

Graduate Certificate in Special Education Counseling

The graduate certificate in Special Education Counseling will prepare scholars to be equipped with a background in the areas of special education and school counseling to meet the social emotional needs of students with disabilities who have high intensity mental health needs.

Admissions Requirements

Applicants must be accepted into the M.Ed. in School Counseling program or have completed a degree in School Counseling from an approved Texas Education Agency EPP. All applicants must submit an application along with a statement of intent that will be evaluated to determine if the EPP applicant's knowledge, experience, skills, and aptitude are appropriate for the certification sought. Applicants must also pay the \$35 TEA technology fee (non-refundable, paid to the TEA as required by TAC 229.9.7).

A minimum 3.0 GPA on cumulative undergraduate record (or previous 60 hours completed as evaluated by the counseling admission committee) prior to admission. For students enrolled in the alternative certification program (ACP), it is encouraged that you complete the ACP prior to starting work toward the M.Ed. in School Counseling and Graduate Certificate in Special Education. By completing your ACP first, students will be able to focus solely on working toward their M.ED. in School Counseling and Graduate Certificate in School Counseling and avoid the risk of reaching the Graduate School limitation requirement of six-years to obtain a master's degree. For more information about the ACP, please click [here](#).

Teaching experience is not required prior to applying. Applicants are screened based on the quality of their application and potential for success in the program via the assessment of the counseling program admissions committee. Students must include the following in their application:

1. Curriculum Vitae/Resume
2. Statement of intent: one or two page document that:
 - a. Details the applicant's relevant background;
 - b. Outlines career aspirations, especially roles that integrate school counseling expertise to assist students with disabilities;
 - c. Describes the interest in serving students with disabilities who have mental health and/or social/emotional learning needs;
3. Three professional letters of references
4. Official undergraduate transcripts (from each of the colleges or universities the applicant previously attended)

The above-required application materials will be evaluated to determine if the applicant's knowledge, experience, skills, and aptitude are appropriate for the counseling degree sought. Applicants will be specifically evaluated on (1) GPA, (2) Letters of Recommendation, (3) Purpose Statement, and (4) Responses to the Multicultural and interpersonal Skill questions.

Students must successfully pass a background check to complete the practicum/internship requirement. Additionally, pursuant to the Texas Education Code TEC, §22.0835, candidates must undergo a criminal history background check prior to student teaching; and pursuant to the TEC, §22.083, candidates must undergo a criminal history background check prior to employment as an educator. A candidate may be ineligible for issuance of a certificate on completion of the EPP if an individual has been convicted of an offense. A person who is enrolled or planning to enroll in an educator preparation program or planning to take a certification examination may request a preliminary criminal history evaluation letter regarding the person's potential ineligibility for certification due to a conviction or deferred adjudication for a felony or misdemeanor offense. For further information visit the Texas Education Agency (<https://tea.texas.gov/texas-educators/investigations/preliminary-criminalhistory-evaluation-faqs/>) website.

Candidates in the M.Ed. in School Counseling program will receive training in dyslexia, mental health/youth suicide, and instruction in digital learning with digital literacy evaluation followed by a prescribed digital learning curriculum based on the International Society for Technology Education (ISTE) standards. Trainings must be from a TEA approved provider.

Allowable Pre-Certificate Credits: Certificate credit from a CACREP accredited program within a regionally accredited institution* is limited to 6 hours for the graduate certificate in Special Education Counseling. All approved pre-certificate credit must have been completed with a grade of "B" or better, completed within the last five years, and approved by the Counseling program faculty and the University of Texas at El Paso. Approved credits should be evaluated and approved by program faculty during the student's first semester. The course being approved into the graduate certificate should be a direct equivalent to the course within the certification program. Students should work with their advisor to have pre-certificate courses evaluated for approval. Approved credit is not guaranteed and subject to Counseling faculty review and approval. Previous work experience is not accepted as approved credit into the certificate program.

Degree Plan

Code	Title	Hours
Required Courses		
SPED 5337	Assessment: Disability	3
EDPC 5321	School Counseling	3
EDPC 5362	CnsIng Children, Adlscnts & Fam	3

EDPC 5310	Appl. Res. Des. for Coun & Spe	3
SPED 5332	Multi-Tiered SEL for SWD	3
SPED 5333	Field-Experience: SEL for SWD	3
Total Hours		18

Code	Title	Hours
Course below may be substituted for EDPC 5310		
EDPC 5332	Prog Eval in School Counseling	3