a timely manner. Furthermore, those who are following the sequence will be given priority to the classes listed in their POS.

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Home Campus _____

UTRGV COUNSELING SUGGESTED SEQUENCE OF COURSES

GR = grade, LS= long summer

SPRING ADMISSION

Top row courses are required sequence

Block 1 SPRING Year	Block 2 SUMMER Year	Block 3 FALL Year	Block 4 SPRING Year	Block 5 SUMMER Year	Block 6 FALL Year	Block 7 SPRING Year	Block 8 SUMMER Year	Block 9 FALL Year	Block 10 SPRING Year	Block 11 SUMMER Year	Block 12 FALL Year
COUN 6310 (Intro G&C) GR: _____	COUN 6304 LS (Human Gwth) GR: _____	COUN 6327 (Theories I) GR: _____	COUN 6328 (Theories II) GR: _____	COUN 6368 LS (Grp) GR: _____ & COUN 6345 LS (Career) GR: _____ & COUN 6349 (Child & Adols) GR: _____	COUN 6340 (DSM) GR: _____ & COUN 6367 (CMH) GR: _____ or COUN 6344 (Sch) GR: _____	COUN 6365 (Prac) GR: _____ & COUN 6361 (M&F) GR: _____ CPCE Exit Exam (1 st Sat in Feb)	COUN 6369 LS-15wks (Intern I) GR: _____ & COUN 6351 (Crisis) GR: _____ CPCE Exit Exam (2 nd opp- 3 rd Sat in July)	COUN 6370 (Intern II) GR: _____ & COUN 6347 (Addic) GR: _____ CPCE Exit Exam (3 rd opp- 3 rd Sat in Sept)	•	•	•

Student Printed Name

Student ID

Student Signature

Date

Advisor Printed Name

Advisor Signature

Date

Proposed Exit Exam (CPCE)

Proposed Graduation Date

Sch/CMH Track

*I understand that if I do not follow the sequence, I will not be guaranteed the courses needed to graduate in a timely manner. Furthermore, those who are following the sequence will be given priority to the classes listed in their POS.

Rev. 11-30-17vc

Deviation from Original PLAN OF STUDY

	Course Number	Course Title	Semester Offered	Fall	Spring	Long Sum	Sum I	Sum II
Required Sequence Courses	COUN 6310	Introduction to Counseling and Guidance	Fall & Spring					
	COUN 6304	Human Growth and Development	Spring & Long Summer					
	COUN 6327	Theories I	Fall & Long Summer					
	COUN 6328	Theories II	Fall & Spring					
	COUN 6368	Group	Spring & Long Summer					
	COUN 6340	Adv. Studies in Mental Disorders (DSM)	Fall & Long Summer					
	COUN 6365	Practicum	Fall & Spring					
	COUN 6369	Internship I	Spring & Long Sum(15wks)					
	COUN 6370	Internship II	Fall & Long Sum(15wks)					
Remaining Courses	COUN 6313	Personal and Social Dvlpt of the Counselor	Fall & Spring					
	COUN 6301	Research	Spring & Long Summer					
	COUN 6311	Professional Legal Issues	Summer					
	COUN 6364	Multicultural Counseling	Fall & Long Summer					
	COUN 6314	Assessment	Fall & Spring					
	COUN 6367 Or COUN 6344	Clinical M.H. Counseling (CMHTrack) Or School Counseling (School Track)	Fall & Spring					
	COUN 6345	Career Counseling	Long Summer					
	COUN 6349	Child & Adolescent Counseling	Summer					
	COUN 6361	Marriage and Family Counseling	Fall & Spring					
	COUN 6351	Crisis Counseling	Spring & Summer					
	COUN 6347	Addictions Counseling	Fall & Summer					

Student Printed Name _____ Student ID _____ Student Signature _____ Date _____

Advisor Printed Name _____ Advisor Signature _____ Date _____

Proposed Exit Exam (TEExES or CPCE) _____

Proposed Graduation Date _____

Student Phone Number _____

FIELD EXPERIENCES

The practicum and internship courses are taken toward the end of the student's program of study and involve direct client contact in professional counseling settings. Please refer to the Counseling Field Experience Manual for complete information about the clinical courses.

Faculty Seminar Requirement

Each semester seminars on topical issues in counseling and guidance will be presented by the program faculty. Students are required to attend ONE of these seminars each semester. The Faculty Seminars are intended to supplement classroom and applied learning experiences in the program within a more informal atmosphere. Seminars also offer students the opportunity to explore important counseling topics and issues in more depth that is not always possible within the semester timeframe for coursework. In addition, students are able to learn more about the faculty's current counseling and/or research interests. Students are required to submit to each of their instructors a 1-2 page reflection paper on the seminar that they chose to attend.

Reading List

As part of the Counseling Program reading list requirement, students are required to read at least 10 books that are foundational in the field of counseling and guidance before they complete the program. Familiarity with them will strengthen understanding of the graduate studies in which students are embarking and begin to form a basis for their own library of professional materials. Reading one to two books a semester, is required. Reading list is updated every semester. Please check with your instructor for updates. A reflective summary is to be turned into your instructor each semester.

