Middle Rio Grande
M.Ed. Counseling Program

Counseling Program Handbook
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Introduction

Welcome to the Counseling Program at Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande (SRSU-MRG). We hope your time with us will be productive and meaningful. To inform you of the policies and procedures relevant to your chosen course of study, we have developed this Counseling Program Handbook that includes information about Graduate Studies at SRSU-MRG, the Counseling Program, the four (4) professional practice specialties, and the three primary Credentialing processes of Certification as a Professional School Counselor, the Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) credential, and the Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT) license of Texas.

The first section of this handbook includes policies and procedure relevant to Graduate Studies in general at SRSU-RGC, as well as the policies, procedures and practices of the Counseling Program that are relevant to all interested students. The second section of this Counseling Program Handbook includes a discussion of the program requirements beginning in fall semester. The final section of the Handbook are the Appendices which consist of a copy of the Application for Candidacy and Comprehensive Oral Examination, a list of valuable Internet links to relevant organizations and Codes of Ethics, Standards of Practice, and Rules of Professional Conduct, and a comprehensive glossary of counseling-related terminology.

For most students, the transition from being an undergraduate to a graduate student is surprising, exciting, and intellectually stimulating. However, it can also be very challenging and stressful. The quantity and quality of work expected at the graduate level exceeds that expected at the undergraduate level. Graduate studies are more rigorous and involve more independent work than undergraduate studies. Courses also tend to be more taxing because they are taught at a higher level and cover material in greater depth. In addition to academic work, counselor training can be very personally demanding. Counseling is a profession that requires continual self-reflection and examination of one’s own thoughts, feelings, motivations, and experiences. Therefore, academic study and personal reflection are equally important for successfully completing a counselor training program.

The contacts you make in graduate school are the beginnings of your professional network and it is important that you cultivate strong professional ties while at SRSU-MRG. We hope you will work closely with the faculty and your fellow students to succeed in the Counseling Program

Counseling as a Profession

Counseling is a collaborative effort between the counselor and client. Professional counselors facilitate the formation of an emotionally intimate relationship with clients in order to assist the clients in identifying goals and potential solutions to problems which cause emotional turmoil; seek to improve communication and coping skills; strengthen self-esteem; self-efficacy and promote behavior change and optimal mental health.

Professional counseling is the application of mental health, psychological or human development principles, through cognitive, affective, behavioral or systemic interventions, strategies that address wellness, personal growth, and career development, as well as pathology. Using a mindfulness model based on cultural and linguistic relevance enables clients to fully access all the dimensions of their personality and life experiences.
To prepare for this challenging career, professional counselors undergo extensive education and clinical training. This includes at least a master’s degree and field training with a solid foundation in research methodology, techniques and theories, human growth and development, career and lifestyle development, social and cultural foundations, group work, ethics, assessment and diagnosis, practicum and internship.

Professional counselors serve at all levels of schools and universities, in hospitals and mental health agencies, rehabilitation facilities, business and industry, correctional institutions, religious organizations and agencies, community and governmental organizations, and private practice settings.

**Cultural and Linguistic Relevance**

**Unique Identity and Quality of the Counseling Program**

Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande, with campuses in Del Rio, EaglePass, and Uvalde, serves a fifteen-county area in Southwest Texas and is situated along the U.S. – Mexico border. The history and heritage of this region is exemplified by the treasured biculturalism and bilingualism common in the border region of the twenty-first century. The Counseling Program at Sul Ross State University – Middle Rio Grande weaves these rich cultural and linguistic threads through a vibrant tapestry of course work, clinical and school-based fieldwork experiences, and professional identity. The cultural and linguistic fusion of South Texas gives rise to the unique and relevant program qualities of biculturalism and bilingualism within professional counseling in all its settings.

The competent counseling professional in South Texas is comfortable and confident working within a framework of such allocentric cultural values as **personalismo, familismo, sipatia** and **respeto**. **Personalismo** is the warmth in human relationships, with the flavor of personal investment, which can be manifested through the sharing of food, coffee, space, and interests. Positive complementary interpersonal relationships are governed by the rules and obligations of **respeto** and simpatia. **Familismo** consists of the rich and time-honored values aimed at protecting and preserving the family system. A major asset of the border region is the importance placed on family welfare over individual interests, as well as the priority that is placed on personal relationships rather than business transactions. These distinctive principles lay the foundation for the development of authentic, genuine, and effective counseling relationships.

Successful counselors in South Texas understand the dynamics of bilingualism, as well as biculturalism. A multilingual person’s first language heavily influences his or her language preferences in counseling-related situations, regardless of his or her level of mastery of the second (or third) language. Code switching among Spanish-English bilinguals living in the U.S. – Mexico border region is a common occurrence in South Texas counseling sessions. Proficient counseling practitioners genuinely understand that a bilingual student’s or client’s sense of self is language specific, and she or he must be invited to explore the concept of self in both languages.

Finally, a primary task of the culturally relevant counselor in South Texas is to assist all students and clients in developing and/or reaffirming strong ethnic identities, which are essential aspects of healthy personalities. Professional counselors are in position to foster cultural mindfulness in students and clients, and to actively celebrate and preserve the border legacies, traditions, and languages.
Mission Statement
An Exemplary Counseling Program

The mission of the Counseling Program is to educate, develop and train counseling professionals by utilizing the highest standards set by state and national certifying and licensing boards. The Counseling faculty design and deliver counseling courses through a variety of instructional modalities. We are proud to be recognized as one of the leading counselor training programs in the State of Texas. The Counseling Program is renowned in the region for its emphases on counselor mindfulness and self-awareness, authentic skill development, and serving the counseling needs of bicultural and bilingual border region populations.

The Counseling Program of Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande is a professional graduate program in the Department of Education designed to meet the standards and requirements for professional school counselor certification, professional counselor licensure, and the marriage and family therapist credential in the State of Texas. The Counseling Program does not train students for specific job descriptions, but rather provides a comprehensive preparation meeting the national and state standards of professional knowledge and skill in the field of Counseling.

The Counseling Program has been designed to provide graduate students with knowledge, skills, and techniques that will allow them to provide effective counseling services to a broad range of clients. Professional competencies, as established by state and national accreditation organizations, serve as the fundamental foundation of the courses and experiences that are required for pursuit of a career in the field of counseling. The Counseling Program provides courses, experiences, activities, guidance, and mentoring to students in order to further their study of the field of counseling. All counseling students are required to take core courses such as graduate research, standardized assessment, and human growth and development. They further their professional knowledge and personal insight through courses in career counseling, personality and counseling theories, multiculturalism and diversity psychopathology, ethical and legal issues, bilingual and bicultural counseling, mindfulness-based approaches to counseling and program management. The students then develop and demonstrate the necessary mindfulness, self-awareness, sensitivity, empathy, skills and strategies for effective individual and small group counseling through such experiential courses as techniques and group counseling.

Students must choose one of four specialty areas (or emphasis):
- Child, Adolescent and School Counseling
- Community Mental Health Counseling
- Couples and Family Counseling
- Gerontology and Counseling the Older Adult

Each specialty emphasis consists of at least four advanced knowledge and skill courses (12 semester credit hours). The capstone experiences for all students in the Counseling Program are the Practicum Counseling and the Internship in Counseling. These university and community-based fieldwork experiences require students to accrue direct face-to-face counseling experiences. Prior to graduating, all students must successfully pass Comprehensive Oral Examination; a ninety-minute oral examination by the Counseling faculty.
The Counseling Program has specific policies and procedures which provide students with a sequential, growth-oriented progression of courses to take; students are fully responsible for knowing and following these policies and procedures. The Counseling Program does not prepare students for advanced levels of teaching or initial levels of educational administration, but rather a distinctly different profession. Counseling is the art and science of helping others help themselves. It is not an appropriate career field for all graduate students. In the process of pursuing professional training in counseling, many students discover that they are not “a good fit” for the counseling profession. The faculty members of the Counseling Program provide continuous, honest and pragmatic feedback to each student regarding progress and suitability in the program and the profession.

Counseling Program Philosophy

The Counseling Program a Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande educates students within an integrated culturally relevant leadership-practitioner model. This empowers students to become successful professional counselors in a dynamic world and evolving profession. The Counseling Program is structured to ensure that graduate students develop a professional identity and master the knowledge and skills to practice effectively. Faculty members challenge, encourage and support students to develop an ethically informed professional identity, a disciplined professional curiosity about human performance, human possibility, and human relating, and an efficacious commitment to professional service.

Goals of the Counseling Program

The faculty members of the Counseling Program strive toward achievement of the following programmatic and training goals:

♦ Develop and maintain a curriculum based on current knowledge and empirical research concerning the counseling and human development needs of a bicultural and bilingual society with its own vast diversity.

♦ Challenge and support the student’s and the faculty member’s grow thinking human understanding, personal dignity, mindfulness, ethnic identity, and productive interpersonal interactions on all levels.

♦ Preserve and promote the ongoing examination of the interplay between culture-specific knowledge and counseling effectiveness.

♦ Achieve and sustain excellence as a counselor preparation program as defined by state and national accreditation and credentialing standards, as well as unique regional cultural and linguistic characteristics.

♦ Plan and provide excellent instruction, role-modeling, supervision and advisement.

♦ Devise and participate in relevant research, scholarly contributions, and community service that benefit students, families, and the communities of South Texas.
Organize and facilitate professional collaboration and networking between current graduate students in the Counseling Program and alumni who serve as counseling professionals in South Texas.

Counseling Program Objectives
Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the Counseling Program, the candidates for the Degree of Master of Education in Counseling, will clearly and unambiguously demonstrate to the Counseling faculty that they:

- Understand traditional and contemporary personality and counseling theories and can apply appropriate counseling interventions and strategies in individual and small group counseling.

- Identify and utilize basic assessment principles related to standardized assessments and designing an appropriate treatment plan.

- Comprehend the role and function of the counselor in a variety of work settings.

- Know and apply the professional standards of practice and the relevant code of ethics.

- Attend to their own personal growth, as well as that of their students and client through utilizing supervision, valuing interpersonal feedback, and engaging in mindful self-examination.

- Possess the knowledge and skills necessary to practice as a highly competent counseling professional.

- Employ personal self-awareness and professional sensitivity to the divergent values, behaviors, traditions, and counseling needs of all students and clients regardless of gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, ability, language, religion, ethnicity, or race.

- Engage in compassionate cultural sensitivity by applying core counseling concepts, mindfulness-based skills, and professional practices with diverse populations, in particular, the bilingual and bicultural students and clients living in the South Texas border region.

- Model intellectual curiosity and a strong personal commitment to continually expanding their counseling knowledge and proficiency through lifelong learning and professional development.
Personal Commitment
Immersion in Professional Identity

The Counseling Program emphasizes professional, personal, and academic development as essential components in counselor education and training.

Students must not only excel academically, but must adhere to the professional and ethical standards of the profession, demonstrate effective counseling skills and competencies, and attend to their own personal development as it impacts his or her ability to work effectively and ethically as counseling professionals.

Counseling students are expected to attend to their own social and emotional development through extensive self-reflection and mindfulness. They must be open to new and divergent ideas, willing to examine their own values and assumptions, able to receive critical feedback, and capable of engaging in personal growth and transformation. At times this will involve examining one’s own life experiences and facing one’s own emotional issues. Willingness to do this important personal work is an integral part of any counselor’s training.

Therefore, graduation from the Counseling Program requires that students successfully complete the academic and experiential requirements with mindful regard to both professional and personal development. Students must, in the professional judgment of the faculty, understand and behave in accordance with the professional and ethical standards, meet the requisite counseling competencies and skills to work as an effective professional counselor, and be free from any psychological or emotional impairment that may act as a barrier to effective professional practice.

Throughout the counseling course work and the practical experiences, the faculty members regularly review student progress on the following basic qualities:

- Openness to new ideas
- Flexibility
- Cooperativeness with others
- Willingness to accept and use feedback
- Awareness of own impact on others
- Ability to deal with conflict
- Ability to accept personal responsibility
- Ability to express feelings effectively and appropriately
- Attention to ethical and legal consideration
- Initiative and motivation
- Development of professional skills and competencies
- Psychological functioning and mindful self-management
Graduate Admission Requirements

University wide regulations with regard to graduate admissions, course load, and Degree requirements are found in the Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande Catalog. The catalog is most easily accessed online https://www.sulross.edu/page/2454/student-handbook. All regulations governing graduate admissions are designed to equal or exceed the minimum criteria recommended by the Commission on the Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). All regulations regarding admission, retention, and completion are minimum, and programs, departments, and colleges may prescribe more stringent requirements. Applicants are advised to check with the Counseling Program faculty if they have any questions or concerns regarding admission to the Counseling Program at Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande.

Students interested in applying for admission to the Counseling Program must first complete an official application for admission to the Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande Graduate Studies with the Office of Admissions and Records (http://www.sulross.edu/page/2203/graduate-admissions). The Apply Texas common graduate studies application can be accessed and completed online: https://www.applytexas.org/adappc/gen/c_start.WBX. When all transcripts and required documents have been received at the Office of Admissions and Records at Sul Ross State University-Middle Rio Grande, a decision will be made regarding acceptance into Graduate Studies. At this point, the student applicant will be notified of the status of her/his application and outcome of that decision and the counseling program coordinator will be contacted to initiate the Counseling Program Departmental admission process.

Counseling Program Admission

The counseling program coordinator will be contacted once you are accepted into graduate school, and the coordinator will make contact to direct the admission process. All students are required to complete and submit the following documents to the counseling program coordinator at samuel.garcia@sulross.edu after initial contact. Documents include:

- A brief life statement the depicts the origins and motivation to become a counselor; life’s journey or experiences that have cultivated your personality and your goal associated with working in a counseling profession.

- Review, acknowledge and submit the Professional Informed Consent. (See Appendix A)

- Register for the at General Record Examination. When registering for the GRE you will be asked where you want your test scores sent. You must indicate Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande by using the code 003625. Completion of the GRE is a requirement for all students who want to pursue graduate studies in the Counseling Program; there are no exceptions to this rule. The Graduate Record Examination must be completed prior to the completion of 12 semester credit hours of Counseling Program courses. It is the student’s responsibility to make sure that the GRE scores are received in both the Office of Admissions and Records and the Department of Education at Sul Ross Middle Rio Grande.
• Complete and email the Interpersonal Communication Skills Inventory Screen. (See Appendix B) and the Interpersonal Reactivity Index Screen. (See Appendix C).

