

Master of Arts in Mental Health Counseling & Behavioral Medicine



Program Overview

The Mental Health Counseling and Behavioral Medicine program is accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). We are the only CACREP-accredited program in the United States that is housed in a medical school. Our emphasis on behavioral medicine and neuroscience makes us unlike any other counseling program. The two-year intensive program prepares graduates for counseling licensure as mental health counselors in Massachusetts and in other states.



Our full-time counseling program offers unparalleled clinical training opportunities in and around greater Boston, including placements at Boston Medical Center, Veteran's Affairs Hospitals, college counseling centers, trauma counseling and refugee centers, integrated primary care, emergency departments, forensic settings and prisons, treatment centers for substance use and eating disorders, inpatient settings, and clinical research teams. Students receive rigorous training in mental health assessment and diagnosis, counseling theory and application, and are exposed to a wide array of client populations and career paths. Our passionate and caring faculty and staff deliver a counseling curriculum that incorporates unique coursework in behavioral medicine, neuroscience, and psychopharmacology. These are courses not found in other accredited programs.

Esteemed and Exceptional Faculty

All core faculty members are currently or recently active physicians who infuse their instruction with real world examples of clinical service, patient descriptions and psychiatric presentations. We are passionate about your learning and invested in your success as a future counselor and colleague. Many faculty are also actively involved with research that contributes to the scientific understanding of a variety of real-world mental and behavioral health issues.

Program Outcomes

Each year, graduates of the Mental Health Counseling and Behavioral Medicine program are exceptionally well-prepared for employment in mental health counseling positions across the United States and internationally. In 2022, graduates who responded to our exit survey achieved the following outcomes:

- 100% obtained employment within six months of graduation
- 100% passed the counseling licensure exam

Our graduates are equipped to start working in the field immediately after graduation in their area of interest. Examples include working as: trauma clinicians, private practice clinicians, substance abuse counselors, directors of an eating disorders clinic, school-based counselors, or as a member of clinical research team.

Each year, many of our graduates are accepted into and awarded scholarships within prestigious PhD doctoral programs in Counselor Education and Supervision, Clinical and Counseling Psychology PhD programs, RN, and MD programs to further their education and career goals.

Curriculum

The program prepares students to provide effective and ethical counseling for a wide variety of populations and disorders, in a broad array of settings. First semester coursework is designed to support on-site clinical training in the second or optional summer semester. The first year practicum experience varies by site and setting, but all students benefit from close supervision and mentoring while on site. In the second year, students can build on areas of interest through a choice of electives and the setting for their internships. The typical curriculum is outlined below, although there may be some variability depending on clinical site schedules, instructor availability, and other circumstances.

Fall Semester Year 1

- Professional Orientation & Ethics
- Counseling Techniques
- Basic Mental Health Assessment
- Psychopathology
- Research & Evaluation
- Theory & Practice of Child & Adolescent Counseling*

Spring Semester Year 1

- Neuroscience for Mental Health Professionals
- Social and Cultural Foundations
- Psychopharmacology
- Practicum Supervision
- Counseling Theory
- Group Dynamics

Summer Semester Year 1 (Summer sessions are not required)

- Course offerings rotate each year. Recent courses include Addictions and Career and Vocational Counseling.

Fall Semester Year 2

- Human Growth & Development
- Behavioral Medicine & Applied Health Psychology
- Psychological Trauma Across the Lifespan*
- Internship Supervision
- Addictions

Spring Semester Year 2

- Career and Vocational Counseling
- Internship Supervision
- Marriage and Family Counseling*
- Advanced Ethics & Ethical Decision-Making
- Human Sexuality*

* Program elective

Admissions Requirements

In addition to completing the program's online application, prospective students must also submit:

- \$95 application fee

- Unofficial transcripts and/or Transcript Evaluation from each college or university attended (including study abroad and all transfer credits). Students must complete a baccalaureate degree prior to entry into the program. Official transcripts are required if admitted and you choose to enroll. If you have attended (a) university (or universities) outside of the United States, a WES evaluation is also required so that we can maintain equity throughout our application evaluation process.
- Three letters of recommendation from individuals who can attest to the likelihood of your academic and career success. We recommend that two of your letters of recommendation come from faculty members who may speak to your academic potential
- A written personal statement that describes your qualifications and objectives for the program
- Applicants from countries where English is not the language of instruction must submit official TOEFL or IELTS scores
- As of fall 2018, standardized test scores (like the GRE and/or MCAT) are no longer required for admission. Applicants may still choose to submit scores, if desired

Many students accepted into the program have majored in a mental health related field, psychology, or the basic sciences and/or have some experience (volunteer or otherwise) in human service settings.

Tuition, Financial Aid and Student Resources

For the most up-to-date information on tuition and fees, visit www.bumc.bu.edu/gms/admissions/student-financial-services/.

Our Financial Aid Office is available to assist students in identifying sources of financial and scholarship support: www.bumc.bu.edu/gms/students/registration/financing-options/

The BU Office of Housing Resources provides information regarding housing, transportation, and Boston neighborhoods. For more details, visit www.bumc.bu.edu/ohr.

Admissions Deadlines for Fall 2026 Entry

- Priority deadline: December 5, 2025
- Final deadline: January 18, 2026

Contact

For more information about the MA in Mental Health Counseling & Behavioral Medicine program, please visit our website or contact:



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