Comprehensive Examination

The Counseling Program schedules its Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) throughout the year. The purpose of the exam is to evaluate the student's mastery of the requirements of the Counseling & Guidance Program. Student's first opportunity to take the exam will be during enrollment in practicum (COUN 6365). Effective January 2018 the testing dates will be the same at both campuses.

- The CPCE is schedule for both campuses the last Saturday in October and the last Saturday in March and the second Saturday in July.
- Students must take the CPCE at their home campus, unless graduation is dependent on the third and final attempt and permission is granted by the department. (Exceptions must be made through the Program Coordinator to test at the different campus)
- Additional information will be given in the PRAC COUN 6365.
- The passing score will be determined by the first attempt for each student.
- Students who do not show mastery after three (3) attempts will be reviewed by the Goodness of Fit committee. Additional coursework and/or remediation maybe required before can retest.

The result of the exam is one of the following:

- a) **Pass** with the recommendation that the student be cleared for graduation upon the completion of all course and program requirements.
- b) **Fail** stipulating the conditions that must be met before the students is eligible to retake the exam. If a student has completed all course work, he or she must be enrolled in the semester of graduation. A student may enroll in UNIV 6100, a one-hour course, to meet this requirement.

Although there is no "one way" to prepare for Comprehensive Exams, students are encouraged throughout the program to keep textbooks, class papers and projects as possible resources. Additionally, forming study groups the semester before the comprehensive exam is scheduled to take place can be a valuable process.

Process and Policies

In alignment with the University of Texas of Rio Grande Valley guiding principles, the College of Education & P-16 Integration (CEP) has established a mission of excellence in the preparation of educators, instructional leaders and school leaders. The new university has the esteemed reputation of having an educator preparation program with national accreditation and seeking continued status through CAEP accreditation. The College of Education & P-16 Integration (CEP) holds the values of exemplary program and assessment standards, rigorous, relevant preparation as measures of distinction in the application of best practice in K-12 schools. As a result, these guidelines and policies have been developed.

State Testing Policy: Effective September 1, teacher candidates will be limited to five attempts to take a certification exam. The five attempts include the first attempt to pass the exam and four retakes. For example, if candidates were approved to test prior to September 1, and failed, this counts as one attempt with four retakes remaining after this date. Texas Education Code §21.048 in response to House Bill 2205, 84th Texas Legislature, 2015. School Counselor candidates will follow these procedures. After 5 attempts additional course work may be required.

Test Waiver Information

Section 21.048(a-1) of the Texas Education Code specifies that a person may not retake a certification examination more than four times unless the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) waives the limitation for good cause. The SBEC has defined the waiver application process in [Chapter 230, Subchapter C of the Texas Administrative Code](#). To request a waiver, you must complete all waiver requirements as specified in the [waiver application](#). After we receive your completed waiver application, you will be contacted about submitting the \$160 waiver application fee through our online system. Applicants and educator preparation program staff should review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\) document](#) about the test waiver process for answers to common questions and further information on completing the waiver application. If you have any questions, please call Educator Testing at (512) 463-9039 or [email Jennifer Perez](#) or [Rebecca McCoy](#).

You must use Internet Explorer to open the waiver application. For help opening documents that are in Portable Document Format (PDF) or getting the latest version of Adobe Acrobat Reader, please see: <http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/pdf-help/>

POLICIES RELATED TO PROGRAM COMPLETION

This handbook is not meant to be a complete listing of all University of Texas Rio Grande Valley student policies.

Please see the UTRGV Graduate Student Handbook at:

<http://www.utrgv.edu/graduate/files/documents/graduate-catalog.pdf>

for general information about University policies.

Evaluation & Continuation Policy

In addition to meeting the academic standards set forth by the Graduate College and by the Counseling Department, students are expected to conduct themselves in an ethical, responsible and professional manner. They must be knowledgeable of and at all times adhere to the general standards of professional ethics and practice set forth by the American Counseling Association (ACA), and the additional standards set forth for professional practice in specific settings (e.g., American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA), American School Counselor Association (ASCA), the International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors (IAMFT), and the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW).

The general and specific ACA standards for ethical practice of counseling are listed on the ACA website at <http://www.counseling.org>. Further, students in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program must adhere to the requirements of the Texas State Board of Examiners of Licensed Professional Counselors found at [http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=22&pt=30&ch=681&sch=C&rl=Y](http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=22&pt=30&ch=681&sch=C&rl=Y), and students in the School Counseling program must adhere to the Texas Education Agency Code of Ethics found at <http://tea.texas.gov/index2.aspx?id=2147501244>. These codes were developed to protect the client, the counselor, and the student. Ethical practices such as informed consent, confidentiality, and dual relationships will be introduced in the students' beginning coursework and impressed upon students throughout the programs. Practicing unethically will be cause for dismissal from the program. At the outset of their academic program, students are directed to review these standards and seek any clarification needed from their respective advisors.