• After receiving all the documents above, the counseling program coordinator will contact you to schedule a formal interview to review the documents you submitted, review your selected degree specialty and the necessary requirements, program process structure, certification requirements (if applicable) and licensure requirement after graduation.

Applying for the Degree Plan

After receiving a letter of acceptance to Counseling Program, the student must then request an Application for the corresponding Degree Plan (See Appendix D) through the Department of Education office at Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande in Uvalde. This form can be completed online, saved to your computer and then emailed to Ms. Loretta Armistead, Administrative Assistant in the Department of Education (larmistead@sulross.edu).

Once all the above requirements have been fulfilled, a formal degree plan will be filed and sent to the student by the Chair of the Department of Education at Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande. This becomes the document that formally establishes the student’s educational relationship with Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande, the Department of Education, and the Counseling Program. This provides the graduate student with a clear educational plan of action. For further information on submitting the Application for Degree Plan, students can contact the Coordinator of the Counseling Program or the Administrative Assistant in the Department of Education in Uvalde.

Limitations on Transfer Courses

Please be aware that there is no automatic transfer of classes from other institutions or other programs. A request for transfer of hours from another institution must be made to the Coordinator of the Counseling Program prior to applying for the degree plan. Students are not allowed to apply toward the master’s degree more than twelve semester credit hours of approved course work, and all transfer requests must be approved by the Counseling faculty advisor and the Chair of the Department of Education. In order to be considered for transfer into the Master’s in Counseling the grade must be at least a B, the course must clearly be graduate level from an accredited university, and the course cannot be more than six years old by the time the student expects to graduate. No transfer requests will be considered for Personality and Counseling Theories (EDUC5314), Techniques of Counseling I (EDUC6321), Techniques of Counseling II (EDUC6322), Group Counseling (EDUC 7315), Practicum in Counseling (EDUC 7316) or Internship in Counseling (EDUC7317). These courses and fieldwork experiences must be completed in the Counseling Program at Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande.

Master of Education in Counseling

The course requirements for the Master of Education in Counseling (M.Ed. Counseling) consist of a minimum of sixty (60) semester credit hours of courses and fieldwork experiences. Students must select at least one of the four specialty emphases. All students are required to successfully complete (with a final grade of B or better) Research Methodology (EDUC 5301) within the first twelve semester credit hours of course work, and students are
encouraged to successfully complete the additional two Common Foundations Courses within the first two semesters of program matriculation.

Foundation Courses (9 semester credit hours)
EDUC 5301 Research Methodology
EDUC 5315 Standardized Assessment
EDUC 6318 Principles Advanced Human Growth and Development

Counseling Core Courses (39 semester credit hours)
EDUC 5313 Career Counseling
EDUC 5314 Personality and Counseling Theories
EDUC 6318 Multiculturalism and Diversity in Counseling
EDUC 6319 Psychopathology
EDUC 6333 Ethical, Legal and Professional Issues in Counseling
EDUC 6340 Bilingual and Bicultural Counseling
EDUC 6344 Mindfulness-Based Approaches to Counseling
EDUC 7302 Management of Counseling Programs

EDUC 6321 Techniques I (Experiential)
EDUC 6322 Techniques II (Experiential)
EDUC 7315 Group Counseling (Experiential)

EDUC 7316 Practicum 100 hrs. (Fieldwork)
EDUC 7317 Internship 600 hrs. (Fieldwork)

Specialty-Related Courses

Students must select at least one of the four specialty emphases when applying for the degree plan:

♦ Child, Adolescent and School Counseling Specialty
♦ Community Mental Health Counseling Specialty
♦ Couples and Family Counseling Specialty
♦ Gerontology and Counseling Older Adults Specialty

CHILD, ADOLESCENT AND SCHOOL COUNSELING

Students pursuing the 60-hour master’s degree in Child, Adolescent and School Counseling must complete the following:

1. Acknowledge admission within 7 days by signing acknowledgement and register with TEA by contacting the graduate certification office.

2. Must have two (2) credible years of teaching experience as a school teacher before the application for issuance of certification. (Students who meet this requirement are able to substitute EDUC 6320 Marriage and Family Therapy and EDUC 6323 Substance Use, Abuse and Addiction for courses offered. Students not meeting the criteria will be
advised to take EDUC 6320 and EDUC 6323 Substance use, abuse and addiction to sit for the LPC exam after graduation.

3. Structured field-based training must be focused on actual school-based experiences, and it will commence during the internship phase. The practicum field experience is required that hours are acquired at one of the SRSU-MRG clinics.

4. All **Experiential** and **Fieldwork work** must be approved before commencing the experiential and practical fieldwork experience.

**Foundation Courses (9 hours)**
EDUC 5301 Research Methodology  
EDUC 5315 Standardized Assessment  
EDUC 6308 Principles Advanced Human Growth and Development

**Core Courses (24 hours)**
EDUC 5313 Career Counseling  
EDUC 5314 Personality and Counseling Theories  
EDUC 6318 Multiculturalism and Diversity in Counseling  
EDUC 6319 Psychopathology (**Concurrent with Fieldwork Experience**)  
EDUC 6333 Ethical, Legal & Professional Issues  
EDUC 6340 Bilingual & Bicultural Counseling  
EDUC 6344 Mindfulness-Based Approaches  
EDUC 7302 Management of Counseling Programs

**Specialty Courses (12 hours)**
EDUC 6320 Substance Use, Abuse and Addiction Counseling  
EDUC 6323 Marriage and Family Counseling  
EDUC 6332 Consultation for Professional School Counselors  
AND  
EDUC 6330 Play Therapy  
OR  
EDUC 6346 Counseling At-Risk Youth

**Experiential Block (9 hours) ** *Prerequisites EDUC 5314, 6318, 6333*
EDUC 6321 Techniques of Counseling I  
EDUC 6322 Techniques of Counseling II  
EDUC 7315 Group Counseling

**Practical Experience (6 hours) ** *Prerequisites EDUC 6319, 6321 & 7315*
EDUC 7316 Practicum in Counseling (100 hrs.) **All fieldwork must be completed at an SRSU-MRG clinic.**

EDUC 7317 Internship in Counseling (600 hrs.) **At least 160 hours of fieldwork MUST be completed at an accredited school and requires approval before commencing fieldwork experience.**

**Total Hours= 60**
COMMUNITY AND MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Students pursuing the 60-hour Master of Education with a specialty in Community Mental Health Counseling will become eligible to take the National Counselor Examination for Licensure and Certification (NCE) upon completion of all courses.

**Foundation Courses (9 hours)**
- EDUC 5301 Research Methodology
- EDUC 5315 Standardized Assessment
- EDUC 6308 Principles Advanced Human Growth and Development

**Core Courses (24 hours)**
- EDUC 5313 Career Counseling
- EDUC 5314 Personality and Counseling Theories
- EDUC 6318 Multiculturalism and Diversity in Counseling
- EDUC 6319 Psychopathology
- EDUC 6333 Ethical, Legal & Professional Issues
- EDUC 6340 Bilingual & Bicultural Counseling
- EDUC 6344 Mindfulness-Based Approaches
- EDUC 7302 Management of Counseling Programs

**Professional Counseling Specialty Courses (15 hours)**
- EDUC 6320 Substance Use, Abuse and Addiction Counseling
- EDUC 6323 Marriage and Family Counseling
- EDUC 6350 Counseling and the Neurosciences
  AND
- EDUC 6342 Counseling for Crisis, Trauma & Disaster Counseling
  OR
- EDUC 6352 Community Treatment Planning & Mental Health Advocacy

**Experiential Block (9 hours) * Prerequisites EDUC 5314, 6318, 6333**
- EDUC 6321 Techniques of Counseling I
- EDUC 6322 Techniques of Counseling II
- EDUC 7315 Group Counseling

**Practical Experience (6 hours) * Prerequisites EDUC 6319, 6321, & 7315**
- EDUC 7316 Practicum in Counseling (100 hrs.)
- EDUC 7317 Internship in Counseling (600 hrs.)

Total Hours= 60

MARRIAGE, COUPLES AND FAMILY COUNSELING

Students pursuing the 60-hour master’s degree in Couples and Family Counseling must complete the following:

Students pursuing the 60-hour master’s degree in Marriage, Couples and Family Counseling may sit for both the Licensed professional Counselor NCE and Licensed Marriage and
Family Therapist Exams as described in TAC, Title 22, Part 35, Chapter §801.113(d) and (e) with minimum course content as described in §801.114.

**Foundation Courses (9 hours)**
EDUC 5301 Research Methodology
EDUC 5315 Standardized Assessment
EDUC 6308 Principles Advanced Human Growth and Development

**Core Courses (24 hours)**
EDUC 5313 Career Counseling
EDUC 5314 Personality and Counseling Theories
EDUC 6318 Multiculturalism and Diversity in Counseling
EDUC 6319 Psychopathology
EDUC 6333 Ethical, Legal & Professional Issues
EDUC 6340 Bilingual & Bicultural Counseling
EDUC 6341 Mindfulness-Based Approaches
EDUC 7302 Management of Counseling Programs

**Specialty Courses (15 hours)**
EDUC 6320 Substance Use, Abuse and Addiction Counseling
EDUC 6323 Marriage and Family Counseling

AND
EDUC 6326 Advanced Strategies in Couples & Family

OR
EDUC 6327 Marriage, Divorce and Family Mediation

OR
EDUC 6364 Counseling and Human Sexuality

**Experiential Block (9 hours) * Prerequisites EDUC 5314, 6318, 6333**
EDUC 6321 Techniques of Counseling I
EDUC 6322 Techniques of Counseling II
EDUC 7315 Group Counseling

**Practical Experience (6 hours) * Prerequisites EDUC 6319, 6321 & 7315**
EDUC 7316 Practicum in Counseling (100 hrs.)
EDUC 7317 Internship in Counseling (600 hrs.) MFT Licensure requires 12 months minimum

**Total Hours= 60**

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**GERONTOLOGY - COUNSELING THE OLDER ADULT**

Students pursuing the 60-hour master’s degree in counseling are required to make official application to Middle Rio Grande Graduate Studies with the Office of Admissions and Records. Once the application is processed, the applicant must take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). This must be accomplished within the first 12 hours of graduate coursework in the program.

**Common Foundation (9 hours) Required for all specialties**
EDUC 5301 Research Methodology
EDUC 5315 Standardized Assessment
EDUC 6308 Principles Advanced Human Growth and Development

**Counseling Core Courses (24 hours)**
EDUC 5313 Career Counseling
EDUC 5314 Personality and Counseling Theories
EDUC 6318 Multiculturalism and Diversity in Counseling
EDUC 6319 Psychopathology
EDUC 6333 Ethical, Legal & Professional Issues
EDUC 6340 Bilingual & Bicultural Counseling
EDUC 6344 Mindfulness-Based Approaches
EDUC 7302 Management of Counseling Programs

**Professional Counseling Specialty Courses (12 hours)**
EDUC 6320 Substance Use, Abuse and Addiction Counseling *(Required)*
EDUC 6323 Marriage and Family Counseling *(Required)*
EDUC 6350 Counseling and the Neurosciences
AND
EDUC 6360 Assessment and Counseling of the Older Adult
OR
EDUC 6362 Death, Dying & Bereavement Counseling

**Experiential Block (9 hours) * Prerequisites EDUC 5314, 6318, 6319, 6333**
EDUC 6321 Techniques of Counseling I
EDUC 6322 Techniques of Counseling II
EDUC 7315 Group Counseling

**Practical Experience (6 hours) * Prerequisites EDUC 6321, 6322 & 7315**
EDUC 7316 Practicum in Counseling (100 hrs.)
EDUC 7317 Internship in Counseling (600 hrs.)

**Total Hours= 60**

Counseling students are free to pursue additional specialties and/or take additional electives in addition to the four courses required for the primary emphasis indicated on the degree plan. Applicants will discuss their specialty selection of choice with faculty members during the interview. New students are welcome to discuss specialty specifics with the Counseling Program faculty. Any one of the four specialty areas satisfy the training requirements for submission of initial application as a professional counselor in the state of Texas. Following attainment of the master’s degree, the applicant must earn a passing score on the *National Counselor Examination for Licensure and Certification (NCE)* and then complete a minimum of 3000 hours of supervised counseling experience after earning the degree.

Those who intend to pursue certification as a Professional School Counselor must have at least two years of credible teaching experience, as indicated in the *Child, Adolescent and School Counseling Emphasis prior to requesting the issuance of school counselor certification*, and earn a passing score on the *Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES)* for School Counseling. A student seeking certification, and who does not have the required credible experience will be placed in a Community Mental Health Counselor specialty until the service requirement is met. At which time the student will contact the certification office at SRU-MRG to enroll with *TEA*. A practice exam will be encouraged prior to commencing Internship Fieldwork.
Those who intend to pursue licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist may sit for both the Licensed professional Counselor NCE and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist Exams as described in TAC, Title 22, Part 35, Chapter §801.113 (d) and (e) with minimum course content as described in §801.114; an educational equivalency courses must be completed as indicated in the Educational Equivalency Form (See Appendix E) must be completed. The student must complete the Couples and Family Counseling specialty, satisfy the state practice requirements, and earn a passing score on the National Examination in Marital and Family Therapy (NEMFT) which is administered by the Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Board (AMFTRB).

Prospective Counseling students, applicants for admission to the Counseling Program and new Counseling students are encouraged to consider the projected employment trends in the state of Texas when contemplating one or more of the specialty tracks. In Texas, the employment outlook indicates that they need for geriatric counselors and therapists will increase more than 35% through the year 2025. The demand for community mental health counselors, in agency or private practice settings, will grow more than 25% through the year 2020; while the need for professional school counselors will rise by 30%. The demand for marriage and family counselors and therapists is expected to rise by 27%; while the need for counselors and therapists with strong backgrounds in substance abuse and addiction will grow by at least 20%.

