

Texas A&M University—Central Texas



TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY
CENTRAL TEXAS™

STUDENT GUIDE for the
COUNSELING (M.ED.), COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY (M.S.), CLINICAL MENTAL
HEALTH COUNSELING (M.S.), MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY (M.S.),
SPECIALIST IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY (S.S.P.), and EDUCATIONAL
PSYCHOLOGY (M.S.) Graduate Programs

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Student Checklist

- _____ Apply to the office of Graduate Studies. This includes:
 - _____ Completing and submitting online (<http://www.tamuct.edu/departments/graduatestudies/index.php>) the *Graduate School Application for Admission* form where the student indicates which degree program in the department of Psychology and Counseling he or she is applying for
 - _____ Submitting current Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores (if required). Note: Any undergraduate who obtained a 3.0 GPA or higher is exempt from taking the GRE for university admission to Graduate Studies. **However**, some programs in the department still require submission of GRE scores.
 - _____ Submitting official transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate academic coursework
 - _____ Writing and submitting a 200-300 word essay addressing career and academic goals
- Note: Admission to the Graduate School does not guarantee admission to a graduate degree program in the Department of Psychology and Counseling.**
- _____ Complete the Programs of the Psychology & Counseling Department Application (<http://www.tamuct.edu/departments/psychology/index.php>) that is posted online (application process will vary across programs; see below)
- _____ Meet with a graduate program coordinator prior to enrolling in any courses in a degree program in the Department of Psychology and Counseling
- _____ Meet with a faculty graduate advisor to complete a degree plan AFTER FULL ADMISSION
- _____ Apply for field work courses (e.g., MFTK 530, MHCK 505, or PSYK 505) in the semester prior to enrolling in it (must apply each semester for each course) if required by the program
- _____ Apply to take comprehensive exams if required by the program
- _____ Apply for graduation and participation in graduation ceremony

PART 1: ADMISSIONS AND INFORMATION FOR THE STUDENT

Program Options

Students may choose from different graduate degree programs within the department. Reference should be made to the university catalog and the advising guide sheets (available from the department office or an advisor) for specific coursework requirements within each of these options.

- Each student must declare which program they are applying for when applying to the department for program admission and acknowledge this choice when a degree plan is filed.
- Students will graduate with a graduate degree under only one program.
- Students may take courses not listed on their degree plans after obtaining approval from their program coordinator and completing all necessary prerequisite courses with the understanding that these courses are electives and may not satisfy requirements for graduation in some programs.

Available programs include:

- School Counseling (M.Ed. Counseling with or without *eligibility* for the Licensed Professional Counselor).
- Clinical Mental Health Counseling (M.S. Mental Health Counseling).
- Marriage & Family Therapy (M.S. Marriage & Family Therapy).
- Educational Psychology, experimental psychology emphasis (M.S. Educational Psychology).
- Specialist in School Psychology (S.S.P.).
- Non-degree seeking certification programs include: School Counseling

Conferral of a degree is only the first step for students seeking professional licensure

Statement of Informed Consent

The graduate degree programs include laboratory and field experiences in counseling, therapy, or psychology. These courses may include practicing counseling, therapy, and assessment skills with student peers; being interviewed by counseling or psychology peers; and practicing newly-acquired and more advanced skills with actual clients at field sites. Important components of student evaluation will include receptivity to the giving and receiving of feedback (from peers, university instructors, and site supervisors) and ability to integrate such feedback into the student's counseling, therapy, and assessment behaviors. Feedback will include supervisor observations (from course instructors, program faculty, and site supervisors) of any limitations in counseling, therapy, and assessment skills, professional practice, and personal qualities and behaviors which may inhibit the student's therapeutic abilities. Feedback (oral and/or written) will come in the classroom and lab settings, as well as in group and individual supervision settings. Additional meetings with instructor and/or field supervisor may be necessary. Progression through field experiences will depend upon a formative evaluation by the instructor that the student has acquired the skills necessary for the next level.

Due to the nature of counseling, therapy, and psychology, and the faculty's responsibility to educate effective counselors and therapists, students may be encouraged to participate in experiential activities (including group counseling as well as attending and paying for counseling as an outside class activity). Signing a confidentiality agreement, which is included in the appendix of this student handbook, protects student's rights with regard to self-disclosure.

Students are subject to the conditions of the department's retention procedure included later in this guide.

Program Admission

Admission to the School Counseling Program

- Admission Process
 - Obtain Conditional Admission to Graduate Studies at A&M-Central Texas (<http://catalog.tamuct.edu/graduate-information/graduate-admissions/>)
 - Complete the online Programs of the Psychology & Counseling Department Application (<http://www.tamuct.edu/departments/psychology/index.php>) and submit all admission materials to the program coordinator by:
 - July 1st (Fall)
 - Nov 1st (Spring)
 - Apr 1st (Summer)
 - Submit all of the following to the Psychology & Counseling Department
 - Intent to Pursue Certification as a School Counselor (available from the Department office)
 - Graduate School Admission Letter
 - Official Transcripts
 - School Counseling Program Application (available from the Department office or the Program website)
 - Resume/vita: A work experiences résumé or curriculum vitae detailing your work and educational experience
 - Valid Texas or Out-of-State Educator Certificate
 - Complete Service Record(s) (If you only have 1 year of Teaching Service, you must supply a Letter of Future Employment)
 - A 200- to 300-word essay addressing career and academic goals, personal strengths and weaknesses, and professional goals (can be same as that submitted to Graduate Studies).
 - Copies of any professional licenses and certifications currently held.
 - Your materials will be reviewed by program faculty, and you will either be invited to complete an interview/orientation or notified that your application was denied. School counseling faculty facilitates

the admissions interview and orientation. The purpose of this requirement is to further explore the applicant's personal qualities that are useful for graduate and professional work as a school counselor, to clarify any questions held by either the faculty or applicant, to determine if the applicant's professional goals are in alignment with the objective of the program, and to share more information about the program and course work with the applicant.