As future professional counselors, the faculty expects students to be concerned about other people, to be stable and psychologically well adjusted (personally and professionally), to be capable of effective interpersonal relationships, to be able to receive and apply feedback willingly, and to give feedback constructively. Further, students are expected to behave generally in a manner that demonstrates fitness for a role in the helping professions. Finally, we expect students to be committed to continued personal growth and professional development and to demonstrate that commitment through self-reflection and responsiveness to supervision in all activities related to their degree program.

For all the reasons cited above, the faculty will regularly monitor not only students' academic progress through coursework and scholarship, but also selected personal dispositions that will affect their performance in the field. The assessment of these dispositions and skills necessarily involves subjective judgment by the faculty. When a student's academic or professional progress does not meet program standards, faculty will undertake procedures for remediation to support retention or dismissal from the program, if in the professional judgment of the faculty it is warranted. The purpose of this monitoring process is to ensure that all graduates of the UTRGV Department of Counseling programs sufficiently possess those characteristics so that they do not interfere with their professionalism or helping capacity. (See page 17 for specific program guideline)

Statement of Intent

It is the intent of this faculty that all students who are accepted into this program successfully complete their course of training. Our aim is to help develop highly competent and self-aware professionals. We strive to provide students with high quality academic and clinical training and to support them in their personal growth and development. If any problems arise, we make provisions for additional support and training as possible to remediate developmental weaknesses. We consider it our responsibility to act in the best interests of future consumers and clients and to that end we endorse this student evaluation and continuation policy.

Expectations

The UTRGV Department of Counseling conducts a developmental, systematic assessment of each student's progress through the student's course of study. This evaluation includes consideration of scholastic, clinical, intrapersonal and interpersonal functioning. Students are assessed after each semester on these components and a consensus about his or her readiness to proceed to the next level of training is reached.

Faculty expectations of students' academic, professional, and personal development are explicit in admission and grade point policies, course syllabi, and clinical evaluations. Additionally, deadlines are expected to be met, knowledge of departmental policy is expected, and periodic contact with the advisor is expected. The department faculty also expects that students will read the Student Handbook, the Field Experience Manual applicable to their program, and other documents important to the student's success.

Students are expected to abstain from unethical, unprofessional and/or illegal conduct such as but not limited to substance abuse, inappropriate relationships with clients, failure to protect a client, or presenting themselves in a way other than as in-training. Students will also be subject to disciplinary action for unprofessional conduct such as excessive absences from classes or field site, failure to contact faculty or site supervisors when absences occur, or engaging in inappropriate social media behavior.

Academic Program Standards

The student must maintain a GPA required for continued enrollment consistent with the University's graduation requirements. Students working on a master's or doctoral degree must maintain a 3.0 or better GPA.

All courses with a grade of A, B, C, and F are counted in the calculation of GPA. Satisfactory Academic Progress cannot be determined until all incomplete (I) grades are resolved. Transfer grades that are accepted by the University are not counted in the determination of GPA because they are not part of the institutional or native GPA. However, the credits from all attempts accepted by UTRGV are counted in the calculation of pace and the maximum time frame requirement because transfer credits will be applied to meet prerequisites and course requirements for a student's UTRGV degree. Repeated courses are included in the calculation of GPA, pace, and the maximum time frame requirements. Audited courses do not count toward the qualitative or quantitative standards. Credit is not granted for audited courses. (Source: UTRGV Graduate Catalog, p. 40.)

In addition, the Department of Counseling and Guidance requires that the student must earn a 'B' or better in **every** course. In the event that a student does not meet the aforementioned requirement, the student must seek advisement to schedule the course repeat. Students earning more than two Cs during the program may be exited from the program. (Source: UTRGV Graduate Catalog, p. 146.)

Warning Period

Students who fail to meet the minimum requirements, other than maximum time frame, will be allowed one warning semester to restore satisfactory standing. Financial aid will be processed for one semester only. At the end of the warning semester, the student must have regained satisfactory SAP status in order to continue receiving financial aid. Students having reached the maximum time frame to complete a program cannot receive a warning semester. (Source: UTRGV Graduate Catalog pg. 40-41).

Vaquero Honor Code

Rules and regulations relating to the students of the University are enacted with the view towards protecting the best interests of the individual, the general welfare of the entire student body, and the educational objectives of the University. These rules and regulations are few, and most students will not find them unduly restrictive. Violations of institutional rules and regulations, including others that may subsequently be enacted, may subject a student to disciplinary action.

The Vaquero Honor Code can be found at <http://www.utrgv.edu/en-us/student-experience/student-services/dean-of-students/vaquero-honor-code/>. Additional expectations for academic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal functioning can be found in the Graduate Catalog on page 93.

Goodness of Fit to Practice Counseling

Students are evaluated throughout their enrollment in the program using criteria of student achievement and limitations that have been set to measure students' professional development as it relates to their professional competence as well as interpersonal and intrapersonal functioning.