### Schedule Planning

The major pathway to success in the Counseling Program is to maintain routine Communication with faculty. The faculty members in the Counseling Program are available to students by appointment through a wide variety of media and informational technologies: Email, telephone, text messaging, social media, site-based availability hours, virtual cyber connectivity (Skype or Face Time), and the Collaborate feature of Blackboard.

Additionally, students new to the Counseling Program may wish to consult and/or seek guidance from the Graduate Teaching Assistants (TA’s). Regular contact with the Counseling faculty and the TA’s is important so that you can complete the Counseling Program in a timely fashion. Frequent email, text, and telephone contact are highly encouraged.

### Priorities and Prerequisites

All students must complete EDUC 5301 Research Methodology within the first twelve (12) semester credit hours of graduate coursework. Students are encouraged to complete the other two Common Foundations Courses (EDUC 5315 & EDUC 6308) during the first year of matriculation. Therefore, these three courses should be of priority during the initial semesters of graduate studies:

All students must complete the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) within the first twelve (12) semester credit hours of graduate coursework. Although there are no minimum score requirements, students will be prevented for registering for courses beyond the initial twelve hours until such time that they complete the GRE requirement.

Many of the experiential-based and advanced skill courses have the prerequisite of the successful completion of Personality and Counseling Theories (EDUC 5314) with
a final grade of B or better. Therefore, it should be a priority to complete Personality and Counseling Theories within the initial semesters of graduate studies.

All students are required to take the course, Bilingual and Bicultural Counseling (EDUC 6340). In order to register for this course, students must have successfully completed the prerequisite of Multiculturalism and Diversity in Counseling (EDUC 6318).

### Counseling Skill Hierarchy

Once students have successfully completed the three Common Foundations Courses, the GRE, and Personality and Counseling Theories (EDUC 5314), they are able to enroll in the **Experiential Block** during fall semester. This consists of two highly intensive experiential courses: Techniques of Counseling I (EDUC6321) and Group Counseling (EDUC 7315). These two courses must be taken concurrently. There are no exceptions to this rule. This will require all students to be in Uvalde at least two evenings a week during one fall semester of the graduate program, unless otherwise specified by the professor. These courses are only offered in the fall and only offered in Uvalde, unless otherwise specified by the professor. These courses are not delivered via teleconference or web-based instruction. We recommend that students avoid taking any other courses while they are completing the **Experiential Block** (EDUC6321&EDUC7315). Students who are not employed on a full-time basis may take one additional course during the fall semester of the **Experiential Block**.

Upon successfully completing Techniques of Counseling I (EDUC6321) and Group Counseling (EDUC7315) with final grades of B or better, students must enroll in Techniques of Counseling II (EDUC 6322) during the spring semester of the same academic year. If a student successfully passes the two fall experiential courses but receives a final grade of C in Techniques of Counseling II (EDUC 6322) in the spring semester, the student will be required to participate (without registering or being officially enrolled) in the two fall experiential courses the following academic year prior to registering for and retaking the spring course of Techniques of Counseling II (EDUC 6322). This requirement exists for the purposes of establishing safety, trust and cohesion in the cohort group of student-counselors. Such conditions are essential for effective counseling skill development. Therefore, Techniques of Counseling II(EDUC6322) must be taken consecutively, in the same academic year, after successfully completing Techniques of Counseling I (EDUC 6321) within the same academic year. Any exceptions to this policy must have instructor’s approval.

### Clinical Fieldwork Experiences

After successfully completing Techniques of Counseling II (EDUC 6322) with a final grade of B or better, students may enroll in the Practicum in Counseling (EDUC 7316). The Practicum requires student-counselors to accumulate 100 clock hours of experience, with a minimum of 40 direct contact (face-to-face counseling) hours. Typically, students take two or more semesters to complete the Practicum requirements. Once students begin the Practicum they must maintain continuous enrollment each semester (and summer session) until fulfilling the Practicum requirements. Students earn a final grade
of PR (in progress) for each semester of Practicum until all requirements are completed, at which point the student is granted a final letter grade based on his or her counseling performance.

Students pursuing a specialty in child, adolescent and school counseling are required to acquire his or her practicum hours at an SRSU-MRG clinic site or other clinical setting. The Texas Education Agency requires students to acquire 160 practicum (Fieldwork) hours at an approved school. Students often get confused with TEAs definition of practicum and the Sul Ross State University-Middle Rio Grande definition. SRSU-MRG defines practicum as novice fieldwork experience with close supervision by a field faculty supervisor and Internship as advanced fieldwork with supervision by a Faculty Field Supervisor and a Site supervisor. Students pursuing the Child, Adolescent and School Counseling degree with adhere and annotate a brief focus, intervention and/or outcome in the weekly log based on The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Program. (See Appendix D in the Practicum handbook.

A field supervisor is a faculty member supervising the fieldwork experience, while a site supervisor means an approved supervisor designated by the organization where field hours are earned and have equitable or adequate credential, training or education to supervise the fieldwork experience at the designated site.

Consequently, a student seeking to become a school counselor will acquire his or her required school related 160 hrs. of the 600 fieldwork hours at an approved school while enrolled in EDUC 7317 Internship at the SRSU-MRG.

Practicum and Internship

Practicum and internship courses are designed to provide student counselors with authentic field-based professional experiences. The Practicum in Counseling (EDUC 7316) allows student counselors the opportunity to engage in supervised practice in counseling and psychotherapy in order to enhance their skills and development as professional counselors. To successfully complete one three-semester credit hour Practicum in Counseling, the student counselor must complete a minimum total of 100 clock hours of counseling experience, with a minimum of 40 direct-contact clock hours (face-to-face counseling), under the direct clinical supervision of a qualified professional in the field of counseling or mental health, as well as the Counseling Program faculty member.

The intensity of the weekly time commitment for the practicum experience is a highly individual decision. Students are encouraged to work at a pace that allows for equanimity and balance between other courses, work, and family demands. Since student counselors rarely, if ever, complete the required clock hours in one regular semester, they are expected to maintain continuous enrollment in the Practicum in Counseling (EDUC 7316) each semester until all requirements and fieldwork hours are met.

The Practicum in Counseling can only be taken after successful completion (i.e., a grade of B or better) of Techniques of Counseling II (EDUC 6322) and Group Counseling (EDUC 7315), the completion of a minimum of 36 semester credit hours of required counseling courses, and/or the approval of the Coordinator of the Counseling Program. Before engaging indirect counseling contact, the student-counsel or must show proof of
professional liability insurance. Practicum is not structured like a traditional course. The student-counselor’s primary responsibility is to practice the science and skills of counseling in a school, agency, and/or institutional setting. The practicum counselor is responsible for maintaining regular weekly contact with the university instructor via an online journal blog, telephone, email, or in-person meetings.

Students must maintain continuous enrollment in the Practicum in Counseling (EDUC 7316) each semester until all course requirements have been satisfied. If the student is not able to successfully complete all practicum requirements by the end of a semester or a summer session he or she is given a final grade of PR (in progress) for that semester of practicum work. At the end of the semester in which all requirements are satisfied, the practicum counselor will be awarded a final letter grade. The practicum experience should not be rushed. Students are encouraged to pace the practicum work in appropriate balance with other career and life demands.

Upon success Internship in Counseling (EDUC 7317). This field work experience provides advanced students with supervised practice in counseling and psychotherapy in sites representing the student counselor’s desired professional setting. During the fall semester of 2017, counseling interns must accumulate 300 total clock hours of counseling experience with at least 150 hours of direct face-to-face counseling contact. As with the practicum, interns counselors are required to maintain continuous enrollment until all requirements are met.

The Internship in Counseling focuses on the implementation of the role of the counselor. Interns will be working under the supervision of a site supervisor with the oversight of the university instructor. As the Counseling Program moves toward attaining national accreditation by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the requirements of the Internship in Counseling will gradually be increased until the nationally required total of 600 contact hours is achieved. During the fall of 2017, interns will be required to accumulate 300 clock hours of counseling-related experiences with a minimum of 150 clock hours of direct face-to-face counseling contact. Students who plan to pursue licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist need the 250 direct hour total, with at least 150 being direct face-to-face counseling and therapy with couples and families. In order to implement these changes gradually, the contact hour requirements will increase 50 hours each semester until the 2019-2020 academic year when the total 600 contact hours will have been fully implemented and integrated.

Students often ask about summer vacation and how that would affect taking the Practicum in Counseling or the Internship in Counseling during the summer. The answer is simple: Take your vacations as planned and don’t worry. The practicum and internship experiences are totally individualized and completed based on the student’s work and family schedules. Therefore, if you are planning a family getaway or a personal mindfulness retreat during the summer, just be clear with both your supervising counselor and the university faculty member about your intentions to be in Jamaica for two weeks in the middle of July. You will still need to register for the practicum or internship during both summer sessions; this is a legal and ethical requirement.

For those counseling students who work full-time as teachers, the summer sessions can offer opportunities to accumulate direct contact counseling hours. The direct contact hours are the most difficult for students to collect since they require that you conduct
individual or small group counseling in the manner of Techniques I, Techniques II and Group Counseling. Students never struggle with collecting the indirect hours, as those come very easily. If you are not working during the summer months, then you would be able to volunteer at one of the local schools to provide intensive counseling services for summer school children. If you are required to workfull-time during the summer months, then you will want to consider fieldwork settings that allow for evening and weekend counseling.

Upon successfully completing the Practicum in Counseling, the student will be able to Demonstrate the therapeutic application of professional counseling skills through initiating, maintaining, and successfully terminating counseling relationships in both individual and small group settings. The Internship in Counseling (EDUC 7317) provides advanced graduate students with the invaluable opportunity to be immersed in the professional practice of counseling. Interns engage in counseling, psychotherapy and related professional duties in school, institution, and/or agency settings with clinical supervision by university instructors and site-based supervisors.

**College and Community Counseling Services**

In the fall of 2016, the Counseling Program at Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande (SRSU-MRG) officially implemented a valuable new component to both the Practicum in Counseling (EDUC 7316) and the Internship in Counseling (EDUC7317). This new addition is evolving slowly but steadily. The College and Community Counseling Services provides no-cost counseling services to students, staff and faculty of both SRSU-MRG and Southwest Texas Junior College at three of the SRSU-MRG sites (DelRio, Eagle Pass & Uvalde).

Promotions and advertisements of the community-based no-cost counseling services are intended to familiarize the communities within the fifteen southwest Texas counties served by Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande and gradually succeed in reducing the social stigma often associated with counseling and psychotherapy.

The College and Community Counseling Services provides culturally and linguistically relevant mindfulness-based counseling services to children, adolescents, adults, couples, and families who might not have mental health insurance or be able to afford fee for service mental health costs.

Practicum and internship counselors are the service providers for the College and Community Counseling Services and in collaboration with counseling faculty members and alumni of the Counseling Program, on-site clinical supervision is provided. The RGC administration has provided secure and confidential office space for the sole use of the Counseling Program. All practicum and internship counselors are required to allocate at least five (5) hours of available counseling time at an RGC site of geographic convenience. When potential clients initiate contact with the services, they are assigned to specific counselors based on geographic proximity and/or client presenting concerns.

As an example, let’s imagine that Nick Garcia is a practicum counselor who lives in the Eagle Pass area. Nick’s “day job” is that of an elementary teacher. He is accumulating contact hours under the supervision of the head counselor at his elementary school. Additionally, Nick makes himself available after school on Mondays and Wednesdays for the College and Community Counseling Services. If a client from the Eagle Pass area contacts the Counseling
Program requesting services, Nick will receive an email from the Coordinator of the Counseling Program or one of the TA's notifying him to contact the client and schedule an initial intake session.

Once Nick contacts the client he must schedule the upcoming counseling session on the VALT system and consult the administrative assistant in Eagle Pass who is charged with scheduling the counseling office at that site. When Nick has scheduled his appointment and then confirmed with the client, he will send a notification email to the Coordinator of the Counseling Program and the TA’s with the client’s name as well as the date and time of the initial appointment.

Like everything new, this project will take time to evolve and thoroughly integrate into the mental health services of the southwest Texas communities and constituencies. The likelihood of practicum and internship counselors accumulating a significant number of direct contact hours through this project during the 2017-2018 academic year is fairly low. However, the College and Community Counseling Services will evolve rapidly and thereby serve a pronounced need in the counties and communities of Southwest Texas. Practicum and internship counselors should carefully examine their personal schedules so that they can volunteer at least five hours per week to the College and Community Counseling Services if and when there is sufficient client demand. The SRSU-MRG sites are open from 8:00 am through 9:00 pm (sessions must end by 8:45pm) Monday through Thursday, and 8:00 am through 5:00 pm (sessions must end before 4:45 pm) on Fridays. Unfortunately, at this point, we’re not able to schedule counseling appointments on the weekends because of building security issues.

**Project Mission Statement**

The mission of the College and Community Counseling Services project is to support the intellectual, emotional, social, and cultural development of Sul Ross State University-Middle Rio Grande (SRSU-MRG) and Southwest Texas Junior College (SWTJC) students, staff and faculty by offering a variety of counseling services. Additionally, the program provides no-cost counseling services to the various Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande service communities and area school districts. The College and Community Counseling Services functions as a vital component in the training of graduate students enrolled in the Counseling Program at Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande.

The services provided by practicum and internship counselors (advanced graduate students in the Counseling Program) are designed to assist college students, staff and faculty, as well as community members (children, adolescents, adults, couples and families) in resolving personal difficulties, and acquiring the skills, attitudes, abilities, and knowledge that will enable them to live richer and more meaningful lives. All students, staff, faculty and community members are welcome to participate in the College and Community Counseling Services, regardless of race, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, age, religion, citizenship, language or disability.