- At the interview you will also complete an on-site writing sample (500 words).
 - During or after your interview, you may have additional program requirements to complete.
- Upon invitation, schedule and complete an individual interview by:
 - Aug 1st (Fall)
 - Dec 1st (Spring)
 - May 1st (Summer)
- Applications received after the established deadlines will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis if space is available.
- Following the interview, students will be granted Conditional Admission, or informed that their application for admission has been denied.
- Students may be granted Conditional Admission status until the first 12 semester hours are completed.
- Coursework taken by students with Conditional Admission must be approved by the program coordinator.
- Once all admission requirements have been met the student packet will be presented to the Education Preparation Committee (EPC) for a vote of acceptance of requirements for school counseling certification upon completion of the degree program. Upon acceptance of the EPC, Full Admission will be granted.
- Admission Requirements
 - Bachelor's degree from a fully accredited institution.
 - Minimum GPA of 3.0 in the last 60 semester hours completed.
 - Clinical/Work/Volunteer Experience: Teacher certification needed as well as two years teaching experience.

Admission to the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program

- Admission Process
 - Obtain Conditional Admission to Graduate Studies at A&M-Central Texas (<http://catalog.tamuct.edu/graduate-information/graduate-admissions/>)
 - Complete the online Programs of the Psychology & Counseling Department Application (<http://www.tamuct.edu/departments/psychology/index.php>) and submit all admission materials to the program coordinator by:
 - July 1st (Fall)
 - Nov 1st (Spring)
 - Apr 1st (Summer)
 - Submit a GRE score. Your materials will be reviewed by program faculty, and you will either be invited to complete an interview/orientation or notified that your application was denied. Counseling faculty facilitate the admissions interview and orientation. The purpose of this requirement is to further explore the applicant's personal qualities that are useful for graduate and professional work as a counselor, to clarify any questions held by either the faculty or applicant, to determine if the applicant's professional goals are in alignment with the objective of the program, and to share more information about the program and course work with the applicant.
 - Upon invitation, schedule and complete an individual interview by:
 - Aug 1st (Fall)
 - Dec 1st (Spring)
 - May 1st (Summer)
 - Following the interview, students will be granted Full Admission, Conditional Admission, or informed that their application for admission has been denied.
 - Students failing to meet full admission requirements may be granted conditional admission status until the first 12 semester hours are completed.
 - If denied conditional admission, students may re-apply for admission after successful remediation. Students are responsible for this remediation following input from their graduate coordinator.
 - Conditionally admitted students must enroll in coursework approved by their graduate coordinator and receive a grade point average (GPA) of 3.25 or above on the specified coursework to be eligible for full admission.
 - Students will not be permitted to enroll in additional coursework in counseling (CNSK), counseling psychology (CPSK), mental health counseling (MHCK), marriage and family therapy (MFTK) or psychology (PSYK) beyond the first 12 semester hours if not fully admitted to a program in the department.

- Conditionally admitted students who are denied full admission after completing 12 semester hours may re-apply for admission after successful remediation. Students are responsible for this remediation following input from the graduate coordinator of the program to which they are applying.
 - Remediation plans are designed to be specific to a student's needs. They may involve one-on-one consultation with faculty, additional undergraduate coursework, professional development activities, use of tutoring services, etc.
 - Applications received after the established deadlines will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis as space is available.
- Admission Requirements
 - Conditional Admission by Graduate Studies
 - Bachelor's degree from a fully accredited institution.
 - Minimum GPA of 3.0.
 - Clinical/Work/Volunteer Experience: While specific experience not required, previous related work experience may make applicant more competitive.
 - Timely submission of admission materials.
- Admission Materials
 - Programs of the Psychology & Counseling Department Application: This application can be found online at the Psychology & Counseling Departmental website.
 - References: Three letters of recommendation concerning the applicant's academic and professional abilities and potential are required. These letters should address the applicant's ability to meet graduate-level academic challenges and to work in the counseling profession.
 - Personal Statement: An essay describing why the applicant wants to pursue professional counseling as a career. In addition, the statement should include what the applicant thinks his or her strengths are for counseling, and any other qualities which speak to the applicant's potential for success in the counseling program. Limit the statement to no more than two pages double-spaced.
 - Resume/CV: A work experiences résumé or curriculum vitae.
 - Copies of any professional licenses currently held.

Admission to the Marriage & Family Program

- Admission Process
 - Obtain Conditional Admission to Graduate Studies at A&M-Central Texas (<http://catalog.tamuct.edu/graduate-information/graduate-admissions/>)
 - Complete the online Programs of the Psychology & Counseling Department Application (<http://www.tamuct.edu/departments/psychology/index.php>) and submit all admission materials to the program coordinator by:
 - June 1st (Fall)
 - Nov 1st (Spring)
 - Apr 1st (Summer)
 - Submit a GRE score. Your materials will be reviewed by program faculty, and you will either be invited to complete an interview or notified that your application was denied.
 - Upon invitation, schedule and complete an individual interview by:
 - July 1st (Fall)
 - Dec 1st (Spring)
 - May 1st (Summer)
 - Applications received after the established deadlines will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis if space is available.
- Admission Requirements
 - Bachelor's degree from a fully accredited institution.
 - Preferred minimum GPA of 3.0.
 - Clinical/Work/Volunteer Experience: While specific experience not required, previous related work experience may make applicant more competitive.
 - Timely submission of admission materials.
- Admission Materials
 - Departmental application: The Departmental application can be found online at the Departmental website.
 - References: Three professional references are required from colleagues or supervisors who can attest to the applicant's clinical knowledge, skill, and potential aptitude for graduate study. Recommendation letters must include address, phone number, and signature of recommender. The envelope must be submitted unopened. If a recommender prefers to submit an original, hard copy letter, please remind them that it must include an ink signature and be submitted in a sealed envelope.
 - Personal Statement: An essay describing your pertinent human services experiences and how they will enhance your development as a marriage and family therapist.
 - Resume/CV: A work experiences résumé or curriculum vitae.
 - Copies of any professional licenses currently held.
 - Most recent GRE scores