These criteria are defined as the following four areas of professional and personal performance standards:

1. Academic Skills
2. Clinical Skills
3. Ethical Conduct
4. Interpersonal Skills

The Goodness of Fit to Practice Counseling Assessment is conducted at the conclusion of each semester by all program faculty and adjunct faculty. Faculty are constantly monitoring and evaluating student progress and suitability for the field of counseling. Faculty make judgments as to students' progress based on the benchmarks listed in the student evaluation section of this handbook, and on the students' adherence to the ethical standards, certification, and licensure standards. These standards will be reflected in the grades assigned by faculty, periodic scheduled evaluations (benchmark points), and evaluation forms completed as part of field experience supervision by faculty and supervisor, and completion of the Goodness of Fit to Practice Counseling form.

Student Evaluation Timeline

Benchmark 1: Admissions Interview. All candidates must participate in an admissions interview with program faculty who will recommend candidates to enter into the program or deny admission. The Admissions Interview occurs prior to students' acceptance into the program.

Benchmark 2: Research Methods Proposal. Counseling graduate students will demonstrate understanding and knowledge of quantitative and/or qualitative research designs by preparing a research methods proposal in COUN 6301.

Benchmark 3: Theoretical Orientation. Counseling graduate students will demonstrate understanding, knowledge, and application of counseling theories based on understanding of theoretical content in order to inform treatment with diverse clients. Students will prepare a research paper in COUN 6328 describing their understanding of their preferred theoretical orientation while linking their understanding to a personal reflection of their values and experiences and their ability to accept another individual in a professional helping relationship. Students enroll in COUN 6328 after completing a minimum of 12 semester credit hours.

Benchmark 4: School Counseling Program. Counseling graduate students will demonstrate knowledge, understanding, and application of school counseling programs through development of a comprehensive school counseling guidance program design and evaluation plan in COUN 6344.

Benchmark 5: Clinical Mental Health Counseling Skills. Counseling graduate students will demonstrate knowledge of techniques, interventions, and applications for prevention and treatment to work with diverse populations in various settings. Students will be assessed on their clinical skills in COUN 6365, COUN 6369, and COUN 6370 based on the Counseling Skills Scale (CSS; Eriksen & McAuliffe, 2003) and other assessment instruments. Students are approved for Practicum after completing all prerequisites, typically after 42 credit hours.

Benchmark 6: Goodness-of-Fit to Practice Evaluation. Program faculty will administer a Goodness-of-Fit to Practice Evaluation in a team meeting at the end of each semester for every student in the counseling program. The purpose is to assess students' academic and clinical skills, ethical conduct, professional conduct, and interpersonal skills. Those students who receive unsatisfactory ratings will undergo remediation according to faculty recommendations to successfully improve in the program. The Goodness-of-Fit evaluation occurs at the end of each semester.

Benchmark 7: Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam (CPCE). Counseling graduate students will demonstrate knowledge and proficiency in CACREP core counseling areas such as career development, human growth and development, social and cultural diversity, and assessment. Counseling graduate students must successfully pass the CPCE in order to graduate from the counseling and guidance program. The purpose of this examination is to assess students' knowledge of the same eight content areas as the National Counselor Examination (NCE), which is used by Texas as the licensing exam for counseling professionals. The CPCE serves as the Department of Counseling and Guidance exit exam. Students in good academic standing are permitted to take the CPCE three times as long as they are enrolled in, or have completed COUN 6365: Practicum.

Benchmark 8: Professional Counseling Orientation and Identity. Counseling graduate students will demonstrate a strong professional counseling orientation and identity through membership in counseling organizations and attending and/or presenting at school, local, state, or national counseling conferences or seminars. Students will write a reflection journal on their professional counseling orientation and identity as well as document membership and participation in professional organizations in COUN 6369 and COUN 6370.

Appeals Process

Grade Appeal Process

Students wishing to appeal final grades or decisions regarding academic standards should first discuss the matter with the instructor of the class. If no resolution occurs, and the student wishes to pursue the matter further, the student may appeal in writing to the appropriate department chair within one long semester after the disputed grade or decision is issued. The department chair will respond in writing to the student within 14 calendar days (excluding holidays) of the receipt of the student's written appeal.

Subsequent appeals can be written and directed within 14 calendar days (excluding holidays) of the date of the department chair's decision to the school, college, and division College Academic Appeals Committee respectively.

The Committee will consist of a panel of three faculty members, two of whom may not be from the department in which the appeal originated. The dean or director will appoint the panel members upon receipt of the written appeal and notify the student in writing of the date, time and location of the hearing and the names of the members of the panel. The student and the faculty member involved may appear in person before the panel and present evidence. The hearing will be closed to the public, and no person other than the student, the faculty member involved and panel members may be present. No person may represent the student or the faculty member.

After the College Academic Appeals Committee has heard the appeal, it will deliberate and come to a decision. The Committee's decision will be written and mailed, or delivered in person, to the student and faculty member within three class days of the close of the hearing. The student may appeal in writing within 14 calendar days to the dean/director (excluding holidays). The dean's/director's decision will be final, and it must be mailed or delivered in person to the student within 14 calendar days (excluding holidays) of the receipt of the student's written appeal. (Source: UTRGV Graduate Catalog, pg. 99.)

