

COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY, PHD

The APA-accredited doctoral program in counseling psychology is based on the scientist/practitioner model of professional psychology and integrates counseling and psychological theory, scientific inquiry, and supervised practice. Counseling psychology is a psycho-educational specialty in which practitioners help others to improve their well-being, alleviate their distress, resolve their crises, and increase their ability to solve problems and make decisions. Counseling psychologists apply systematic, research-based approaches to help themselves and others understand and develop solutions to problems that are educational, vocational, emotional, social, cultural, health-related, or developmental in nature.

The UW–Madison program places special emphasis on multicultural competence and social justice, integration of research and practice, and preparation for ethical and professional conduct as either a researcher, teacher, or practitioner. The theoretical orientation of the program is best described as eclectic. Coursework emphasizes the research base of counseling psychology and students are expected to involve themselves in faculty research. All students complete a one-year, full-time pre-doctoral internship as a culminating training experience. The planned length of the program for students entering with a master's degree (post-MA track) is five years, although students may opt to take additional time depending on academic background and career objectives.

The department also admits a small number of students to a post-BA track. These students apply to the PhD program at the completion of their undergraduate degree and are required to integrate coursework and professional practice training at the master's level, as well as introductory doctoral coursework, during the first two years of study. Students admitted to the post-BA track typically have excellent academic records and experiences that demonstrate high levels of both helping skills and research skills prior to admissions. The planned length of the post-BA track is six years, although actual completion times will vary depending on student needs and career goals.

The mission of the counseling psychology PhD program is to train health service psychologists who are skillful in research and intervention with diverse populations, who integrate science and practice into their professional roles, and who uphold high ethical and professional standards as psychologists. Program graduates are broadly prepared for a number of professional roles, including direct service, research, teaching, clinical supervision, and program design and evaluation.