Admission to the Educational Psychology Program

- Admission Process
 - Obtain Conditional Admission to Graduate Studies at A&M-Central Texas (<http://catalog.tamuct.edu/graduate-information/graduate-admissions/>)
 - Applicants must complete the online Programs of the Psychology & Counseling Department Application (<http://www.tamuct.edu/departments/psychology/index.php>) and submit all admission materials to the program coordinator by:
 - July 1st (Fall)
 - Nov 1st (Spring)
 - Apr 1st (Summer)
 - Each applicant's materials will be reviewed by program faculty, and the applicant will be notified via email of the admission decision.
 - Applications received after the established deadlines will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis if space is available.
- Admission Requirements
 - Bachelor's degree from a fully accredited institution.
 - Minimum GPA of 3.0.
 - Research Experience: While research experience is not required, any research experience applicants have should be noted in application materials.
 - Timely submission of admission materials.
- Admission Materials
 - Departmental Application: The online Programs of the Psychology & Counseling Department Application (<http://www.tamuct.edu/departments/psychology/index.php>) on the Department webpage must be completed.
 - Personal Statement: An essay describing why the applicant wants to pursue a research-based career in psychology and how the degree will help him/her achieve professional and/or personal goals is required. The essay should include a description of how the applicant plans to use the degree to advance his or her career, the type of research-related profession the applicant plans to enter, the applicant's strengths and weaknesses as they pertain to graduate-level study with an explanation of how the applicant plans to overcome the weaknesses described, and any other qualities which speak to the applicant's interest in and potential to succeed in the Experimental Psychology Program. The essay should be no less than 400 words and no more than 600 words. The essay must be typed, double-spaced, and submitted electronically as an attachment to the email address provided in the Departmental Application.
 - Statement of Research Interests and Experience: An essay describing the applicant's experience in performing research and the areas of research the applicant is interested in pursuing is required. The essay should describe all research experiences including (but not limited to)

the number and types of research papers written for coursework, research-based honors projects, work with faculty members on research projects, lab assistantships (paid or unpaid), conference presentations, publications, etc. The essay should also include a description of the applicant's ideas and plans for conducting research in the future such as the variables, samples, and/or applications that the applicant wants to explore. The essay should explain why the applicant's interests are a good fit with the Educational Psychology Program at TAMU-CT. The essay should be no less than 400 words and no more than 600 words. The essay must be typed, double-spaced, and submitted electronically as an attachment to the email address provided in the Departmental Application.

- Resume/CV: A résumé or curriculum vitae summarizing the applicant's education and work experiences should be submitted with the rest of the materials.

Admission to the Specialist in School Psychology Program

- Admission Process
 - Obtain Conditional Admission to Graduate Studies at A&M-Central Texas (<http://catalog.tamuct.edu/graduate-information/graduate-admissions/>)
 - Submit a GRE score and complete the online Programs of the Psychology & Counseling Department Application (<http://www.tamuct.edu/departments/psychology/index.php>) and submit all admission materials to the program coordinator by:
 - July 1st (Fall)
 - Nov 1st (Spring)
 - Apr 1st (Summer)
 - Applications received after the established deadlines will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis if space is available.
 - The SSP program may conditionally admit students for one semester to allow them time to obtain an acceptable GRE score as long as they meet all other admission standards.
- Admission Requirements
 - Bachelor's degree from a fully accredited institution.
 - Minimum GPA of 3.0.
 - Clinical/Work/Volunteer Experience: While specific experience is not required, previous related work experience may make applicant more competitive.
 - Timely submission of admission materials.
- Admission Materials
 - Departmental application: The Departmental application can be found online at the Departmental website.
 - Personal Statement: An essay describing why the applicant wants to pursue professional counseling as a career. In addition, the statement should include what the applicant thinks his or her strengths are for counseling, and any other qualities which speak to the applicant's potential for success in the SSP program. Limit the statement to no more than two pages double-spaced.
 - Resume/CV: A work experiences résumé or curriculum vitae.
 - Copies of any professional licenses currently held.

Ethical Standards

All students are expected to understand and practice the ethical codes and standards of conduct of their appropriate professional organization, certification and/or licensing board. These include:

- the American Counseling Association (ACA)
- the American Psychological Association (APA)
- the American School Counselor Association (ASCA)
- the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT)
- the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)

Students are also expected to understand and adhere to the standards of conduct for students at Texas A&M University - Central Texas (A&M-Central Texas). Violations of professional ethical standards or University rules could indicate a student is unfit to continue in the program.

Students are expected to periodically review the ethical standards to ensure continued understanding and practice.

Advisors and faculty members at A&M-Central Texas have an obligation to respond when students are in violation of professional ethical standards or University rules of conduct. Additionally, the Office of Student Affairs may take action when a student violates the Student Code of Conduct.

Faculty Advisement

Students are required to seek advising by faculty advisors regarding coursework, certification and licensing requirements, program policies and procedures, requests to change degree plans, and assistance with other educational or career needs.

- A faculty advisor is assigned to each student according to area of emphasis and degree plan. Students may consult with any faculty member but are urged to work with their assigned advisor as much as possible due to his/her expertise and knowledge in the student's area of emphasis.
- Advising is a continuous process, and faculty advisors are assigned many students to advise in addition to their other workload requirements, such as teaching, service, and research. Students should demonstrate respect for the faculty advisor's time by setting appointments and being prepared for their appointments as much as possible.

Student's Responsibilities

Students have a responsibility for their learning. Other responsibilities include:

- Reading the A&M-Central Texas catalog each year to determine if changes impact them
- Reading and adhering to professional ethical standards

- Meeting registration and payment deadlines
- Participating in activities and projects, internal or external to the University, that will enhance their learning experience
- Following the degree plan outline as closely as possible and being aware of all course prerequisites
- Preparing for courses by making arrangements to attend regularly scheduled classes, allowing for adequate study time, completing assignments on a timely basis, and taking the final exam as scheduled
- Identifying skill strengths and working toward development of skills that need improvement
- Asking questions to obtain information regarding topics they do not understand
- Acquiring and maintaining a minimum of \$1,000,000 (\$3,000,000 aggregate) in professional liability insurance prior to taking clinical practicums and internships
- Preparing for the site-based practicums and internships in advance of the semester in which they will be taken, including submitting application forms by posted deadlines
- Successfully completing the comprehensive examination or thesis
- Meeting graduation requirements and deadlines
- Collecting and maintaining documentation of practicum and internship hours which will be needed when applying for certification or licensure
- Becoming identified with the professional community (e.g., participating in professional activities and/or joining a professional association such as APA, ACA, ASCA, AAMFT, National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), Texas Counseling Association (TCA), etc.) – see Part 4 of this handbook.