Goodness of Fit to Practice Appeal Process

Faculty will initiate the Goodness of Fit to Practice protocol at any time for students who knowingly engage in illegal, unprofessional, or unethical activities or for students whose professional performance is deemed to present an immediate threat to the well-being of others. In such cases and depending upon the level of perceived threat, the combined faculty may recommend discontinuation in the program without opportunity for student remediation. The procedures below apply in less egregious cases.

In the event faculty members have reasonable cause to suspect a student has been engaged in unethical, unprofessional or illegal conduct, a student's right to due process is respected when the faculty members follow these procedures.

1. A "retention committee" of two faculty members (excluding any faculty member who initiated the procedure) is appointed by the Department Chair and conducts a preliminary investigation *prior to confronting the individual* suspected of the unacceptable conduct. Witnesses are interviewed and asked to sign statements. The Dean of the Graduate College is given informal notice of the proceedings at this point.

2. The retention committee delivers its report to the faculty and the faculty makes a decision to pursue or drop the line of inquiry.
3. If the faculty decides to pursue the line of inquiry, the student is immediately informed by the retention committee of the nature of the charges against him or her and is given a chance to respond.
4. The retention committee conducts further investigation and presents its report along with recommendations and/or requirements to the department faculty. When the faculty members have acted upon the committee's report, the Department Chair and the committee members meet with the student to convey verbally and in writing the department's decision and/or recommendations which in extreme cases may be a recommendation to the student to withdraw or to the Dean of the Graduate College for dismissal.
5. If the student is not satisfied with the recommendation of the faculty, he or she can choose to initiate the appeals and grievance process at the Graduate College.
6. The committee will subsequently monitor the student's progress in carrying out the program's requirements, if any.
7. Failure to comply with the requirements or evidence of further misconduct will result in additional disciplinary action up to, and including, recommendation for dismissal.

Process for Retention, Remediation, and Dismissal

Student evaluation is an ongoing process that is conducted in informal and formal manners. If a student is deemed at risk in terms of failure due to academic skills deficits, professional skills deficits, or personal issues that interfere with the ability to function in the role of a professional counselor, faculty will engage in a systematic process to address the concerns.

Level 1

Discuss between faculty member and student to address the concerns. Faculty members complete Student Evaluation Scale every semester on all students enrolled in their courses.

Level 2

Faculty member consults with other faculty during faculty meeting and alerts them to the concerns. Documentation is included in the faculty meeting minutes.

Level 3

Upon the third consultation in faculty meetings or at any time in which the concern is deemed significant, the faculty advisor requests a meeting with the student to create a professional development plan. The student will be required to set goals and identify means for achieving those goals. A follow up meeting will be scheduled to monitor progress toward goals.

Level 4

A formal remediation plan will be developed and implemented at any time in which the concern is deemed egregious. Remediation can involve repeating classes, other required professional development activities, and attending personal counseling. The entire program faculty will develop the goals for the plan, identify the required target measures of accomplishment and documentation of goal attainment, and the timeframe for completion. Students who are mandated to attend personal counseling will be required to sign a release of information that will allow the faculty to obtain information about the number of sessions attended, willingness to address the identified concerns, and progress toward the identified goals. Personal information will not be shared with the faculty. Failure to complete the remediation plan will result in removal from the program.

Level 5

If the student has failed to respond appropriately to the previous levels or has committed a serious breach of professional ethics, dismissal from the program will occur.

Remediation and Dismissal Appeal Process

A student may appeal a remediation or dismissal decision by filing a written appeal with the Department Chair within ten working days of receipt of the decision. If the student is dissatisfied with the Department Chair's decision, the student may file a written appeal with the Dean of the Graduate College within ten working days of receipt of the Department chair's decision. The decision of the Dean of the Graduate College is final.

A student appealing a dismissal decision may remain in classes until any appeals have been completed.

Liability Insurance

All counseling graduate students are required to carry professional liability insurance throughout the entire program beginning with the semester they enroll in field courses or courses with practice components. Liability insurance needs to be renewed on an annual basis. To ensure liability insurance is effective throughout the professional practice experiences, students should obtain this insurance every August. You will receive information on how to enroll in your field experience courses. Employee insurance does not cover professional practice experiences.

Professional Organizations and Involvement

(CACREP Standards Section 2: Professional Counseling Identity.)

Counseling is a dynamic profession sensitive to the needs of society throughout its evolution. Counselors are committed to being involved in their profession in order to support the mission of serving humanity. Therefore, counseling students are strongly encouraged to seek student membership in the American Counseling Association (ACA) or the Texas Counseling Association (TCA); and/or American School Counseling Association (ASCA) or the Texas School Counseling Association (TSCA), Rio Grande Valley Counseling Association (RGVCA) top of Texas Counseling Association (TTCA), Counseling and Guidance Counseling Association (CGSA).