The cultural and linguistic fusion of South Texas gives rise to the unique and relevant specialties of the Counseling Program: Biculturalism and bilingualism. The practicum and internship counselors who provide the various mindfulness-based counseling services foster and develop bicultural and bilingual competence to promote awareness of and empathy for the unique and rich cultural environment of rural South Texas.
Project Structure and Organization

In the final semesters of education and clinical training in the Counseling Program, all counseling graduate students are required to complete the Practicum in Counseling (EDUC 7316) and the Internship in Counseling (EDUC 7317). Each semester, every graduate student enrolled in either the Practicum in Counseling or the Internship in Counseling must be available for a minimum of five hours per week for counseling services at the campus of their choice (Del Rio, Eagle Pass or Uvalde). The practicum and internship counselors will be assigned clients based on geographic proximity and the presenting concerns of the client. Each counselor is responsible for managing his/her own schedule of counseling appointments by reserving the counseling room via the schedule platform of the VALT system and clearly communicating with the designated administrative assistant at the particular campus site. At the beginning of the spring semester, as a component of Techniques of Counseling II (EDUC 6322), students must have one of the SRSU-MRG IT Specialists install the Barracuda SSL VPN and Remote Access program on their personal computer in order to access the VALT system remotely. Once the student has Barracuda, she or he is able to access the VALT system using the following URL: https://172.18.1.222/login and logging on with his or her Sul Ross credentials. In the event that students need information or assistance with the VALT system, they can consult the training program a http://ipivs.com/wiki/Valt_User_Training.

Once a counseling appointment is entered on the VALT system master schedule and confirmed with the campus site Administrative Assistant, the practicum counselor or intern must send an email to the instructor and the TA’s indicating the client’s name and the date and time of the appointment.

All three counseling rooms are fully equipped with a computer terminal and the digital recording equipment necessary to operate the VALT system. All counseling sessions must be video recorded for the purpose of supervision as well as professional liability. At the beginning of Techniques of Counseling I (EDUC6321) in the fall semester, all students will receive extensive training on the use of the VALT system for scheduling sessions, recording sessions, and uploading and downloading recorded counseling sessions.

At the beginning of each new semester and summer sessions, information about the College and Community Counseling Services is distributed widely to all students, staff and faculty of Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande and Southwest Texas Junior College, as well as to all at-large community members. Methods for promotion of the Project include email announcements, newsletters, college and university web pages, campus/community flyers and brochures, and word-of-mouth. Persons seeking counseling services, or professionals referring someone for counseling or mental health services, can inquire via email at rgccounselors@sulross.edu or contact the Coordinator of the Counseling Program or one of the TA’s.
Project Procedures and Precautions

To schedule the offices designated for the Counseling Program the following procedures will be employed until such time that digital security keypads are installed on the doors of the three counseling offices. The designated offices for the Counseling Program are Room 211 in DelRio, Room B108 in EaglePass, and RoomA111 in Uvalde. Each counseling office is equipped with a digital security keypad in order to access the room. The access codes will be provided at the commencement the first day of your fieldwork experience. Counseling sessions can be scheduled Mondays through Thursdays (when classes are in session) from 8:00 am to 7:30 p (counselor and client must be out of the building prior to 8:45 pm) and Fridays from 8:00 am to 3:45 pm (counselor and client must be out of the building prior to 4:00 pm). The weekly schedule for each site is available on the VALT website so that counselors can reserve a particular room at a particular time. Currently, the Administrative Assistants responsible for scheduling and securing the counseling offices are:

(830-703-4821) in Del Rio  
(830-758-5004) in Eagle Pass  
(830-279-3002) in Uvalde

Mondays through Fridays, from 8:00am through 5:00pm, the respective administrative assistant will unlock the door to the counseling office at the previously scheduled appointment time. All counselors will schedule the counseling room using the online scheduling system for the specific room. The counselors will then inform the Program Coordinator and the Graduate Teaching Assistants of the date and the time of the scheduled appointment. If the day and time of a counseling appointment are to remain constant for several weeks or months, then the counselor must inform all necessary parties of the scheduling block.

Graduate students are expected to arrive at least fifteen (15) minutes before his or her counseling sessions. For counseling sessions after 5:00pm, the door to the counseling office will be left unlocked so that the counselor who is scheduled for an evening appointment will have access to the room. It is the counselor’s responsibility to notify the Program Coordinator and the Graduate Teaching Assistants of this security-related issue.

Counselors must remember to be out of the campus building by 8:45 pm; not doing so will result in a breach of building security systems thereby setting off the security alarms. Counselors are responsible for reminding clients that licensed/concealed handgun holders are requested to leave their weapons at home or in their vehicle during counseling sessions. A notice of this restriction is posted in each counseling room and included on all consent and disclosure forms related to the College and Community Counseling Services.

Project Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Professional ethical codes and state and federal laws consider the personal information discussed in counseling to be highly confidential. All information gathered in counseling, including the fact that the client (consumer) has made initial contact with the College and Community Counseling Services, is held in strict confidence. Exceptions to this will be discussed by the counselor. The personnel of the College and Community Counseling Services maintain secure and confidential records of all client and consumer contacts, beginning with initial contact and ending with the termination of the services. The minimum
information which is collected and saved electronically on the secure Blackboard site includes the following documentation:

- Date, time and action of the initial client or consumer contact
- Client identifying data and contact information
- Client informed consent or assent for services
- Waivers of confidentiality and authorization or consent for release of information
- Mandated disclosure of confidential information
- Client presenting concerns or primary counseling issues
- Counseling treatment plan
- Dates of counseling sessions and session progress notes
- Formal or informal assessment of client status
- Case related consultations
- Clinical supervision of counselor

**Project Crisis Response**

In the event that a person who either self-referred, or is referred by another, presents potential crisis risk, then the Program Coordinator or one of the Graduate Teaching Assistants will quickly intervene and assign the case to the appropriate available practicum or internship counselor or other advanced graduate student who can see the client within 24 hours of initial contact. Additionally, faculty members, TA’s and clinical supervisors have real-time access to monitor the counseling sessions in progress via the VALT system. This is an important safety measure for both the client and the counselor.

**Video Audio Learning Tool**

Digital video recording is an essential component of counselor training. The Counseling Program at Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande employs cutting-edge technologies to better train counselors and therapists for work in a variety of community settings. Intelligent Video Solutions provides VALT (Video Audio Learning Tool) to capture and stream video and audio content in high definition resolution. The system incorporates the latest technologies in video observation and capture. A counseling room has been designated at each of the primary campus sites—DelRio, Eagle Pass and Uvalde. High definition cameras and audio streams from each of the three counseling rooms are simultaneously recorded with perfect audio-visual synchronization. VALT allows the Counseling Program to record, save and manage a comprehensive training video database.

In compliance with the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and approved by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the video recordings and client data are highly secure through data and video encryption, extensive user permissions and rights, group containers, user access control and a robust audit trail.

A built-in scheduler allows counselors to set up recordings in advance so that they only need to meet the client at the scheduled time and the counseling session is automatically recorded and cataloged with the proper identifying data.

Each of the three designated counseling rooms is equipped with network cameras Combined with high-quality microphones and audio equipment which provide a high-
definition audio and video experience. Counseling session recordings can be initiated via a common Internet browser, a built-in automatic scheduler, or a physical button located in each of the three designated counseling rooms. Each recorded counseling session is stamped with identifying data that allows counselor students and faculty members to easily locate and track specific video content. VALT video is recorded in the standard MP4 format, making session videos easy to share and store.

The VALT system is equipped with features that allow for the input of client level data and case session notations in association with the video record. Counselors can include relevant session information that is necessary for clinical supervision. Markers allow counseling students and faculty members to tag specific points, create notes and annotate during live recordings or during the review and supervision processes. VALT enabled users to quickly search and find the desired session or interview. Videos are available for review seconds after the recording is completed and stream almost instantaneously. All information is completely searchable allowing student-counselors and faculty members to easily identify the specific content they are searching for and quickly play back the video. At the end of the academic year, all recordings are deleted.

**Accessing Counseling Services**

The students, staff and faculty of both Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande (SRSU-MRG and Southwest Texas Junior College are eligible for no-cost counseling services provided by the College and Community Counseling Services. Additionally, all members of the SRSU-MRG service area communities (children, adolescents, adults, couples and families) are eligible for no-cost counseling services provided by the College and Community Counseling Services. The advanced graduate students enrolled in the Counseling Program of SRSU-MRG provide all counseling services as essential components of both the *Practicum in Counseling* (EDUC7316) and *Internship in Counseling* (EDUC7317) learning experiences. The operation and management of the College and Community Counseling Services are overseen and supervised by the Counseling Program faculty members and Graduate Teaching Assistants.

Difficult issues of day-to-day life can easily serve as obstacles and barriers to living a happy and fulfilled life. The practicum and internship counselors associated with the College and Community Counseling Services will assist clients in managing these personal issues and stressful situations. Persons seeking counseling services, or professionals referring someone for counseling or mental health services, can inquire via email at rgcounselors@sulross.edu or contact the Coordinator of the Counseling Program or one of the Graduate Teaching Assistants. Service requests and referrals can be made through email or telephone contact with:

**Dr. Todd T. Russell**

*Professor*

trussell@sulross.edu

(210) 253-0884

**Pursuit of National Accreditation**

The Counseling Program at Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande is laying the foundation for the eventual application for national accreditation. The Council of
Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) accredits professional counseling programs within institutions of higher education throughout the United States. As an accrediting body, CACREP (www.cacrep.org) is committed to the development of standards and procedures that reflect the needs of a dynamic, diverse and complex society. CACREP is dedicated to:

- Encouraging and promoting the continuing development and improvement of preparation programs
- Preparing counseling and related professionals to provide service consistent with the ideal of optimal human development offering specific training, skills, and knowledge in various counseling specialties

CACREP requires foundational training in eight core counseling areas:
1. Professional Identity
2. Social and Cultural Diversity
3. Human Growth and Development
4. Career Development
5. Helping Relationships
6. Group Work
7. Assessment
8. Research and Program Evaluation

Furthermore, CACREP requires additional training in the various counseling emphases and specialties.

The Master of Education in Counseling at Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande is not currently accredited by CACREP. However, the Counseling faculty and university administration is currently preparing to apply for full CACREP accreditation in the very near future. This process will likely result in some revisions and changes to the core requirements of the Counseling Program during the 2020-2021 academic year.

**Counseling Student Advising**

All incoming students are assigned to the Coordinator of the Counseling Program for advising. Students should maintain regular communication with the adviser and the faculty of the Counseling Program. The faculty advisor serves as a source of information and support to incoming students. All students should consult with the Coordinator of the Counseling Program at registration time in order to register for the appropriate courses and experiences. Additionally, students in the Counseling Program are encouraged to seek advising and guidance from any of the faculty members in the Counseling Program. Upon acceptance into Graduate Studies at Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande, all students should contact the Coordinator of the Counseling Program for initial advisement. The major pathway to success in the Counseling Program is to maintain routine and regular contact with the faculty members:

- Dr. Samuel Garcia (samuel.garcia@sulross.edu) (830-734-7732)
- Dr. Todd T. Russell (trussell@sulross.edu) (210-253-0884)
- Dr. Monica Gutierrez (monicag@sulross.edu) (830-279-3021)
Additionally, students new to the Counseling Program may wish to consult and/or seek guidance from Graduate Teaching Assistants.

## Personal Counseling

Graduate students in the Counseling Program are encouraged by the faculty. To seek personal counseling services for themselves during the time they are enrolled in the counsel or preparation program. In keeping with the philosophy that counseling services are beneficial to all persons, not just individuals who have emotional or mental disorders, but for individuals who are functioning effectively as well, graduate students are encouraged to learn about themselves from being a client in a counseling relationship. In addition to self-exploration, being a client provides counseling students with the opportunity to experience what they ask their clients to do, which helps counseling students to empathize more fully with clients who seek counseling services.

## Professional Identity and Behavior

In registering for classes in the Counseling Program at Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande, graduate students accept responsibility for attending scheduled class meetings, completing assignments on time, contributing to class discussions, and fully participating in all experiential learning activities. Counseling faculty members maintain specific attendance and participation requirements for each particular class. Faculty members may impose academic penalties upon absences from some classes and/or experiences; however, such penalties for absences will be a part of each course syllabus and will be distributed to each class at the beginning of each class and a copy filed in the departmental office.

The Counseling Program does not train students for specific job descriptions, but rather provides a comprehensive preparation meeting the national and state standards of professional knowledge and skill in the field of counseling. The Counseling Program has specific policies and procedures which provide students with a sequential, growth-oriented progression of courses to take; students are fully responsible for knowing and following these policies and procedures. This is not a singular academic program to prepare students for advanced levels of teaching or beginning levels of administration, but rather a distinctly different profession entirely. Counseling is not an appropriate career field for all students. In the process of pursuing professional training in counseling, some students discover (or faculty may advise) that they are not appropriate for the counseling field, nor is the Field of Counseling appropriate for them. Faculty of the Counseling Program will provide continuous, honest and pragmatic feedback to each student regarding progress and suitability in this program.

It is the personal and professional responsibility of each and every graduate student in the Counseling Program of Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande to be familiar with the the **Counseling Program Handbook**. This document details and describes all aspects of the Counseling Program, from taking the first courses to passing the Comprehensive Oral Examination and graduating with the Master’s in Counseling.

Unethical behavior (as defined by the *Code of Ethics* of the American Counseling Association; refer to Appendix F) by a student enrolled in any counseling course will result in the exclusion of that student from the Counseling Program of Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande and may subject the student to civil penalties as well. Professional behavior is expected of each and every student at all times across all counseling
courses. Failure to maintain professionalism is considered unethical behavior.

**Counseling Student Evaluation Process**

Graduate students in the Counseling Program are required by university regulation to maintain a cumulative graduate grade point average (GPA) of a 3.0 or better at all times. If a student’s GPA falls below a 3.0, the student will be placed on academic probation by the Director of Admissions and Records for one semester. Failure to remove any grade point deficiencies during this one-semester period will result in suspension from the Counseling Program. Students cannot graduate from the Counseling Program with a final grade of C in any courses included in the degree plan. If a student earns a final grade of C in any course listed under the common foundations, the counseling core courses or the specialty-related courses, she or he is required to retake that course (with the same instructor if available) at a later date and earn a grade of B or better. If a student is placed on academic probation, or earns a final grade of C in a graduate course, the Counseling Program faculty members may request a meeting with the student for the purpose of academic review and program planning. The Master of Education in Counseling degree must be completed within six (6) years from the date of the student’s initial enrollment and matriculation in the Counseling Program. Graduate courses over ten years old at the time of graduation will not be counted toward the M.Ed. in Counseling.