Degree Plan

Once Full Admission to a Program is granted, a student should contact his/her graduate advisor to discuss a plan for completing coursework as soon as possible and complete a Graduate Degree Plan Acknowledgment & Responsibility Form, which will be signed by the student, graduate advisor, and the Department Chair (or College Dean). Note: Students who are non-degree seeking are not in a degree program and are not eligible to file a degree plan. Care must be taken to select courses that also meet requirements for special credentials the student may be seeking such as licensure or certification. See the Certification and Licensure section of this guide for more details.

PART 2: PROGRAM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Program Standards

Students must maintain high scholastic standards and develop skills necessary to work with people with diverse needs. Students are expected to demonstrate emotional and mental fitness in their professional fields and to conform to the code of ethics of relevant professional associations and the state of Texas. A student's acceptance in the Clinical Mental Health, Counseling, Counseling Psychology, Educational Psychology, Marriage and Family Therapy, or School Psychology programs does not guarantee professional fitness that is required to remain in the program. See Student Retention Policy described below regarding what procedures will be followed when faculty believe students are not fit for a particular program.

Academic Appeal Policy

- I. **Overview:** The College of Education Grade Appeal Policy was designed to protect students from biased or inaccurate evaluation procedures without unfairly impinging on the academic freedoms of the faculty. Consistent with this, it is recognized that:
 - a. Students have the right for their work to be evaluated fairly and accurately using a method consistent with professional academic standards.
 - b. Faculty members have the right to evaluate students' work using any method that is professionally acceptable, submitted in writing to all students, and applied consistently to all students.
 - c. It is assumed that A&M-Central Texas faculty members appropriately evaluate students' work, so the burden of proof for a grade appeal lies with the student.
- II. **Academic Dishonesty:** The process for appealing a professor's determination that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty is separate from the process for determining if a grade was determined fairly/accurately. If a student wishes to appeal a grade that was influenced by the faculty member's belief that the student violated the university's academic integrity policy *and* the student denies these allegations, the student must complete the university appeal process for accusations of violating the academic integrity policy prior to initiating a grade appeal.
- III. **Justification for an Appeal:** Grade appeals may only be initiated if the grade was influenced by one of the following:
 - a. **Error:** A clerical/computational error was made in calculating/reporting the grade.
 - b. **Prejudice:** The faculty member's evaluation of the student's work was influenced by the faculty member's negative attitude toward the student.
 - c. **Arbitrary method:** The grading procedure employed departed substantially from accepted academic norms in a manner that indicated a failure to exercise professional judgment (e.g., no explanation given regarding the

basis for assigning point values to assignments; grading procedure deviated substantially from what was stated in the syllabus without notifying students in advance of this change).

- d. Inconsistent application: The student's grade was not determined using the same process applied to other students in the course.
 - e. Unsubstantiated charge of dishonesty: The grade was based on a charge of academic dishonesty by the student which has been determined by the university to be unsubstantiated by the evidence presented.
- Insufficient reasons upon which to base an appeal include:
- a. Disagreement with course policies that are clearly communicated in writing to all students.
 - b. Differences in policies among sections of the same course or across faculty members.
 - c. Potential negative impact on the student (e.g., loss of financial aid).
 - d. Dissatisfaction with instructional style and/or methods (Note: Students who have complaints regarding the instruction they receive should address these directly with their instructor or that faculty member's supervisor).

IV. Appeal Process:

- a. A student who wishes to appeal a decision of a faculty member must request a review by that person within 30 calendar days of the originating event using the *Grade Appeal Form* (located on the website for the College of Education).
 - i. The faculty member is required to give the student a written response within 15 calendar days.
 - ii. The response by the faculty member (or his or her immediate supervisor) should be made using the *Appeal Response Form* (located on the website for the College of Education).
 - iii. For an appeal of a course grade the originating event shall be considered to be the posting of the grade to the university record. For an appeal of an assignment/exam grade, the originating event shall be considered to be the posting of the grade by the faculty member.
- b. If the faculty member is not available, a response is not made within the specified timeframe, or if the student is dissatisfied with the response, the student should submit a written appeal to the Department Chair (or his or her designated proxy; the Chair must designate a proxy if he or she is the faculty member who assigned the grade to be appealed) within 60 calendar days of the originating event.
 - i. This submission should include a copy of the original *Grade Appeal Form*, a copy of the *Appeal Response Form* from the faculty member, and a written explanation from the student addressing why he or she believes the faculty member's response was inadequate/unsatisfactory.
 - ii. The Chair (or proxy) then has 15 calendar days to respond to the written appeal.

- c. If the student is unsatisfied with the decision of the Department Chair, the student may appeal in writing to the College's Academic Appeals Committee within 15 calendar days of notification of the decision from the Department Chair. The Committee will review the student's appeal and after hearing both sides of the incident, the committee may decide that no further review is justified or may render a recommendation to the College Dean within 30 calendar days of receiving the student's appeal.
 - i. The Committee will consist of a minimum of three faculty members appointed by the College Dean and two student representatives.
 - 1. The student representatives will be the president of the university's Psychology and Counseling student organization and the president of the university's student chapter of the Association of Texas Professional Educators. If these students are not available to participate they may appoint a replacement from within their respective organizations.
 - ii. The Committee may request additional information from the parties involved (e.g., course syllabus, work samples, testimony).
 - iii. The Committee will notify the student and faculty member that the appeal is under committee review.
 - iv. If the student or faculty member wishes to provide the Committee with additional materials explaining their position, this should be done within 7 calendar days of the time the committee is asked to review the appeal.
 - v. The student and faculty member both have the right to present evidence in person to the committee, but the committee may deliberate in private.
- d. The decision of the College Dean is final and will be communicated to the student in writing.

Student Retention Policy

Every student enrolled in Graduate Studies is required to maintain a high level of performance and comply fully with the policies of the institution. Students who have achieved admission are expected to maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA on work completed at A&M-Central Texas. Graduate Studies reserves the right to suspend any graduate student who does not maintain satisfactory academic standing or fails to conform to University regulations.