Individual faculty members model this commitment to professionalism through extensive involvement as members and leaders in state, national, and international counseling associations. Most professional organizations offer reduced membership rates to students as well as the following benefits: receipt of professional publications (journals and newsletters); reduced registration fees for professional meetings (seminars, conventions, workshops) sponsored by the organization; eligibility for member services (library resource use, legal defense funds and services, etc.); involvement in activities and issues which are directly or indirectly pertinent to the profession (legislation and professional credentialing including licensure, certification, and program accreditation); and affiliation with other professionals having interests and areas of expertise similar to one's own.

Name and Address Changes

For a variety of reasons, it is important that the department be able to reach students. In order to facilitate correspondence, please report any change of physical address, personal email address, or phone number to the Department's Administrative Assistant, Ms. Norma Sepulveda at

norma.sepulveda@utrgv.edu 956-665-3449, as well as changing it through U Central at <http://www.utrgv.edu/files/documents/student-enrollment/utrgv-change-of-information.pdf>.

General Communication

A UTRGV account and university email is created for each student upon their enrollment in the program. It is the student's responsibility to regularly check messages at this account and email address and to respond in a timely manner. A variety of informational items are communicated through these venues including book lists, registration information, upcoming deadlines, exam information, and other important items. Faculty at will use students' UTRGV email addresses for all communications.

Financial Aid

In accordance with Financial Aid guidelines, a graduate student who is enrolled for at least six hours of credit during a regular semester, or six hours of credit during the summer sessions (six hours can be taken during one summer session or split between the two summer sessions) may be eligible to receive financial aid. Students must complete a FAFSA to apply. Contact the UTRGV Financial Aid Office for more information. (<https://fafsa.gov/>)

Course Load

The Department of Counseling and Guidance recognizes the rigorous and demanding nature of graduate study and strongly suggests that students who are employed in full-time positions in addition to pursuing a graduate degree enroll in no more than six hours per semester and nine hours total in the summer. Students wishing to exceed the recommended course load per semester must have permission from their faculty advisor and the department chair to do so.

Transfer Credits

A maximum of nine (9) semester hours of appropriate graduate work earned at other institutions, subject to the approval of the director of the graduate program or chair of the major department and certification by the Graduate College, may be transferred to UTRGV for degree credit. Individual graduate degree programs may accept fewer hours or have additional requirements.

A course may be transferred only if:

1. The course is equivalent to a graduate-level course at UTRGV or is appropriate for elective credit at the graduate level within the student's degree program;
2. The grade for the course is not less than B; and
3. The course was not taken at such a date that it would extend the student's time for achieving the degree beyond the approval limit for the graduate program (seven years for a master's program and 10 years for a doctoral program).

Transfer of graduate credit is not automatic. The student must submit a written request for approval of transfer to the director of the graduate program or chair of the major department, who determines whether all the conditions for transfer have been met before the hours are added to the graduate degree plan. The department must specify which course is to be transferred by prefix, name, course grade and indicate the equivalency (providing that the student graduates within the approved time limit for the degree) on the student's Application for Degree form which is approved

by the dean of the college and routed to the Graduate College for review and approval by the dean of the Graduate College. (Source: UTRGV Graduate Catalog, pg. 28).

Incompletes

An incomplete (I) grade is a temporary grade given only during the last one-fourth of a term/semester and only if:

1. The student is passing the course to date;
2. The student will not have completed the required coursework within the allotted time of a regular semester or summer session; and
3. The instructor determines that the reason for the work being incomplete is valid and that the grade of "I" is justified.

A written agreement between the student and the instructor specifying the work to be made up and the deadline for its accomplishment must be filed in the office of the Department Chair at the time that the "I" is submitted. The work agreed upon must be satisfactorily completed and the "I" changed no later than the end of the next regular (Fall or Spring) semester from the date the "I" was received (unless an extension is requested by the instructor) or the grade will automatically be recorded as the grade alternatively assigned by the faculty at the time of submitting the written agreement.

The Office of the Registrar must receive the complete Request for Grade of Incomplete Form with all required signatures by the published deadline for faculty to enter grades, or an NR grade will be entered. (Source: UTRGV Graduate Catalog, pg. 52.)

Time Limit for Degree Completion

All requirements must be completed within one seven-year period. Work more than seven years old will not meet graduation requirements and can be reinstated only by special permission of the Dean for graduate studies. (Source: UTRGV Graduate Catalog, pg. 67.)

COUNSELING SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

Counseling and Psychological Services (CaPS) is a center that provides free and confidential counseling services to address mental health concerns and to promote personal growth for currently enrolled UTRGV students. Counseling services are provided by either licensed mental health professionals or graduate-level interns under the supervision of a licensed counselor.

Students being seen for counseling may work on a wide variety of issues. Examples include: Stress, Family Problems, Depression, Sexual Assault, Anxiety, Abuse, Eating Disorders, Grief/Loss, Self-Esteem, Anger Management, Sexuality, Parenting, Divorce, Academic Difficulties, Harassment, Partner/Relationship Problems, Suicidal Ideation, Domestic Violence, Health Issues, Post-Traumatic Stress, Substance Abuse, and Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder. In some cases, such as with more severe or complex conditions, a student may be referred out for additional or more appropriate treatment options.