Members of the faculty formally evaluate student fitness and performance at three points in the students’ progression through the program: (1) after successful completion of *Personality and Counseling Theories* (EDUC 5314), (2) prior to enrolling in the *Practicum in Counseling* (EDUC 7316), and (3) during the *Comprehensive Oral Examination*. Additionally, faculty members can request a progress evaluation of any student at any time. During a student progress evaluation meeting, the faculty share observations and assessments of the students’ professional development and performance. Students are evaluated on academic performance, professional development, and personal development. As a result of a progress evaluation the faculty may identify additional help that the student might need in order to be successful in all aspects of the Counseling Program.

Counseling professors will specifically address, both in class and in course syllabi, how students will be evaluated in areas other than their academic performance. Generally, this evaluation will be based on students’ understanding and adherence to professional and ethical behavior, their demonstration of mastery over the relevant professional skills and competencies, and their social, emotional, and interpersonal functioning as relevant to their work as counselors. Faculty members will attempt to identify and address any concerns with a student’s performance as early as possible in the semester. However, if at anytime during the semester, a faculty member identifies a concern with a student, the faculty member will meet with the student on an informal basis to see if some informal remediation can resolve the issue. If the issue cannot be resolved in this manner, the faculty member will request a student progress evaluation meeting with the other faculty in the Counseling Program.

The Counseling Program faculty members will meet and review the student’s performance and recommend a course of action for the student. The Coordinator of the Counseling Program will inform the student in writing of the faculty’s recommendations and notify the student of his/her right to meet with the faculty. If the student requests a personal meeting with the faculty members, then one will be scheduled in a timely fashion. In the final stage of the student progress evaluation, the faculty will recommend one of the three following courses of action:
1. The student’s professional and interpersonal functioning is adequate and the student can continue in the program with no remediation or further concern.

2. The student should undergo some form of specified remediation. The form of the remediation is determined by the faculty members. Examples of remediation include but are not limited to course repetition, denial of advancement to sequenced courses, recommendation to receive personal counseling, increased supervision, written warnings, placement on formal probation, advisement to take a leave of absence, disciplinary action, receiving tutoring, attending special seminars, extra assignment or coursework, attending peer support groups, and repetition of the Practicum in Counseling.

3. The student should be dismissed from the Counseling Program.

If at any point in the process the student does not agree with the recommendations of the faculty, the student may appeal the decision to the Chairperson of the Department of Education at Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande. If the faculty recommend that the student receive some type of remediation and the student agrees to this recommendation a time-based and outcome focused plan will be developed in which clearly documentable steps and actions to be taken by the student to help remediate the issue. A date for a follow-up review procedure is identified to determine if the student has met the goals and expectations of the remediation. At the date indicated, the faculty in the Counseling Program determines the student’s future status in the program based on their assessment of whether the remediation has been successful. The Coordinator of the Counseling Program will inform the student that the remediation has worked, further remediation is required, or the student should be dismissed from the program. If the remediation is successful, then the student continues in the Counseling Program under no further sanction. If it has not been successful, then the faculty either implements additional remediation or moves to dismiss the student from the Counseling Program. If the faculty chooses to dismiss the student from the Counseling Program, this is reported to the student, the Chairperson of the Department of Education, and the Dean of Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande.

Remediation or Removal

Counseling program faculty regularly reviews student goodness of fit for the counseling profession as advised by the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics (Appendix F). The Counseling Program at Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande has developed a formal policy and procedure for remediation or dismissal from the program for non-academic reasons. A student may be terminated from the Counseling Program for non-academic reasons as a result of one or more of the following factors:

1. The student has displayed unprofessional conduct in the university or field placement.
2. The student has exhibited attitudes, values and/or behavior that are grossly inconsistent with the ACA Code of Ethics and the profession of counseling.
3. The student’s mental health is impaired to the extent that the student is unable to meet the expectations of the program. Problem behaviors may include violent behavior, irrational behavior, inappropriate affect or other behavior that interferes with a student’s ability to meet the expectations of the Counseling Program.
4. The student is abusing non-prescription or prescribed substances.
5. The student is not meeting the counselor education program faculty members’ expectations for performance in the field placement. Unacceptable performance in field placements may include, but are not limited to, students not fulfilling their assigned responsibilities for the field placement; consistent tardiness or absence in the field placement; displaying an inability to engage in a professional helping relationship with clients; an inability to appropriately use supervision; violating the ACA Code of Ethics; and/or inappropriate conduct toward clients or agency staff.

6. The student has been engaged in criminal behavior that has resulted in a felony conviction.

7. The student has given false information about himself for herself in the admissions procedure or to any staff associated with the program, including employees of field placements and clients.

8. The student displays unacceptable behavior toward faculty and/or students that undermines the teaching or learning processes.

9. Other behaviors which evidence the student’s inability to adequately handle the demands of professional counseling practice, such as, but not limited to, consistently not meeting deadlines in field or academic settings; consistently being unable to manage personal difficulties so that they do not interfere with the student’s ability to meet academic responsibilities; an inability to engage in self-observation and reflection; and an inability to accept constructive criticism.

**Student Evaluation of the Counseling Program**

All graduate students have the opportunity to evaluate individual courses and Instructors throughout their enrollment. Further, students are given the opportunity to evaluate their practicum placement sites and site supervisors. Graduates of the Counseling Program are contacted shortly after they graduate, and periodically thereafter to solicit their opinions about the Counseling Program, faculty, department, and clinical experiences. Graduates and students currently enrolled in the program are encouraged to provide up-to-date contact information to the Coordinator of the Counseling Program.

**Title V PPOHA Grant:**

**Services to Graduate Students**

Title V Promoting Post Baccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans (PPOHA) program goals include expanding post baccalaureate educational Opportunities by developing five new degree options in college teaching in the concentrations of math, biology, history, English, and political science; creating a scholarship program for graduate students; expanding the counseling program to provide four additional areas of emphasis; and developing graduate academic support services. The four additional areas of emphasis implemented in the counseling program are community and mental health counseling, couples and family counseling, child, adolescent and school counseling, and gerontology and counseling the older adult.

**Graduate Student Support Center**

As part of the Title V PPOHA mission, the Graduate Student Support Center (GSSC) provides graduate students with services and resources that will enhance their academic experience, promote satisfactory progress toward degree completion, and improve skills necessary for their chosen careers. The GSSC promotes an environment that fosters
fruitful engagement among graduate students and faculty, collaborative learning, and preparation for their professional careers.

As a critically important part of a multi-campus university spread out across the southwest Texas region and beyond, the GSSC’s services expand a cross three campus sites: EaglePass, DelRio and Uvalde. Essentially, the “center” encompasses these services as they are spread out among campuses, as opposed to a physical center. Our primary services include writing centers in Eagle Pass, Del Rio, and Uvalde, Smarthinking, and a series of webinars and seminars offered each semester. Free writing assistance is available in our writing Centers located in Uvalde, Eagle Pass, and Del Rio. Smarthinking is our online writing assistance service for students who live in remote areas, or who cannot attend one of the writing centers in their area. While writing centers primarily assist undergraduate students, as they are the greater group, GSSC staff is currently collaborating with faculty and writing center staff to enhance peer tutor training, especially new graduate peer tutors, and to develop other academic support components specifically for graduate students.

The GSSC provides computers in each of our writing centers, including the Study Center in the Medina Valley location, with software exclusively for graduate students. Software includes SPSS (statistics) and writing/language focused software like Scrivener and Grammarly. Each center also provides texts and resources for research, basic writing techniques, and thesis preparation. Our Del Rio campus has a separate computer lab specifically, for graduate students located in room 110 of the Academic Building.

A significant component in the GSSC program is the graduate student course section on Blackboard. Graduate students are automatically enrolled in the course section, “SRSU MRG_GRADUATE.” Students can find this course section under their “MyCourses” menu on Blackboard. In this course section, they can find helpful documents and links regarding scholarships, GRE/GMAT resources, access writing and research resources, attend webinars and book a remote meeting with the Coordinator of the Graduate Student Support Center via Blackboard Collaborate. Additionally, the GSSC offers a series of seminars and webinars presented by staff and faculty, including a graduate student orientation session offered at the beginning of each long semester. APA style, research methods, basic writing techniques, grammar refreshers, and critical reading techniques are among the various subjects covered in seminars and webinars.

The GSSC locations at each of the four Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande campus sites:

◊ **Uvalde Writing Center**  
Southwest Texas Junior College, Fly Building  
(830) 279-2908

◊ **Eagle Pass Writing Center**  
SRSU-MRG, Room D129  
(830) 758-5035

◊ **Del Rio Writing Center**  
SRSU-MRG, Building 1, Room 301  
(830) 703-4817

**Graduate Student Support Center Lab**  
Room 110, Academic Building
Graduate Support Coordinator

The Coordinator of the Graduate Student Support Center (GSSC) oversees development of all aspects of the GSSC across all campuses of Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande in an effort to improve and support graduate student achievement. Webinar/seminars are scheduled each semester, including most of the presentations; creates and implements the graduate student online orientation; and is available to meet with graduate students via Blackboard Collaborate or on a scheduled travel visit regarding preliminary advising or mentoring.

Office hours and contact information for the GSSC Coordinator:

Monday – Thursday: 8:00 am – 5:00 pm
Friday: 8:00 am – 4:00 pm
Lunch: 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

Office hours may vary if travelling to another site.

Distance Education Policy Statement

Counseling graduate students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, library resources, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources visit the SRSU-RGC website. Students should submit online assignments through Blackboard or university email (as directed by the professor), which require secure login information to verify students’ identities and to protect students’ information. If the course requires students to take proctored exams, to participate in class activates in real-time and in other locations, or to purchase additional software or equipment that information will be included in the course syllabi. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to Academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the Sul Ross State University Student Handbook (http://www.sulross.edu/page/2454/student-handbook) and the Counseling Program Handbook. Students in web-based and enhanced web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined in this policy, the course syllabus, and the current class schedule and/or Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande Catalog.

Web-Based Courses

Web courses (offered online) are not self-paced and require considerable work in order to meet requirements. Counseling graduate students should be prepared to devote approximately 12 hours per week to accomplish the work required for a 3-semester credit hour course (i.e. student should devote approximately the same study time for an online course as would be spent in a regular class with outside work requirements—a measure generally calculated at 3 hours outside work for each hour in class). Students must have a reliable high-speed internet connection available on a regular basis for coursework and other assignments whenever University computer laboratories are not open. Computer labs are open Mon.- Thurs., 8 a.m. - 10 p.m., and Fri. 8a.m.- 5 p.m. University computer labs are not
open on weekends and holidays, but computers are available at the SWTJC and Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande libraries. A student who fails to participate in assignments during any one work period may be subject to being withdrawn from class and given a grade of F.

Students should regularly log into their class on the Blackboard platform as required by the professor. Policies in effect for on-campus classroom instruction courses also apply to students enrolled in distance education courses, including Web-based, Enhanced Web-based and ITV courses. Non-participation and inactivity may include not logging on to the course, not submitting assignments or participating in other assigned activities as scheduled, not communicating with the instructor by e-mail or telephone, and/or not following the instructor’s participation guidelines stated in the syllabus.

**Enhanced Web-Based Courses**

The Counseling Program offers several required and advanced skill courses in an “Enhanced” Web-Based format. Web-based courses are typically taught in the “virtual world” of the Internet and the university's Blackboard platform. The professor makes all the course materials, resources, expectations and assignments available for student-access on Blackboard. Typically, the professor communicates with the students through Blackboard Announcements or university email. Enhanced Web-Based courses regularly use the Collaborate (or Collaborate Ultra) feature of Blackboard or the Zoom application. After consulting with class members at the beginning of the semester, the professor will determine the best day and time for regular class sessions/meeting (in real-time). Students can participate in the class meetings from home, office, the Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande computer labs, or the corner coffee bar.

Blackboard Collaborate, Collaborate Ultra or Zoom are simple, convenient, and reliable virtual conferencing solutions created especially for graduate education and training. The virtual feature allows an easy and convenient way for Counseling graduate students to actively engage in counseling strategies, skills and systems while interacting in person in real-time with the professor and other students. The virtual feature facilitates a learning experience in which the student often feels like she or he is in the same room with the professor and the other students, regardless of the student’s actual physical location or digital device. Through the real-time video-conferencing tools, the professor can lecture, discuss, model, answer questions, and dialogue directly with students – just like in a traditional on-campus classroom setting. The virtual tool is accessed through the course Blackboard site and class sessions/meetings will be scheduled by the professor and announced in advance to the students. Furthermore, the professor can choose to record any virtual class session and make the recording available for student review at later dates. Students do not need to install any particular software in order to fully utilize virtual features. The creators of Blackboard recommend that to have the best learning experience students should use Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox when using your desktop or laptop computer. Browsers on mobile devices are supported on Windows touch devices; students can choose to use either the Blackboard Student Mobile App (available on the class Blackboard site) or the default device browser.

Like the more typical Web-Based courses, in the Enhanced Web-Based format the professor will post on the class Blackboard site resources and materials for students to easily access. Additionally, the professor may require regular student participation in discussions, blogs, and small group assignments. Counseling graduate students can safely assume that all course...
expectations and requirements are clearly and unambiguously delineated in the course syllabus. If questions and/or concerns arise, students are encouraged to contact the professor directly.

**Accessibility and Safe Learning Environment**

The Counseling Program of Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from intentional or unintentional sexual harassment, as defined below, or harassment on the basis of any protected classification including, but not limited to race, gender, color, religion, sexual orientation, age, national origin, disability, medical condition, marital status, veteran status or on any other basis protected by law. Such conduct is unprofessional, unproductive, illegal, and generally unacceptable. All conduct of this nature is expressly prohibited, regardless of whether it violates the law.

The Counseling Program of Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande (SRSU-MRG supports equal employment and educational opportunities for all persons. No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity sponsored by SRSU-MRG on any basis prohibited by applicable law, including but not limited to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age or disability.