Probation –At the end of any grading period, if a student's semester or overall GPA falls below the minimum required as set by the department (at least a minimum of 3.0 GPA), she/he will be given notice of unsatisfactory academic performance and put on probation. The student must attain a 3.0 cumulative GPA during her/his next period of enrollment. Failure to do so will result in suspension.

Suspension – At the end of any grading period, if a student's semester or overall GPA falls below a 2.0 she/he will be automatically suspended. Students may not attend

classes for one long semester or the summer term. Upon return from suspension a student will sign a contract with Graduate Studies stipulating the conditions that must be met for the following term. At a minimum, the graduate student must maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA for every semester thereafter. Additional stipulations may be created on a case by case basis. A graduate student is allowed one suspension. If poor academic performance results in a second suspension, the student will be dismissed from the current program and may be permanently dismissed from the university.

Suspension Appeal – Under exceptional conditions, a student may write a letter of appeal to the Director of Graduate Studies. Consideration for reinstatement will be on a case by case basis and approved only **one** time by the Director of Graduate Studies or designee. There is no appeal beyond the Director of Graduate Studies.

Student Review Policy

Members of the program faculty, using their professional judgment, continually evaluate each student's performance. Students receive feedback about their performance from faculty members, advisors, and supervisors.

If a faculty member believes that a student is not making satisfactory progress or meeting program or university standards, that faculty member will discuss the situation with the student. If the faculty member believes the student's performance cannot improve to acceptable standards, the faculty member may refer the student to a committee of the program faculty, consisting of a minimum of three faculty members, to review the student's performance. The Performance Fitness Evaluation Form included in the Appendix will be used for this review. Please familiarize yourself with this form.

1. If the student wishes to appeal the faculty member's decision to make this referral, they may appeal this decision to the Department Chair. The Department Chair is expected to give a response within 15 days.
 - a. If the Department Chair agrees with the faculty member's decision, the matter will be referred to a committee of the program faculty.
2. The faculty review committee:
 - a. Will provide the student in writing with the reasons for non-satisfactory progress.
 - b. Will provide the student an opportunity to meet with the committee and respond.
 - c. Within 10 working days of meeting with the student, the committee will report to the student, the department chair, and the College Dean its findings that the student either be allowed to remain, allowed to remain with conditions, or be removed from the program. The department chair will forward copies to the offices of the College Dean, the Director of Graduate Studies, the Provost and the Office of Student Conduct.

3. Within 15 days of the receipt of such information, the student may notify the Dean of the College of Education of the acceptance or appeal to the committee's findings. Lack of appeal or notification within this time period is assumed as acceptance.
4. If the student is recommended to stay in the program, the committee will develop a growth plan.
5. To appeal the outcomes of the committee, the student must submit a written appeal to the Dean of the College of Education. The Dean will determine whether or not to uphold or modify the directives made by the committee. The Dean will provide the student with a final decision in writing. The Dean will forward copies to the department chair, and the offices of the Director of Graduate Studies, the Provost, and the Office of Student Affairs.
6. The decision of the Dean of the College of Education is final and will be communicated to the student in writing.

Professional Endorsement Policy

The faculty will not endorse any graduate from the clinical mental health, counseling, counseling psychology, marriage and family therapy, and educational psychology programs for a license or certification for which the graduate has not been trained.

Comprehensive Examination

- Every candidate for a M.Ed. in Counseling or a M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling, Counseling Psychology, or Marriage and Family Therapy must successfully complete a comprehensive examination. Candidates for the S.S.P. must complete either a comprehensive examination or a thesis. Candidates for the M.S. in Educational Psychology degree must complete a thesis instead of a comprehensive exam. There is no non-thesis or comprehensive exam option for the M.S. in Educational Psychology.
- Students are ultimately responsible for enrolling in a zero hour comprehensive exam section the semester they plan to sit for the exam and for making arrangements to take it as scheduled. Examination dates are typically:

<u>Graduating Semester</u>	<u>Comprehensive Examination</u>	<u>Application Deadline</u>
Fall	2 nd Saturday in November	October 1 st
Spring	2 nd Saturday in April	March 1 st
Summer	2 nd Saturday in July	June 1 st

- The nature of the comprehensive examination will differ according to the graduate program in which a student is enrolled. Students should consult with their Program Coordinator regarding the specific nature of this exam.
- Program Coordinators will determine the minimum score required to pass the Comprehensive Exam. Students who fail to earn a passing score must meet with

their Program Coordinator to develop a remediation plan before making a second attempt to pass the Comprehensive Examination. Students who are unable to successfully complete the required comprehensive exams will be dismissed from the program.

Thesis

A thesis is an independent, original research project completed by all graduate students seeking the Master of Science in Educational Psychology degree with an emphasis in experimental psychology. The research project must be quantitative in nature and will be completed in collaboration with three faculty members who serve on the thesis committee. Students will complete the project while enrolled in the course, PSYK 588 Thesis. Six hours of thesis credit is required. Credit is awarded for thesis course work when 1) the thesis proposal is completed and again when 2) the final thesis is completed. Once a student enrolls in thesis hours, the student must remain continuously enrolled in a PSYK 588 course until the thesis is completed. A student may begin the thesis after meeting the following requirements:

1. Successful completion of PSYK 500 and PSYK 501.
2. Successful completion of 12 additional hours of coursework in the degree plan beyond PSYK 500 and PSYK 501.

Prior to being enrolled in thesis the student is expected to identify his or her topic, draft a concept paper, and select the faculty chair of the thesis committee. During the first semester of thesis, the student is expected to write a research proposal and defend the research protocol. Prior to collecting data, the student must obtain approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB). During the second semester, the student will collect and analyze data, interpret his or her findings, and defend the final thesis report. The Office of Graduate Studies publishes a Thesis Manual which outlines required thesis elements and procedures. Due to the shortened calendar during the summer semester, it is strongly recommended that students begin their thesis in the Fall semester. There is no guarantee that the thesis can be completed in two semesters though students should work diligently to achieve this goal.