There is no charge to enrolled students for counseling services. The following locations offer counseling services:

Brownsville Campus
Cortez Hall, Rm. 237
Brownsville, TX 78520
Phone: 956-882-3896

Edinburg Campus
University Center, Rm. 109
Edinburg, TX 78539
Phone: 956-665-2574

You can contact CaPS or find more information at

Email: counseling@utrgv.edu

Web: www.utrgv.edu/counseling

EXIT REQUIREMENTS

All Students

1. Completion of all course requirements with a minimum 3.0 grade point average.
2. Satisfactory completion of all benchmarks.
3. CPCE Passing Score

ENDORSEMENT, LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION

Endorsement of Graduates Policy

The policy of the Department of Counseling at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley is that graduates are recommended by faculty for employment only for positions consistent with the specialty areas in which they have had internships or field experience and completed the required courses.

School Counseling Certification

To meet the academic requirements for licensure as a school counselor in Texas, one must successfully complete a school-counseling graduate program. The degree must be awarded before certification can be issued.

Texas Education Agency Requirements for School Counseling Certification:

- Complete an approved Educator Preparation Program (EPP) for the specific certificate desired (UTRGV is a TEA-approved EPP).
- Hold a master's degree from an institution of higher education that is accredited by an accrediting agency, as recognized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (UTRGV is accredited by SACSCOC, which is recognized by THECB).
- Successfully complete the TExES exam in school counseling. School counseling program students may be approved to take the test after successful completion of

- TExES Representative Pre-test
- Pass CPCE
- Successfully complete COUN 6345 School Counseling
- Enrolled in COUN 6369 Internship I
- Have two years of classroom teaching experience in a public or accredited private school
- It is the students' responsibility to complete the certification process. The COE certification offices will assist with this process.

Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)

Graduate programs offered by the Department of Counseling meet the academic requirements specified by the Texas Board of Examiners of Licensed Professional Counselors. The Board also requires passage of the post-masters supervised experience. Consult the website of Texas Board of Examiners of Licensed Professional Counselors for the latest requirements at National counselor Exam (NCE), the Jurisprudence Exam <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/counselor/>

Requirements as of the printing of this handbook are

- A master's or doctorate degree in counseling or related field from a university, which meets the accreditation requirements of the board (UTRGV meets these requirements).
- A planned graduate program of at least 60 graduate semester hours (effective fall 2017) of courses which are counseling in nature, including a practicum or internship of at least 300 clock-hours which primarily involve the direct delivery of counseling.
- Pass the National Counselor Examination and the Texas Jurisprudence Exam.
- Three thousand (3,000) clock-hours of appropriately supervised experience in the provision of counseling services gained subsequent to completion of academic course work, awarding of the graduate degree and obtaining a temporary license from this board.

The School Counseling and Clinical Mental Health Counseling programs offered by the Department of Counseling at UTRGV prepare the student to apply for certification and licensure. It is the student's responsibility to complete all state requirements for certification and licensure upon graduation from the Counseling program. Students should apply for certification and/or licensure as soon as they are eligible. If requirements change between the time a student completes the program and the time he or she applies for certification and/or licensure, the student will be required to meet the new standards. This may mean taking additional courses or completing additional requirements.

STUDENT FEEDBACK

Course Evaluations

Students are encouraged to evaluate faculty members through the University's course evaluation process at the end of each semester. This affords the student the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the teaching effectiveness of faculty members. The course evaluations are compiled and posted for faculty to review. All evaluations are anonymous. The course evaluations are reviewed carefully when faculty are considered for retention, promotion, or tenure.

Alumni Survey

Every three years, the department conducts a follow-up study of program graduates and their employers. The department is interested in the perceptions of the graduate's preparedness to work as counselors in school and clinical mental health settings. Please take the time to respond to surveys and questionnaires post-graduation sent to you from the Department of Counseling and Guidance. (This timeline is under review by the COE UTRGV.)

STUDENT RESOURCE CONTACT INFORMATION

REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION/FACULTY/STAFF				
Name	Position	E-Mail Address	Phone #	Office
Dr. Patricia McHatton	Dean	Patricia.mchatton@utrgv.edu	665-3627	EEDUC 3.102E
Dr. Cynthia Wimberly	Dept. Chair	cynthia.wimberly@utrgv.edu	665-3464	EDUC 1.506A
Ms. Norma Sepulveda	Dept. Admin Support	norma.sepulveda@utrgv.edu	665-3449	EDUC 1.506C
Ms. Celinda Quintanilla	Clinic Director	celinda.quintanilla@utrgv.edu	665-3073	EDUC 1.226