The Counseling Program is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Disability Services Coordinator assists students with disabilities in gaining opportunities for full participation in programs, services, and activities. The Disability Services Coordinator is the Director of Student Services) in Uvalde, Texas. Services available to all students include consultation, information and referral as well as personal counseling and academic advising. A student is eligible for disability services if s/he has been admitted to Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande and has a documented physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Qualified students with disabilities who need academic adjustments, auxiliary aids or services or other accommodations to ensure equal access must register with Disability Services. It is the student’s responsibility to bring disability documentation with them to an appointment with the Disability Services Coordinator to discuss their individual needs at this time. Each request is considered on an individualized, case-by-case basis. As considerable time may be involved in obtaining complete and adequate documentation and arranging for qualified service providers, prospective and current students should request services in a timely manner. These services should be requested well in advance of the anticipated need.

Recent disability documentation from appropriate qualified professionals must be provided by the student to establish current functional limitations and the impact of the disability. Any recommendations for specific accommodations may be helpful in making determinations and these will be considered as part of the documentation review process. Documentation of disability status and other related information is handled in a confidential manner and is maintained in files separate from a student’s educational record.
In compliance with applicable laws, unless Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande can demonstrate that an academic requirement is an essential component of a degree or program, the University will make reasonable adjustments to requirements to ensure that the requirements do not discriminate against qualified students with disabilities. A student with a disability may request a course substitution or a modification of a degree or program requirement through the following process.

The student's first point of contact for assistance with this process should be the Disability Services Coordinator. The student should submit:

1. A written request for the modification explaining his/her difficulties in the relevant areas and reasons for requesting the modification;

2. Information about the results of previous efforts in the relevant area (transcripts, etc.); and

3. Comprehensive documentation of the disability and the specific aspects of the disability which impair the student's ability to learn or perform in the area in which the student is requesting the modification. The Disability Services Coordinator will meet with the student, review the documentation and prepare a recommendation on the request.

   a. A diagnostic statement identifying the disability, date of the current diagnostic evaluation (within a 5-year period), and the date of the original diagnosis.

   b. A description of the diagnostic criteria and/or diagnostic test(s) used.

   c. A description of the current functional impact/limitations of the disability.

   d. Treatments, medications, assistive devices/services currently prescribed or used.

   e. A description of the expected progression or stability of the disability overtime.

   f. The credentials of the diagnosing professional(s) to include the training and experience which enable the person capable of making the diagnoses.

Recommendations for accommodation are helpful and will be given due consideration. If a student feels that s/he has been discriminated against based on disability, it is recommended that the student first attempt to resolve the issue directly with the individual or group suspected of discrimination. If this procedure is non-productive, a second step may be to seek assistance from the Disability Services office. Students may also file a complaint with the appropriate university officer for ADA/504 compliance, the ADA Compliance Officer, according to the student grievance procedure.

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to: unwanted sexual advances; demands for sexual favors in exchange for favorable treatment; verbal abuse of a sexual nature;
graphic commentary about an individual’s body, sexual prowess, or sexual deficiencies; leering; whistling; touching; pinching; assault; coerced sexual acts; suggestive, insulting or obscene comments or gestures. The Counseling Program prohibits all conduct of this nature whether or not such conduct violates any applicable laws.

Graduate Counseling Club and Professional Involvement

The students and alumni of the Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Counseling Program maintain a highly active student organization. The primary purpose of the Graduate Counseling Club is to facilitate collaboration, cooperation, and professional networking between students and counselors in the field. All students (and alumni) are encouraged to maintain regular contact with one another through the SRSU-MRG Counselor’s organization Blackboard site. To request that your name be added to the organizational site, send an email to rgccounselors@sulross.edu. Once you have been added to the Blackboard organizational site, then you will see “SRSU-MRG Counseling Program” under “My Organizations” when you log into Blackboard.

For several years, the Graduate Counseling Club hosted the Annual Counseling Fiesta on the first Saturday of August. However, for the past two years the traditional Fiesta has not been held due to inactive leadership. In order to continue the tradition of the Annual Counseling Fiesta, students must assume active leadership roles and reach out to alumni for support and assistance. The Counseling Fiesta is also one of the times throughout the year that the Club raises funds for the Pedro (“Pete”) Carrillo Memorial Scholarship. In memory of a beloved alumnus and dear friend, the scholarship will be used to help offset school costs for counseling students.

All Counseling Graduate Students are highly encouraged to participate in the Graduate Counseling Club and to assume positions of leadership. Counselors, by nature, are leaders! Student organizations cannot exist and function without active student involvement and leadership. If you are willing to assist by serving in a position of leadership, please contact the Coordinator of the Counseling Program.

Many students, alumni, and faculty at tendandco-present at the Annual Professional Growth Conference of the Texas Counseling Association. Any counseling graduate student or alumni who would like to participate as a presenter or program assistant should contact Counseling Program faculty members.

Advancement to Candidacy

Within the first two weeks of the final full semester (fall or spring) of coursework and Internship experiences, all students must apply for Advancement to Candidacy (Appendix G). This is an indication of the student’s full involvement in successful completion of the Master’s in Counseling. In order to earn Advancement to Candidacy, the student must have maintained a GPA of 3.0 or better, earning no grades of C in the Counseling courses.

Comprehensive Oral Examination

Within the first two weeks of the final full semester (fall or spring) of coursework and Internship experiences, the student must apply for the Comprehensive Oral Examination (See
Appendix G). In the Counseling Program, oral exams are only scheduled during fall and spring semesters. No oral examinations are conducted during the summer months because of faculty employment issues. Students must contact the Coordinator of the Counseling Program and submit an Application for Candidacy and Oral Examination within the first two weeks of the semester in which the student plans to graduate (Appendix G). In order to graduate, not only does the student need to complete the Comprehensive Oral Examination but must also be able to complete all course work and all required Practicum/Internship hours and documentation.

The Counseling Program Comprehensive Oral Examination is the final culmination of successful graduate work. The Oral Examination is scheduled with the Counseling Program faculty members and is held for approximately ninety minutes. During that time, the faculty members will examine the candidate’s knowledge of theory, practice, and professionalism. At the immediate completion of the Oral Examination, the faculty members deliberate and make a clear decision as to the outcome of the examination. Students may receive an Unconditional Pass or a Conditional Pass (requiring further work and preparation as determined by the examining faculty members). Students will only fail the Oral Examination by failing to comply with the conditions specified by the examining faculty members.

In preparing for the Comprehensive Oral Examination, it is critically important to note that in the Counseling Program, Oral Examinations are only scheduled during fall and spring semesters. No oral examinations are conducted during the summer months. During the Oral Exam, the candidate has the opportunity to demonstrate his or her professionalism and competency in the precision, depth, and extensiveness of knowledge and skills for working effectively with clients of diverse and varied backgrounds and cultures. Through the process of interviewing and questioning the candidate, the Counseling Program faculty members determine if he or she is professionally mature and sufficiently insightful to work effectively with the infinite variety of people with whom he or she will come in contact in the professional counseling setting.

In the weeks preceding the Comprehensive Oral Examination, students are advised to study in small groups or to work with recent graduates and alumni. It is important for students to practice verbally articulating responses and developing a level of comfort with the immediacy and spontaneity of the interview process. Upon scheduling the Oral Examination, the Coordinator of the Counseling Program will provide each student with a list of practice questions to help in preparation for the exam. Students should be prepared to demonstrate their proficiency in effective counseling skills through various counseling role-plays with the examining faculty members.

Because of the individualized nature of the fieldwork experiences, students can complete their degree requirements at any point from September to September. However, the university only conducts graduations twice a year—in May and December. In the Counseling Program, Comprehensive Oral Examinations are only scheduled and conducted during fall and spring semesters. No oral examinations are conducted during the summer months. Counseling students who will clearly complete all degree requirements by the end of the first summer session (end of June) can request to have the Comprehensive Oral Examination during spring semester (one semester immediately preceding the one in which all degree plan requirements are completed). Students who are highly likely to complete all degree requirements by the end of the second summer session (August) can request to have their Comprehensive Oral Examinations conducted during the fall semester. Students do not have to be enrolled in the semester in which they sit for the Comprehensive Oral Examination and
participate in the graduation ceremonies. Any student who completes all degree requirements during either the first or the second summer session will not be eligible to participate in the graduation ceremonies until the following December.

Application for Graduation

Application for Graduation forms may be obtained online (http://www.sulross.edu/page/2649/sr-rgc-forms-and-downloads) or from the Dean of Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande or any of the Business Services offices at any of the three sites. A diploma fee of $30.00 is required. A student is expected to submit an application for graduation during the semester preceding the final semester of enrollment. Students who are not able to complete degree requirements as planned will re-submit the application during the semester they expect to graduate. Applications which must be re-submitted require a $5.00 diploma insert fee. The University Calendar should be consulted for a specific deadline for applying to graduate. Students applying after the posted deadline for application in the Academic Calendar must also pay a $50.00 late application fee.

Graduate Teaching Assistants

Description

The Graduate Teaching Assistant (TA) is appointed for teaching and/or teaching-related duties to assist in the Counseling Program of Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande. The TA’s are assigned to assist with the experiential block component to the Counseling Program which consists of Techniques of Counseling I (EDUC 6321), Group Counseling (EDUC 7315), and Techniques of Counseling II (EDUC 6322). Additionally, as funding permits, the TA’s are assigned to other courses and/or faculty members. All Teaching Assistants in the Counseling Program must be eligible for and enrolled in the Practicum in Counseling (EDUC 7316) or the Internship in Counseling (EDUC 7317).

Teaching Assistants must manage their academic workload with teaching and supervision responsibilities. The TA’s in the Counseling Program are expected to devote 12 to 18 hours per week toward the TA responsibilities. The TA provides academic program support to faculty members by conducting or monitoring classes, modeling effective counseling through demonstrations, providing supervision of the counseling practice sessions recorded by the beginning counseling students, reading and grading written assignments and tests. The Coordinator of the Counseling Program, with input from another faculty member, will serve as the supervisor of the TA’s.

Education and Training

Requirements for Graduate Teaching Assistants in the Counseling Program include a bachelor's degree and the successful completion of the experiential block of the counselor training program which consists of Techniques of Counseling I (EDUC 6321), Group Counseling (EDUC 7315), and Techniques of Counseling II (EDUC 6322). All TA’s in the Counseling Program must be eligible for and enrolled in the Practicum in Counseling (EDUC 7316) or the Internship in Counseling (EDUC 7317).
Graduate Teaching Assistants in the Counseling Program are advanced graduate students enrolled in the Masters of Counseling Program at Rio Grande College who are considering pursuing doctoral degrees in Counseling Psychology or related fields. Thus, the TA position can be understood as a steppingstone to becoming a doctoral level Counseling Professor and/or Mental Health Practitioner.

**Specific Duties of the Teaching Assistants**

- Co-facilitate the experiential component of *Group Counseling* (EDUC 7315)
- Co-instruct and model in the fishbowl component of both *Techniques of Counseling I* (EDUC 6321) and *Techniques of Counseling II* (EDUC 6322)
- Provide clinical supervision to practice triads and individual beginning counseling students
- Assist in planning and implementing the Encounter Group Marathon
- Experience component of *Group Counseling* (EDUC 7315)
- Establish effective mentoring relationships with the beginning counseling students
- Inform the Coordinator of the Counseling Program of current student issues, concerns, obstacles, and feedback
- Assist with assignment and test grading for counseling courses
- Assist with examination preparation, administration and grading
- Facilitate videoconferencing and the Collaborate feature of Blackboard when relevant for various courses
- Monitor and maintain class-related Blackboard sites
- Oversee and provide poignant feedback on the blog entries of the beginning counseling students posted on the class-related Blackboard sites
- Maintain valuable and relevant discussions through the Discussion Board of the class-related Blackboard sites
- Maintain familiarity with the policies and procedures of the Counseling Program as delineated in the most current edition of the *Counseling Program Handbook*
- Assist students with discussion, tutoring, supervision and review of practice triad counseling sessions
- Collaborate with the professor in reviewing, modifying and finalizing course requirements, assignments, and examinations
- Provide support, encouragement, advisement and mentoring to the beginning level counseling students
- Cooperate with the professor to ensure the confidentiality and privacy of student personal self-disclosures, class behavior, and academic grades
- Collaborate with the professor in scheduling and conducting the Midterm and Final Evaluations of Skill which are required in both *Techniques of Counseling I* (EDUC 6321) and *Techniques of Counseling II* (EDUC 6322)
- Solicit feedback from students at the end of each semester through an appropriately created student evaluation of TA teaching and supervision skills
- Utilize the results of student feedback to make modifications to future course syllabi, requirements, teaching styles, and instructional strategies
- Assist faculty and students with professional conference presentations and participation when attendance and travel are possible
- Assist the Coordinator of the Counseling Program with new student recruitment Provide organizational oversight and clinical supervision for the College and Community Counseling Services
• Assist the Coordinator of the Counseling Program and the faculty members in maintaining student and alumni collaboration through the Graduate Counseling Club and the annual Counseling Fiesta

Teaching Assistant Stipends

Teaching Assistants in the Counseling Program will be compensated via stipends provided by externally funded projects and/or university, college and departmental budgeted resources. TA’s do not qualify for benefits or paid leave.

Application for Teaching Assistant Position

Eligible graduate students in the Counseling Program can apply for consideration as a Teaching Assistant, to begin in the fall semester, by contacting the Coordinator of the Counseling Program during the last half of spring semester. The applicant will submit evidence of his/her academic and counseling skills to the Coordinator of the Counseling Program. In discussion with the Coordinator of the Counseling Program, or faculty member, the student will construct a letter of application that addresses his/her educational and career backgrounds, counseling skills, doctoral-level aspirations and plans, and demonstration of the specified qualifications for being a successful TA. (See Appendix H)

In the event that there are more applicants than current funding can support, the letters of application will be carefully considered by the selection committee which consists of the Coordinator of the Counseling Program and the counseling faculty members. The selection committee will prioritize the TA applicants and awards will be made according to the faculty-generated priority list.

Training for the Teaching Assistants will be provided by the Coordinator of the Counseling Program, or other faculty member, through advising, mentoring, and modeling.