Graduation

Students must register to graduate by the deadline listed in the current catalog or class schedule. All university requirements regarding the final procedures related to the degree must be followed. If courses have been substituted for those printed on the degree plan, a substitution approval form must be completed, signed by the student, graduate advisor, and the Department Chair and placed on file in the graduate studies office.

PART 3: FIELD PLACEMENT

Courses

- The following courses require a separate application for each semester in which the student will be enrolled:

MFTK 530, 554, 559, 560, 561	MHCK 505, 595
PSYK 505, 584, 587, 595, 596	CNSK 595, 596

Eligibility

- All prerequisite courses must be completed to be eligible for enrollment in practicum and internship courses with a grade of B or better (see the appropriate Verification of Coursework form)
- Students must have a 3.0 GPA, be admitted to one of the professional programs, and not be on academic probation
- Students must show satisfactory progress and acceptable standards of conduct
- Every applicant must be approved for eligibility by the practicum/internship director
- Any program faculty member may challenge a student's eligibility or fitness for a practicum or internship under the student fitness and performance guidelines of the department. No student will be admitted to a practicum/internship until all challenges to eligibility have been resolved.

Application and Deadlines

- Application for practicum/internship experiences must be submitted for each experience.
- Acceptance and completion of one practicum/internship course does not assure acceptance to a second practicum/internship.
- Application forms are available in the program offices.
- Application deadlines are announced and posted each semester. It is the responsibility of the student seeking a practicum/internship to know and adhere to the application deadline. No new applications will be considered after a deadline for a particular semester has passed.
- The application deadlines are (note: if a deadline falls on a weekend or holiday, it will be moved to the next working day):

<u>Practicum/Internship Semester</u>	<u>Application Deadline</u>
Fall	June 1 st
Spring	September 1 st
Summer	February 1 st

- Written notification of acceptance to a practicum/internship will be provided as soon as all applications have been processed after the deadline date. Packets containing guidelines and procedures will be mailed to all applicants who have been accepted. The assigned supervisor of each section will provide specific information and

guidelines to those students registered in that section. Students whose applications are not accepted may reapply for the subsequent semester.

Selection of Practicum and Internship Sites

- The student seeks and chooses the practicum/internship site. Approval of the site by the practicum/internship director is required.
- A site must be deemed appropriate by the practicum/internship director to be approved. Sites that are >75 miles from the Killeen campus must additionally be approved by the student's program coordinator. The student must provide the names and phone numbers of contacts at the site, as well as detailed information about the services offered and potential experiences for the student. To approve a site, the practicum/internship director will consider the qualification of supervisors at the site, the experiences to be offered the student, the coursework, degree plan, and licensure/certification sought by the student, and the quality of the services offered at the site. The practicum/internship director may deny placement of a student at a particular site if the site is deemed inappropriate for meeting the educational needs of the student.
- It is highly recommended that students seeking sites meet with the practicum/internship director early in the semester of the application deadline to get pre-approval of the site. This will help to insure that adequate time is available to find an alternate site in case a site is not approved.

Liability Insurance

- All students who register for a practicum or internship course are required to submit proof of their student counseling/therapy liability insurance. In some instances, students may be required to provide health certificates or evidence of immunization to work with clients.
- Because it is the responsibility of students to prepare themselves for course requirements, liability insurance must be purchased several weeks prior to taking a practicum or internship course to avoid delays in working with clients. Students are also responsible for renewing the insurance as needed.

PART 4: PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

Professional Associations

- Students are strongly encouraged to network within the professional community (e.g., participate in professional activities and/or join a professional association). A variety of professional associations have student members. As a whole, these associations provide many benefits, products, and services to counselors, psychologists, and therapists. They promote public recognition of the profession, advocate for the profession, and represent the profession's interests before federal, state, and local governments.
- Professional associations most directly related to our program options include:
 - Counseling
 - American Counseling Association
 - American Mental Health Counselors Association
 - American School Counselor Association
 - American College Personnel Association
 - Texas Counseling Association
 - Texas Mental Health Counselors Association
 - Texas School Counselor Association
 - Mid-Tex Counseling Association (Killeen)
 - Metroplex Counseling Association (Ft. Worth)
 - Psychology
 - American Psychological Association
 - Association for Psychological Science
 - Southwestern Psychological Association
 - National Association of School Psychologists
 - Texas Psychological Association
 - Texas Association of School Psychologists
 - Marriage and Family
 - American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
 - Texas Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
- Students are also encouraged to attend and participate in professional association conferences. Such experiences give opportunities to share research, network, and enhance professional development. While it is not a requirement, graduate faculty are often interested in collaborating with students to develop conference presentations.

Honor Societies

If invited, students should accept membership in a professional honor society such as Psi Chi (psychology) or Chi Sigma Iota (counseling). Such honors give recognition for academic excellence and are appropriate for listing on one's resume. Local chapters often have activities that provide professional development and collegiality.

PART 5: CERTIFICATION AND LICENSURE

- All graduate degree options within the master's degree programs are designed to lead to **eligibility** for professional certification or licensure in the State of Texas, with the exception of Educational Psychology. Each degree option is primarily designed for a particular credential. Conferral of a degree is only the first step for students seeking professional licensure.
- Certification or licensure is generally coordinated between the student and the board issuing the desired credential. Program faculty and the department usually provide documentation and verification of training experiences to boards after the student has initiated the credentialing process.
 - For school counseling certification, students initiate the process by contacting the certification office at A&M-Central Texas.
 - For professional counseling licensure (LPC), marriage and family therapy licensure (LMFT), and school psychologist licensure (LSSP), students initiate the process by contacting the appropriate licensing board.
- It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of the particular requirements of the certification and licensing board for which a credential is sought. Consult with program faculty if you are unsure of how to find these requirements.
- Many credentials require post-master's degree internship experiences. The student independently arranges these with the consent of the certification or licensing board. The department and its program faculty are not involved in this requirement.
- Program options, the eligible credentials, and the appropriate certification and licensing boards for these credentials are listed in table 1 on the next page:

<u>Program</u>	<u>Degree</u>	<u>Credential</u>	<u>Responsible Board</u>
School Counseling	M.Ed.	School Counselor (certification)	Texas State Board for Educator Certification
		Licensed Professional Counselor (license)	Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors
Clinical Mental Health Counseling	M.S.	Licensed Professional Counselor (license)	Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors
		National Certified Counselor (certification)	National Board for Certified Counselors
Marriage and Family Therapy	M.S.	Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (license)	Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists
School Psychology	S.S.P.	Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (license)	Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists
Non-degree Seeking	Post master's degree with 2 years teaching experience	School Counselor (certification)	Texas State Board for Educator Certification

APPENDIX A

Performance Fitness Evaluation

Counseling, Counseling Psychology, & Educational Psychology Graduate Programs
Department of Psychology & Counseling
Texas A&M University-Central Texas

Student _____ Semester/Year _____

Faculty _____ Course Number _____

This evaluation is to be completed by instructors when they believe that there is a poor match between the student and the counseling program. The evaluation covers four areas:

1. Professionalism 2. Competency 3. Social and Emotional Maturity 4. Integrity

This form should be completed in triplicate. The faculty member completing it should retain the original, give one copy to the student, and place one copy in the student's file. The faculty member **MUST** complete follow-up documentation to be placed in the student's file.

Directions: Based on your observations of the student, select the relevant items, then circle the number that corresponds to the level of concern:

0= Not Concerned 1= Concerned 2 = Highly Concerned

Professionalism

1. The student conducts self in an ethical manner so as to promote confidence in the counseling program.	0	1	2
2. The student relates to peers, professors, and others in a manner consistent with stated professional standards.	0	1	2
3. The student demonstrates sensitivity to real and ascribed differences in power between themselves and others.	0	1	2
4. The student demonstrates an understanding of the legal requirements relevant to counseling training and practice.	0	1	2
5. The student regularly attends class, is on time for class, and stays for the full class meeting time.	0	1	2
6. The student willingly increases knowledge (and implementation) of effective counseling strategies.	0	1	2
7. The student projects a professional image and positive attitude.	0	1	2

Competency

1. The student recognizes the boundaries of his/her particular competencies and limitations of his/her expertise.	0	1	2
2. The student takes responsibility for compensating for his/her deficiencies in a timely manner.	0	1	2
3. The student takes responsibility for assuring client welfare when faced with the	0	1	2

boundaries of his/her expertise.			
4. The student provides only those services, and applies only those techniques, for which s/he is qualified by education, training, or experience.	0	1	2
5. The student demonstrates basic cognitive, affective, and sensory capacities when responding therapeutically to clients.	0	1	2
6. The student demonstrates appropriate oral and written language skills.	0	1	2

Social and Emotional Maturity

1. The student demonstrates appropriate self-control (such as anger control, impulse control) in interpersonal relationships with faculty, supervisors, peers, and clients.	0	1	2
2. The student is honest, fair, and respectful of others.	0	1	2
3. The student is aware of his/her own belief systems, values, needs, and limitations and the effect of these on his/her work.	0	1	2
4. The student demonstrates the ability to receive, integrate, and utilize feedback from peers, instructors, and supervisors.	0	1	2
5. The student exhibits appropriate levels of self-assurance, confidence, and trust in own ability.	0	1	2
6. The student follows professionally recognized problem-solving processes, seeking to informally solve problems first with the individual(s) with whom the problem exists.	0	1	2

Integrity and Ethical Standards

1. The student refrains from making statements which are false, misleading, or deceptive.	0	1	2
2. The student avoids improper and potentially harmful dual relationships.	0	1	2
3. The student respects the fundamental rights, dignity, and worth of all people.	0	1	2
4. The student respects the rights of individuals to privacy, confidentiality, and choices regarding self-determination and autonomy.	0	1	2
5. The student respects cultural, individual and role differences, including those due to age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status.	0	1	2

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Faculty Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX B**PSYCHOLOGY AND COUNSELING GRADUATE PROGRAMS
Texas A&M University-Central Texas****Statement of Confidentiality**

I, the undersigned, do agree to hold in strictest confidence personal information gained in any psychology or counseling course as well as any other that may be construed to be in a psychology or counseling course. This agreement is in accordance with established Codes of Ethics from professional associations as well as the licensure laws of the State of Texas. I understand the necessity for such an agreement and will abide by the implicit and explicit demands of this statement. I further understand that breaches of confidentiality will result in disciplinary action including possible dismissal from the Texas A&M University-Central Texas Counseling, Counseling Psychology, Educational Psychology and School Psychology programs.

Student Name

Date

APPENDIX C
Texas A&M University-Central Texas
INFORMED CONSENT

The undersigned student understands:

The graduate degree programs include laboratory and field experiences in counseling or psychology. These courses will include practicing counseling, therapy, and assessment skills with student peers, being interviewed by counseling or psychology peers, and practicing newly-acquired and more advanced skills with actual clients at field sites. Due to the nature of counseling and psychology, and the faculty's responsibility to educate effective counselors and therapists, students may be encouraged to participate in experiential activities (including group). All reasonable efforts will be made to protect the confidentiality of any disclosed information.

Important components of student evaluation will include receptivity to the giving and receiving of feedback (from peers, university instructors, and site supervisors) and ability to integrate such feedback into the student's counseling, therapy, and assessment behaviors. Feedback will include supervisor observations (from course instructors, program faculty, and site supervisors) of any limitations in counseling, therapy, and assessment skills, professional practice, and personal qualities and behaviors that may inhibit the student's therapeutic abilities. Feedback (oral and/or written) will come in the classroom and lab settings, as well as in group and individual supervision settings. Additional meetings with instructor and/or field supervisor may be necessary. Progression through field experiences will depend upon a formative evaluation by the instructor that the student has acquired the skills necessary for the next level.

In consideration of being allowed to participate in courses and the field placement requirements of the program, the undersigned student agrees:

1. That his/her participation in said program will make use of personal student experiences in a classroom situation, and hereby gives informed consent to the usage of these experiences and further agrees and consents that professional observations and/or findings as well as student comments may be communicated to and discussed in a classroom situation.
2. To hold harmless Texas A&M University - Central Texas, The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents, The Texas A&M University System, their respective officers, agents, servants, and employees from any and all liability arising out of or in any way predicated upon acts or omissions, in connection with the program described above.
3. That he/she assumes all risk involved in participation in this program. This assumption is made freely and voluntarily and with full and complete understanding of the consequences of such risk assumption.