BROWNSVILLE CAMPUS FACULTY/STAFF				
Name	Position	E-Mail Address	Phone #	Office
Ms. Cynthia Deleon	Admin Support - Clinic	cynthia.deleon@utrgv.edu	882-7792	BMAIN 1.210
Ms. Celinda Quintanilla	Clinical Director/Supervisor	celinda.quintanilla@utrgv.edu	885-7792	BMAIN 1.210
Ms. Bertha Mujica	Dept. Admin Support	bertha.mujica01@utrgv.edu	882-7678	BMAIN 2200M
Dr. Javier Cavazos	Faculty	lionel.cavazos@utrgv.edu	882-5709	BMAIN 2200D
Dr. Mehmet Karaman	Faculty	mehment.karaman@utrgv.edu		EDUC 1.642
Dr. Eunice Lerma	Faculty	eunice.lerma@utrgv.edu	882-5850	BMAIN 2200F
Dr. Dustin Reed	Faculty	dustin.reed@utrgv.edu		BMAIN 2.200G
Dr. James Whittenberg	Faculty	james.whittenberg@utrgv.edu	882-7593	BMAIN 2200J
Dr. Selma Yznaga	Faculty	selma.yznaga@utrgv.edu	882-7855	BMAIN 1402D

EDINBURG CAMPUS FACULTY/ STAFF				
Name	Position	E-Mail Address	Phone #	Office
Ms. Sandra Saavedra	Admin Support - Clinic	sandra.saavedra@utrgv.edu	665-5251	EDUC 1.270
Mr. Roy Rosales	Clinic Supervisor	roy.rosales@utrgv.edu	665-3738	EDUC 1.224
Dr. Victor Alvarado	Faculty	victor.alvarado@utrgv.edu	665-2299	EDUC 1.646
Dr. Veronica Castro	Faculty	veronica.castro@utrgv.edu	665-5319	EDUC 1.648
Dr. Peter Kranz	Faculty	peter.kranz@utrgv.edu	665-3467	EDUC 1.654
Dr. Diana Ruiz	Faculty	diana.ruiz@utrgv.edu	665-8091	EDUC 1.640
Dr. Jean Shen	Faculty	jean.shen@utrgv.edu	665-7086	EDUC 1.650
Dr. Scott Sparrow	Faculty	gregory.sparrow@utrgv.edu	665-7953	EDUC 1.652

UTRGV Student Resources

U Central	http://www.utrgv.edu/en-us/academics/utb-utpa-current-students/u-central/index.htm
Parking/ Transportation	http://www.utrgv.edu/en-us/student-experience/parking/index.htm
Student Accessibility Services	http://www.utrgv.edu/en-us/student-experience/student-academic-success/student-accessibility-services/index.htm
Learning Center	http://www.utrgv.edu/en-us/student-experience/student-academic-success/learning-center/index.htm
Library	http://www.utrgv.edu/library/index.htm
Calendars	http://www.utrgv.edu/en-us/student-experience/calendars/index.htm
Child Development Center	http://www.utrgv.edu/en-us/student-experience/student-services/child-development-center/index.htm
Counseling Services	http://www.utrgv.edu/en-us/student-experience/student-services/counseling-service/index.htm
Dean of Students	http://www.utrgv.edu/en-us/student-experience/student-services/dean-of-students/index.htm
Health Services	http://www.utrgv.edu/en-us/student-experience/student-services/health-services/index.htm
Military and Veteran's Success Center	http://www.utrgv.edu/en-us/student-experience/student-services/veterans-services/index.htm
University Recreation	http://www.utrgv.edu/en-us/student-experience/student-services/university-recreation/index.htm
Student Food Pantry	http://www.utrgv.edu/en-us/student-experience/student-services/student-food-pantry/index.htm

Websites of Professional Counseling Organizations and Resources

American Counseling Association (ACA)	www.counseling.org
American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA)	www.amhca.org
American School Counselor Association (ASCA)	www.schoolcounselor.org
Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)	www.counseling.org/CACREP
National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC)	www.nbcc.org
Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE):	http://www.nbcc.org/NCE
Information Regarding NCE and NCMHCE Examinations	http://www.nbcc.org/NCMHCE
Texas Counseling Association (TCA)	http://www.txca.org
Texas School Counselor Association (TSCA)	http://www.txca.org/tca/tsca_home.asp
Texas Board of Examiners of Licensed Professional Counselors (TxLPC)	http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/counselor/

Acknowledgment of Student Responsibilities

I, _____
Full Name, Please Print

have read The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Department of Counseling and Guidance Student Handbook. I understand that my enrollment status in the Department of Counseling and Guidance is based on my ability to continue to satisfy all academic program requirements, including but not limited to adequate grades, professional and personal development and dispositions, and skill development during my entire graduate enrollment. I understand I may be dismissed at any time if I do not satisfy these requirements and adhere to these policies.

I understand I will be continually evaluated regarding my appropriateness for the field of counseling. I further understand that the University may modify the policies and procedures as stated in the Graduate Student Handbook, the Graduate Catalog, and the Department of Counseling Student Handbook at any time. If modifications do occur, I will be notified via my UTRGV email.

Signature

Date