Counseling Course Descriptions

Common Foundations Courses

The three Common Foundations Courses should be completed early in the student’s pursuit of the master’s in counseling. Research Methodology (EDUC 5301) must be completed, with a final grade of B or better, within the first twelve (12) hours of graduate coursework.

EDUC 5301 Research Methodology

An introduction to social science research. The student will demonstrate competency in reading and interpreting research and will use the APA style and format. Demonstrated competency in research design will be shown through written products and presentations. Must be taken within first 12 hours of graduate coursework. No substitutions for this course without written permission from the Education Department Chair.

EDUC 5315 Standardized Assessment Principles
A course which studies the basic principles of standardizing testing, the planning, implementation and coordination of testing programs.

EDUC 6308 Advanced Human Growth and Development
A study of the life-span human developmental process encompassing physical, social, and emotional theories of development.

Counseling Core Courses

EDUC 5313 Career Counseling
This course will study human career development across the lifespan, historical concepts and foundations, career decision-making processes, career counseling techniques for diverse and multicultural populations, systems of career information, and the application of these to career counseling in school and community settings.

EDUC 5314 Personality and Counseling Theories
A study of traditional and contemporary theories of personality as they relate to the process and practice of counseling in a pluralistic society.

EDUC 6318 Multiculturalism and Diversity in Counseling
This course is based on the premise that all counseling is cross-cultural; occurring in a context influenced by institutional and societal biases and norms and is a culture-bound profession. Course content will focus on examining one’s own assumptions, values, biases and worldview perspectives; constructing an understanding of the worldview perspectives of culturally different students, clients; and developing culturally appropriate intervention strategies and techniques.

EDUC 6319 Psychopathology
This course will investigate abnormal behavior as defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Prerequisites: Student must have earned a grade of B or higher in EDUC 6321 and have permission of the instructor.

EDUC 6321 Techniques of Counseling I
An experiential course in professional counseling practice designed to develop communication and conceptualization skills essential to an effective and culturally relevant counseling relationship.

Prerequisite: Student must have earned a grade of B or higher in EDUC 5314, and have instructor approval. This course must be taken concurrently with EDUC 7315.

EDUC 6322 Techniques of Counseling II
An advanced experiential course in which students are required to demonstrate proficiency in counseling concepts, skills, and techniques that are sensitive to human diversity, with a major emphasis on students developing insight into their own theoretical orientations.

Prerequisite: Student must have earned a grade of B or higher in EDUC 6321 and have instructor approval. This course must be taken consecutively, in the same academic year, after successfully completing Techniques of Counseling I (EDUC 6321) within the same academic year. Any exception to this policy require instructor approval.
**Explanation:** If a student successfully passes EDUC 6321 and EDUC 7315 in the fall semester but receives a final grade of C in EDUC 6322 in the spring semester, the student will be required to participate (without registering, auditing or paying tuition) in the two fall experiential courses the following academic year prior to registering for and retaking EDUC 6322 in the spring. This requirement exists for the purposes of establishing and maintaining safety, trust and cohesion in the cohort group of student-counselors. Such conditions are essential for effective counseling skill development.

**EDUC 6333 Ethical, Legal, and Professional Issues in Counseling**
This course will examine legal, ethical, and professional standards and issues affecting the practice of professional counseling in schools, community agencies, and private practices in the multicultural and diverse society of the twenty-first century. Ethical standards will be discussed from a historical and practice perspective, as well as legal issues that affect and/or conflict with the professional practice of counseling. Ethical decision-making models will be examined, and professional issues distinctive to the specific practice settings of counseling will be presented.

**EDUC 6340 Bilingual and Bicultural Counseling Strategies**
This course offers a comprehensive and in-depth examination of current theories, research, and strategies in bilingual and bicultural counseling with clients of all ages. Bilingual and bicultural individuals can effectively employ two different languages and successfully navigate in two different cultures. Hence, students will learn therapeutic use of monolingual and bilingual strategies in counseling.

**Prerequisite:** EDUC 6318 or instructor approval.

**EDUC 6344 Mindfulness-Based Approaches to Counseling**
This course explores mental health, wellness, counseling, and cutting-edge neuroscience through the lens of mindfulness-based counseling paradigms. Emphasis is placed on students developing knowledge and skills in the applications of mindfulness-based theories and strategies in the counseling process.

**Prerequisite:** EDUC 6321 or instructor approval.

**EDUC 7302 Management of Counseling Programs**
An examination of the mission, philosophy, and function of counseling programs in school systems with emphasis on program organization, administration, needs assessment, evaluation, legal and ethical issues, creating community coalitions and outreach, training support staff, and adopting and adapting culturally relevant prevention and intervention programs.

**Prerequisite:** Student must have earned a grade of B or higher in ED 5314 and have instructor permission.

**EDUC 7315 Group Counseling**
This course will provide students with an experiential and interactive opportunity to develop awareness and competence in counseling diverse groups of individuals through exploration of group dynamics, processes, and therapeutic interventions.

**Prerequisite:** Student must have earned a grade of B or higher in EDUC 5314 and have instructor permission. This course must be taken concurrently with EDUC 6321.
EDUC 7316 Practicum in Counseling
This field work experience will provide students with supervised practice in counseling in university-affiliated services and community settings. Practicum students are supervised by university faculty as well as site-based supervisors. Students must accumulate 100 total clock hours of counseling experience, with at least 40 hours of direct face-to-face counseling contact. Students are required to maintain continuous enrollment until all requirements are met.

Prerequisite: EDUC 6322, Instructor approval, and students must have professional liability insurance prior to direct counseling contact.

EDUC 7317 Internship in Counseling
This fieldwork experience provides advanced counseling students with supervised practice in counseling and psychotherapy in school, institution, and/or agency settings. Intern counselors are clinically supervised by university faculty members and site-based counseling supervisors. Interns must accumulate 600 total clock hours of counseling experience with at least 240 hours of direct face-to-face counseling contact. Students are required to maintain continuous enrollment until all requirements are met.

Prerequisite: EDUC 7316, Instructor approval, and students must have professional liability insurance prior to direct counseling contact.

Child, Adolescent and School Counseling Specialty

EDUC 6330 Play Therapy
This course will develop knowledge and skills to enhance the counseling relationship with diverse clients of all ages by utilizing play media to facilitate expression, self-understanding, catharsis, and personal growth and development. The basic theories and applications of play-related and action-based approaches will be explored, with special emphasis on the counselor’s own unique contribution to the therapeutic relationship and the emotional needs of the client.

EDUC 6332 Consultation for Professional School Counselors
This course examines theory and method of consultation as a student-centered process for counselors to collaborate with colleagues, administrators, teachers, parents, and community agencies. Content includes the state model, certification exam, ethical/legal issues and effective skills for consulting in schools that serve multicultural and diverse populations.

Prerequisite: Prerequisite: EDUC 5314 and/or have permission of the Instructor.

EDUC 6342 Counseling for Crisis, Trauma and Disaster
This course prepares counselors to respond effectively in critical situations of crises, trauma, and disaster. Students learn crisis assessment, diagnoses, post-traumatic patterns, intervention skills, management, and cultural, ethical, and legal considerations for working with diverse and multicultural populations in community and governmental agencies, schools, hospitals and private practice.

Prerequisite: EDUC 5314 and have permission of the Instructor.

EDUC 6346 Counseling At-Risk Youth
This course explores theory and practice related to counseling at-risk youth including the social, multicultural, ethical, and legal issues associated with school failure and dropout, teen
pregnancy and sexuality, substance abuse, violence, and criminal behavior. Emphases are on skill development, prevention strategies and social justice factors.

**Prerequisite:** EDUC 6321 or Instructor permission.

### Community Mental Health Counseling Specialty

**EDUC 6320 Substance Use, Abuse and Addiction**
This course will examine the use, abuse and addiction of drugs and alcohol in a postmodern multicultural and diverse society. Emphasis will be placed on the physiological, psychological, and sociological aspects of abuse/addiction, their impact on the individual, family, and community, and evidence-based treatment approaches.

**Prerequisite:** EDUC 6321 or Instructor permission.

**EDUC 6342 Counseling for Crisis, Trauma and Disaster**
This course prepares counselors to respond effectively in critical situations of crises, trauma, and disaster. Students learn crisis assessment, diagnoses, post-traumatic patterns, intervention skills, management, and cultural, ethical, and legal considerations for working with diverse and multicultural populations in community and governmental agencies, schools, hospitals and private practice.

**Prerequisite:** EDUC 5314 and/or have permission of the Instructor.

**EDUC 6350 Counseling and the Neurosciences**
This course provides students with an understanding of the relationships between neurological processes and counseling. With emphases on counseling diverse populations, course topics include neurological processes associated with perceptions, cognitions, emotions, behaviors, neuroplasticity, neurogenesis, and psychoactive pharmacological agents used in mental health treatment.

**Prerequisite:** EDUC 5314 and/or have permission of the Instructor.

**EDUC 6352 Community Treatment Planning and Mental Health Advocacy**
This course provides an in-depth overview of the multidimensional community mental health systems, with perspective on the administrative, organizational, socio-cultural, advocacy and clinical aspects of policy formation, managed care, case-management, legal paradigms and trends in mental health services delivery.

**Prerequisite:** EDUC 5314 and/or have permission of the Instructor.

### Couples and Family Counseling Specialty

**EDUC 6323 Marriage and Family Counseling**
The general purpose of this course is to familiarize students with the stages of family development, family dynamics, and techniques of marriage and family counseling, family consultation, and parent education.

**EDUC 6326 Advanced Strategies in Couples and Family Counseling**
This course is designed to assist advanced counseling students in the full integration of theories and skills in relationship counseling and family therapy. Students will develop professional competence in assessment, treatment planning, and therapeutic interventions for effectively counseling couples and families of multicultural and diverse backgrounds.

**Prerequisites:** EDUC 5314, EDUC 6323 and/or Instructor approval.

**EDUC 6327 Marriage, Divorce, and Family Mediation**  
This course provides advanced counseling students with cutting-edge knowledge of the models and methods of mediation. Emphasis is placed on the strategies and skills necessary for counselors to competently provide professional mediation assistance to families and couples, as well as the evaluative, transformative, and therapeutic practices employed before, during and after relationship dissolution and divorce.

**Prerequisites:** EDUC 6321, EDUC 6323 and/or Instructor approval.

**EDUC 6364 Counseling and Human Sexuality**  
This course provides counselors with the knowledge and skills for effectively working with clients of diverse backgrounds on issues related to human sexuality. Physical, psychological and cultural aspects of sexuality will be explored with emphasis on enhancing mindful counselor self-awareness.

**Prerequisite:** EDUC 6321 and/or Instructor Approval

**Gerontology and Counseling Older Adults Specialty**

**EDUC 6350 Counseling and the Neurosciences**  
This course provides students with an understanding of the relationships between neurological processes and counseling. With emphases on counseling diverse populations, course topics include neurological processes associated with perceptions, cognitions, emotions, behaviors, neuroplasticity, neurogenesis, and psychoactive pharmacological agents used in mental health treatment.

**Prerequisite:** EDUC 5314 and/or Instructor approval.

**EDUC 6360 Assessment and Counseling of the Older Adult**  
This course offers counselors a comprehensive perspective of the aging process. Common life experiences and transitions in later life create specific individual, marriage and family needs which require unique treatment approaches. Special emphasis is placed on assessment, differential diagnosis, treatment planning and implementation, and gerontological counseling strategies.

**Prerequisite:** EDUC 6321 and/or Instructor approval.

**EDUC 6362 Death, Dying and Bereavement Counseling**  
This course explores the theories and conceptual frameworks for working with death, dying, and bereavement. Students will increase their own affective development and sensitivity in working with clients who are struggling with issues of death, loss and grief, and they will identify, clarify, and understand their own personal assumptions, biases, attitudes, and reactions.
**Prerequisite:** EDUC 6321 and/or Instructor approval.

**EDUC 6366 Counseling and Spirituality**
This course will provide counselors with an exploration of theories and technique appropriate for integrating spirituality into the counseling process. Spirituality and the search for meaning are central elements of the human experience, and they are considered important components of mental health and wellness. Students will learn to assess a client’s spiritual domain and develop treatment plans and counseling interventions based on various models of spiritual development.

**Prerequisite:** EDUC 6321 and/or Instructor approval.

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**Advanced Skill Electives in Course Inventory**

**EDUC 5306 Advanced Testing**
An analysis of clinical tests of individual intelligence with emphasis on the Wechsler Scales and the Revised Stanford Binet, and individual achievement tests.

**Prerequisite:** EDUC 5315

**EDUC 6303 Counseling Supervision and Consultation**
A study of the theoretical foundations, current issues, and effective practices of counseling supervision and professional consultation with emphasis on legal, ethical, multicultural, gender, age, and lifestyle concerns in the supervisory relationship, as well as the principles of collaborative consultation.

**Prerequisite:** Permission of Instructor.

**EDUC 6316 Seminar in Counseling**
This course will address a variety of special issues and topics in counseling. Students may enroll in more than one Seminar if the topics are different.

**Prerequisite:** Permission of Instructor.

**EDUC 6331 Advanced Strategies in Play Therapy**
This course is designed to provide counselors with advanced knowledge and skills in a wide range of nonverbal approaches for working effectively with diverse and multicultural clients of all ages. Emphasis is on the history, theories, techniques, and applications of play therapy, action-oriented counseling, and the therapeutic use of the expressive arts.

**Prerequisite:** EDUC 6330 and Instructor approval.
APPENDIX A

PROFESSIONAL INFORMED CONSENT

PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

The expectations of the counseling curriculum are that you will explore and recognize the effect that your personal beliefs, values, issues, emotions, and behaviors have on your ability to function as a counseling professional. The various methods, courses, practica, and internships will require that you develop and demonstrate your counseling skills as you work with other students in role-play scenarios and with clients in actual counseling sessions. You will be asked to examine your behaviors, beliefs, and emotions in relation to your counseling activities and experiences consistently and systematically.