By signing this agreement, I understand and agree to these conditions for my enrollment in the program.

Date

Student Name

**APPENDIX D
VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY**

Complete only the section for the degree program you are completing

M.S. in Marriage and Family Therapy

I certify that I have completed the following pre-requisite courses for MFTH 530, 554, 559, 560, or 561

Required Course	Semester/Year	School	Grade
MFTK 501: Introduction to MFT Theory			
MFTK 507: Ethics in MFT			
MFTK 520: Pre-Practicum			
MFTK 530: Clinical Practicum 1 (If applying for Prac 2)			
MFTK 554: Clinical Practicum 2 (If applying for Prac 3)			
MFTK 559: Clinical Practicum 3 (If applying for Prac 4)			
MFTK 560: Clinical Practicum 4 (If applying for Prac 5)			
MFTK 561: Clinical Practicum 5			

I also certify that my cumulative graduate school grade point average (GPA) at Texas A&M-Central Texas is 3.0 or greater and that I earned a grade of B or higher in all prerequisite courses.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX E

VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY

Complete only the section for the degree program you are completing

M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling

I certify that I have completed the following pre-requisite courses for MHCK 505 or MHCK 595.

Required Course	Semester/Year	School	Grade
MHCK 550: Foundations of Cnsl and Psych			
MHCK 591: Ethical Foundations of Cnsl			
MHCK 553: Personality & Cnsl Theories & App			
MHCK 557: Methods & Practices in Cnsl & Psych			
MHCK 554: Group Procedures for Counselors			
MHCK 558: Cnsl Perspectives on Psychopathology			
MCHK 505: Practicum I (If applying for MHCK 595)			

I also certify that my cumulative graduate school grade point average (GPA) at Texas A&M-Central Texas is 3.0 or greater and that I earned a grade of B or higher in all prerequisite courses.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

**APPENDIX F
VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY**

Complete only the section for the degree program you are completing

M.E. in Counseling Psychology: School Counseling Option

I certify that I have completed the following pre-requisite courses for CNSL 595/596.

Required Course	Semester/Year	School	Grade
CPSY 550: Foundations of Cnsl and Psych			
CPSY 551: Career Cnsl & Guidance			
CPSY 553: Personality & Cnsl Theories & App			
CPSY 554: Group Procedures for Counselors			
CPSY 557: Methods & Practices in Cnsl & Psych			
PSY 581: Assessment & Evaluation Fundamentals			
CNSL 595: Practicum I (If applying for CNSL 596)			

I also certify that my cumulative graduate school grade point average (GPA) at Texas A&M-Central Texas is 3.0 or greater and that I earned a grade of B or higher in all prerequisite courses.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

**APPENDIX G
VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY**

Complete only the section for the degree program you are completing

M.S. in Educational Psychology: School Psychologist Option

I certify that I have completed the following pre-requisite courses for PSY 505, 595, or 596

Required Course	Semester /Year	School	Grade
PSY 560: Foundations of School Psych			
PSY 582: Behavior Management & Therapy			
CPSY 553: Personality & Cnsl Theories & App			
CPSY 557: Methods & Practices in Cnsl & Psych			
PSY 581: Assessment & Evaluation Fundamentals			
CPSY 558: Cnsl Perspectives on Psychopathology -OR- EDSP 505: Introduction to Exceptional Learners			
PSY 505: Practicum I (If applying for PSY 595)			
PSY 500 Behavioral Statistics (If applying for PSY 595)			
PSY 501 Research Methods (If applying for PSY 595)			
PSY 502 Social Psych Processes (If applying for PSY 595)			
PSY 503 Theories of Learning (If applying for PSY 595)			
PSY 504 Human Development (If applying for PSY 595)			
PSY 560 Foundations of School Psych (If applying for PSY 595)			
PSY 511 Cult, Min & Gender Issues (If applying for PSY 595)			
PSY 514 Assmt of Intell & Ach (If applying for PSY 595)			
PSY 515 Physiological Psych (If applying for PSY 595)			
PSY 580 Personality & Social Assmt (If applying for PSY 595)			
PSY 583 Consultation & Supervision (If applying for PSY 595)			
EDU 538 Curr Design & Implem (If applying for PSY 595)			
EDAD 512 Admin of Elem & Sec Schools & Spec Serv (if applying for PSY 596)			
PSY 595 Internship (if applying for PSY 596)			

I also certify that my cumulative graduate school grade point average (GPA) at Texas A&M-Central Texas is 3.0 or greater. I also certify that I earned a grade of B or higher in all prerequisite courses for PSY 505: Practicum I.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

**APPENDIX H
VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY**

Complete only the section for the degree program you are completing

M.S. in Counseling Psychology: 48-hour LPC option

I certify that I have completed the following pre-requisite courses for PSY 505

Required Course	Semester/Year	School	Grade
CPSY 550: Foundations of Cnsl and Psych			
CPSY 553: Personality & Cnsl Theories & App			
CPSY 554: Group Procedures for Counselors			
CPSY 557: Methods & Practices in Cnsl & Psych			
CPSY 558: Cnsl Perspectives on Psychopathology			
PSY 581: Assmt & Eval Fundamentals			

I also certify that my cumulative graduate school grade point average (GPA) at Texas A&M-Central Texas is 3.0 or greater.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

**APPENDIX I
VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY**

Complete only the section for the degree program you are completing

M.S. in Counseling Psychology: 48-hour LMFT option

I certify that I have completed the following pre-requisite courses for PSY 505

Required Course	Semester/Year	School	Grade
CPSY 550: Foundations of Cnsl and Psych			
CPSY 509: Assmt & Trtmt in Marr & Fam Therapy			
CPSY 553: Personality & Cnsl Theories & App			
CPSY 556: Introduction to Family Cnsl & Therapy			
CPSY 557: Methods & Practices in Cnsl & Psych			
CPSY 558: Cnsl Perspectives on Psychopathology			

I also certify that my cumulative graduate school grade point average (GPA) at Texas A&M-Central Texas is 3.0 or greater.

Student Signature _____ Date _____