



Graduate Counseling Program Application Requirement Guidelines

Introduction

The University of Montevallo's Graduate Counseling Program offers a Master of Education (M.Ed.) degree with concentrations in clinical mental health counseling, couples and family counseling, and school counseling. All three program concentrations are accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The admission process is competitive.

Application Requirement Guidelines

Candidates should complete all relevant application information through the [online admissions portal](#). The following guidelines are provided to support candidates in submitting high-quality, competitive applications:

- Statement of purpose
 - Candidates should compose a four to six-paragraph essay on their professional aspirations and goals in counseling. Essays should be thoroughly proofread prior to submission.
 - Essays are evaluated on their (1) ideas and content; (2) organization, unity, and coherence; (3) vocabulary; (4) sentence structure and variety; (5) grammar and usage; and (6) capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.
- Letters of recommendation
 - Candidates should submit two professional letters of recommendation.
 - Candidates should request letters that address their potential success in pursuing a graduate degree in counseling. The letters should be from individuals who know the candidates' academic and professional experiences, such as former or current professors, supervisors, and coworkers.
 - Letters of recommendation that are personal and not professional in nature will be returned to candidates for resubmission. Examples of personal, rather than professional, letters of recommendation may be from family members, friends, or community members who have not had a chance to observe you in a professional setting.
 - We prefer letters to be submitted on letterhead from a business or school email address.
- Current curriculum vitae (CV) or resume
 - Candidates should submit a current CV or resume that includes their educational and professional experience, as well as any honors, awards, or certifications.
 - Candidates should tailor their CV or resume to highlight their strengths as prospective students in the Counseling program. Strong CVs or resumes communicate candidates' (1) academic readiness, (2) professional purpose, (3) relevant experience, (4) clear career direction, and (5) attention to detail.



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Interview Guidelines

As a part of the Counseling program's admissions requirements, candidates participate in a group interview with other candidates and the Program Faculty. Group interviews are conducted to assess candidates' suitability for the Program and their interpersonal skills. Consistent with CACREP accreditation requirements, candidates are evaluated based on their (1) career goals, (2) aptitude for graduate-level study, and (3) potential success in forming effective counseling relationships with diverse populations. The following recommendations are provided to support candidates in preparing for the group interview:

- Before the interview
 - Practice introducing yourself succinctly.
 - Reflect on your motivation for pursuing a career in counseling.
 - Reflect on your academic strengths and areas for growth.
 - Prepare 2-3 brief examples that demonstrate empathy, teamwork, leadership, or resilience, as well as your experiences working with diverse populations.
- During the interview
 - Balance speaking and listening.
 - Demonstrate active listening and other counselor-like qualities (e.g., empathy, emotional awareness, curiosity, openness to feedback).
 - Be mindful of non-verbal communication (e.g., open posture, calm tone, eye contact, attentive facial expressions).
 - Be authentic, reflective, and self-aware.
 - Speak from personal experiences.
 - Show respect for all participants.