1) The course content and experiential activities in the Professional Counseling Program are designed to afford students the opportunity to advance their personal, intellectual, and professional development. Throughout the program of study, you will be expected to receive and integrate feedback concerning your personal, academic, and professional strengths, limitations, and performance in a manner that accords with the professional standards.

   a. The Counseling Performance Evaluation form provides the specific criteria regarding these program standards. Observations and feedback received from faculty, supervisors, peers, and clients will be considered in this evaluation. You will be expected to incorporate this feedback in a mature and professional manner.

   b. The 2014 American Counseling Association Code of Ethics provides the foundation for our ethical standards. Section F.9.b states that faculty members: “…1) assist students in securing remedial assistance when needed, 2) seek professional consultation and document their decision to dismiss or refer students for assistance, and 3) ensure that students have recourse in a timely manner to address decisions to require them to seek assistance or to dismiss them and provide students with due process according to the institutional policies and procedures.”

   c. If, in the professional judgment of a faculty member, a student’s behavior is deemed substandard, unethical, illegal, and/or professionally unbecoming at any time during the course of training, a student may be referred for faculty review. At that time the Program Standards Committee will be called to review the performance, record, and behavior of the student and to make recommendations to the Chair of the Department. The Graduate Catalog contains the Department's and Program's policies on Student Fitness and Performance, including Program Standards, Student Fitness and Performance, and the Review Process.
2) The counseling program involves both didactic and experiential investment on the part of the student as well as participation in an active professional orientation and development process. Thus, it is distinctly different from undergraduate academic experiences and most conventional graduate programs. For this reason, students are urged to limit their enrollment to no more than 9 graduate credit hours in the interest of effective assimilation and optimal balance of curricular and extra-curricular activities. Enrolling in more than 9 hours per semester requires special permission by the Program Coordinator. If a student is found to have enrolled in more than 9 hours without permission, the student will be notified of a breach of policy and have the opportunity to drop classes to again be within policy protocol.

3) A course grade of "B" or better must be obtained in this program for all courses required for graduation to earn credit for the course. A 3.0 GPA must be maintained to progress in and graduate from the program. Please see the Graduate College’s Course Grades and Probation and Suspension standards.

4) I understand that criminal background checks are required for LPC licensure and certification as a school counselor. I also understand that based on information recorded in my criminal history, I may be ineligible for issuance of a certification or license upon my completion of the Professional Counseling Program. If I have a criminal history, I understand that I should request a Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation from the Texas Education Agency (for aspiring school counselors), Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors. Disclose this information to the appropriate professional body: either the Sul Ross State University State Middle Rio Grande Department of Education and the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors.

My signature on this form verifies that I have read the form and all hyperlinked documents – including but not limited to the ACA Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice and that I agree to adhere to these expectations and standards if accepted by the Professional Counseling Program. I agree to read the Counseling Program Handbook prior to beginning classes. My signature confirms my understanding and willingness to participate fully in the courses and to adhere to the principles and requirements as described.

__________________________________________________ Date: __________________

Signature

__________________________________________________

Printed Name

Please download, print, sign, and bring this document to your interview as part of your Department Admissions Application Portfolio.
Appendix B
Interpersonal Communication Skills Inventory

To complete this inventory, read each statement carefully and honestly assess how often the particular statement applies to you. For instance, in Section I - question number 1, if you sometimes find it difficult to talk to other people, you would place a check mark in the “Sometimes” column for question number 1. And for question 2, if others often tend to finish sentences for you when you are trying to explain something, check the “Usually” column and so on until you have completed all questions in all four sections of the inventory.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION I</th>
<th>USUALLY</th>
<th>SOMETIMES</th>
<th>SELDOM</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Is it difficult for you to talk to other people?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. When you are trying to explain something, do others tend to put words in your mouth, or finish your sentences for you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. In conversation, do your words usually come out the way you would like?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Do you find it difficult to express your ideas when they differ from the ideas of people around you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Do you assume that the other person knows what you are trying to say, and leave it to him/her to ask you questions?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Do others seem interested and attentive when you are talking to them?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. When speaking, is it easy for you to recognize how others are reacting to what you are saying?</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Do you ask the other person to tell you how she/he feels about the point you are trying to make?</td>
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<td>9. Are you aware of how your tone of voice may affect others?</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. In conversation, do you look to talk about things of interest to both you and the other person?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

SCORE: SECTION I TOTAL ______________

Learning Dynamics, 2002

Appendix C
### Interpersonal Reactivity Index

The following statements inquire about your thoughts and feelings in a variety of situations. For each item, indicate how well it describes you by choosing the appropriate letter on the scale at the top of the page: A, B, C, D, or E. When you have decided on your answer, fill in the letter next to the item number. READ EACH ITEM CAREFULLY BEFORE RESPONDING. Answer as honestly as you can. Thank you.

#### Answer Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DOES NOT DESCRIBE ME VERY WELL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DESCRIBES ME WELL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I daydream and fantasize, with some regularity, about things that might happen to me. (FS) ✓

2. I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me. (EC) ✓

3. I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the "other guy's" point of view. (PT) (-)

4. I sometimes I don't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems. (EC) (-)

5. I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in a novel. (FS)

6. In emergency situations, I feel apprehensive and ill-at-ease. (PD)

7. I am usually objective when I watch a movie or play, and I don't often get completely caught up in it. (FS) (-)

8. I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision. (PT)

9. When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards them. (EC)

10. I sometimes feel helpless when I am in the middle of a very emotional situation. (PD)

11. I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective. (PT)

12. Becoming extremely involved in a good book or movie is somewhat rare for me. (FS) (-)

13. When I see someone get hurt, I tend to remain calm. (PD) (-)

14. Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal. (EC) (-)
### Appendix D

**SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CAMPUSES**  
**REQUEST FOR MASTER OF EDUCATION DEGREE PLAN**  
and/or  
**PROFESSIONAL SERVICE CERTIFICATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Banner ID</th>
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<td>City</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email Address(es)</td>
<td>Zip</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Degree(s) Currently Held:**

**Teaching Certification(s) Held**

Check the appropriate blank(s) below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>M.Ed. with no Certification</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>_____ M.Ed. in College Teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____ Biology</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____ English</td>
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<td>_____ History</td>
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<td>_____ Mathematics</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____ Political Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>_____ M.Ed. in General Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____ M.Ed. in General Education with Specialization in Bilingual Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| _____ M.Ed. in Counseling (Community Mental Health) 60 Hrs.  
*GRE Required in the first 12 s.c.h. |
| _____ M.Ed. in Counseling (Marriage and Family) 60 Hrs.  
*GRE Required in the first 12 s.c.h. |
| _____ M.Ed. in Counseling (Gerontology) 60 Hrs.  
*GRE Required in the first 12 s.c.h. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Certification Only</strong></th>
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</table>
| For those who have a master’s degree  
Service Record Required |
| _____ M.Ed. in Counseling (Child, Adolescent and School Counseling) |
| _____ Principal Certification Preparation |
| _____ Professional Superintendent Principal Certification Required |
| _____ Reading Specialist Preparation |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>M.Ed. with Certification</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service Record Required</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| _____ M.Ed. in Child, Adolescent and School Counseling 60 Hrs.  
*GRE Required in the first 12 s.c.h. |
| _____ School Administration (Principal) |
| _____ Reading Specialist |

*Updated 02/02/20*

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### Appendix E
Appendix F

FORM I – Course equivalency request

Note: This form is required to be submitted (along with application Form A) by an applicant seeking to be licensed with a master’s or doctorate degree (or in the last semester of study) in a related mental health field with a planned course of study in marriage and family therapy as described in 801.113(d) and (e) with minimum course content as described in §801.114.

Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists

Mail this correspondence (no fees enclosed) to:
Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists
Mail Code 1470
P.O. Box 149055
Austin, Texas 78714-9055
Phone: 1-512-834-6657 FAX NO. 1-512-834-6677

Applicant name: ___________________ _______________________

Education (An original transcript verifying qualifying degree from an accredited institution must be sent to the TSBEMFT office. *Please see the definition of an accredited institution on the following page.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTITUTION</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>DATES ATTENDED</th>
<th>MAJOR</th>
<th>DEGREE(S)-DATE(S) CONFERRED</th>
<th>NAME ON TRANSCRIPT</th>
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§801.114. Academic Course Content: An applicant who is in the last semester of study or holds a graduate degree in a mental health related field must have course work in each of the following areas (one course equals three semester hours.) Additional space is provided on page 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Number of semester hours required</th>
<th>Number of Quarter hours (units) required</th>
<th>Courses in area Title/number on transcript</th>
<th>Number of semester hours or quarter hours (units) / total</th>
<th>Full title of course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical foundations of marriage and family therapy (1 course)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1. 2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment and treatment in marriage and family therapy (4 courses)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Human development, gender, multicultural issues and family studies (2 courses)</td>
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<td>Psychopathology (1 course)</td>
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<td>Professional ethics (1 course)</td>
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<td>Applied professional research (1 course)</td>
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<td>Supervised clinical practicum – 12 months or nine hours</td>
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Appendix F
2014 ACA Code of Ethics

The *American Counseling Association* is an educational, scientific, and professional organization whose members work in a variety of settings and serve in multiple capacities. ACA members are dedicated to the enhancement of human development throughout the lifespan. Association members recognize diversity and embrace a cross-cultural approach in support of the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of people with in their social and cultural contexts. Professional values are an important way of living out an ethical commitment. Values inform principles. Inherently held values that guide our behaviors or exceed prescribed behaviors are deeply ingrained in the counselor and developed out of personal dedication, rather than the mandatory requirement of an external organization.

Download, save and read the ACA Code of Ethics:
https://www.counseling.org/resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf
Application for Candidacy for the Master’s Degree
And Request for Oral Exam

Master of Education in Counseling
Sul Ross State University Middle Rio Grande

Name: _____________________________________ ID: ____________________
LastFirstM.I.(Maiden)

Address: ____________________________________________ Street City State Zip

Home Phone: _______________ Cell Phone: _______________ E-Mail: __________________

Major: COUNSELING Expected Graduation Date: __________________

*Note: You must apply for graduation with the Office of the Dean early in the semester in which you intend to graduate.

Request for Oral Exam

Faculty to Serve on Committee:
1. Dr. Todd T. Russell
2. Dr. Monica Gutierrez
3. Dr. Samuel Garcia

Courses in Progress:

Return this form and attachments to: Dr. Todd T. Russell, Counseling Program, Department of Education, Rio Grande College, 2623 Garner Field Road, Uvalde, Texas 78801

Application for Candidacy for Master’s Degree

I hereby apply for candidacy for the degree of Master of Education in Counseling.

I have complied with the following requirements (check applicable items):

I have completed twelve semester credit hours at SRSU Rio Grande College.
I have maintained a grade point average of 3.0 in Counseling.
I have filed an approved degree plan in the Graduate Office.
I have removed any conditions imposed on my admission to the Graduate Division.

____________________________________________
Student Signature

Major Advisor Signature

Appendix H
APPLICATION FOR STUDENT TEACHING

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY
RIO GRANDE COLLEGE

APPLICATION FOR STUDENT TEACHING

Date _____________________________

Name ______________________________________________

_____ Undergraduate

_____ Post Baccalaureate

Semester you plan to student teach: ___Fall ___Spring

Expected Graduation Date __________

Indicate which student teaching placement corresponds with your degree plan:

___EC-6 Generalist       ___4-8 English/Language Arts/Reading

___EC-6 Bilingual Generalist  ___4-8 Mathematics

___4-8 Generalist       ___4-8 Social Studies

___4-8 Bilingual Generalist ___7-12 Teaching Field: __________

In what district would you prefer to student teach?

Eagle Pass       Uvalde       San Felipe-Del Rio

Upon being assigned to a student teaching position in one of the schools above, I will accept the assignment without protest or argument, and will to the best of my ability strive to do my best to successfully carry out that assignment. I also agree that I will not contact anyone other than university officials concerning my assignment prior to the beginning of my student teaching assignment, nor will I attempt to negotiate with anyone regarding my assignment.

Updated 1/1/18
SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY-RIO GRANDE COLLEGE
APPLICATION FOR GRADUATION

Today’s date ____________________
I am applying for graduation in the following semester and year:
Fall _____  Spring _____  Summer _____  Year _____
Social Security No. ______________________  Student ID No. ______________________
Name as you want it to appear on your diploma. Name must match your name on Banner. Student may use a combination of maiden name and married name. No nicknames allowed:
Name __________________________________________________________________________________________
Mailing Address _________________________________________________  City _____________________  State _____  ZIP __________
Home phone ______________________________  Cell Phone ______________________________
Sul Ross Email ___________________________________________
Degree you are applying for: (choose one)
BA _____  BS _____  BBA _____  BAS _____  BSN _____  MA _____  MBA _____  MED _____  MS _____
Major ____________________________________  Minor _______________________________________
I am the first person in my family to attend college   Yes _____   No _____ (This question is required by direction of the 75th Texas Legislature)

I am currently enrolled in the following courses at the named institutions:

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<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Institution</th>
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There is no summer graduation ceremony. Summer graduates will be included in December’s ceremony.
I will attend commencement _____  I will not attend commencement _____

If you would like an announcement sent to your hometown newspaper, please complete the information below. If this is left blank, no information will be sent.
Name of paper ___________________________________________  Location __________________________________
Name of paper ___________________________________________  Location __________________________________
How you want your name to appear ______________________________________________________________________________
Additional information you may want included in your announcement (not required)  Where you currently live ________________________
Spouse’s name ___________________________________________  Names of both parents ________________________
Name of town/city where parents live ________________________  List parents (check one)  ☐ Together or ☐ separately

STUDENT SIGNATURE __________________________________________________________________________________________________

Return completed form to the cashier on your campus with your payment. You may fax it, but follow with a phone call to give payment information.
Del Rio  830-703-4828  fax: 830-703-4804
Eagle Pass  830-758-5042  fax: 830-758-5019
Uvalde  830-279-3006  fax: 830-279-3010

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
RECEIPT NO. ________  DATE ________________
Check all that apply
TOTAL FEE PAID ________  GRADUATION FEE $30.00 _____
ADMISSIONS & RECORDS ________  LATE FEE 25.00 _____
Revised August 2017  REAPPLICATION FEE (insert fee)  5.00 _____