

COUNSELOR EDUCATION STUDENT HANDBOOK



2009-2010

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WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Counselors of the Future:

The faculty, staff, and I welcome you to our graduate programs that prepare professional personnel who wish to work in schools or other social agencies as either school or community counselors. We believe that you will find the course of study, regardless of your focus, will provide you with the knowledge and direct experiences to help you become a successful counselor. Propel yourself into the counseling field, and promise yourself that you will combine what you learn with your professional involvement.

I encourage each of you to keep this handbook in a safe place, because it addresses concerns that you may have about the program, its operation, and its requirements.

Kudos to you!

Sincerely,
Karen A. Verbeke
Karen A. Verbeke, Ph.D.
Chair, Department of Education

GRADUATE STUDY IN COUNSELOR EDUCATION

The graduate program in Counselor Education offers a Master of Education (M.Ed.) degree in Counselor Education. The program offers two specializations -- (1) School Counseling K-12 and (2) Community/Agency Counseling. The School Counseling specialization is accredited by the Maryland State Department of Education according to the standards of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. This accreditation currently shares reciprocity with many states.

The Counselor Education Program at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore offers courses in the areas of professional identity, social and cultural diversity, human growth and development, career development, helping relationships, groups, assessment, research and program evaluation. It subscribes to an eclectic approach with focus on developmental theory and the design and implementation of preventive interventions based on this theory. The student's competence in theory and practice is important throughout the curriculum.

THE PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

We believe that counselors are agents of change, and we strive to incorporate this belief into our curriculum. In order to be effective instruments of positive change, students are expected to integrate cutting edge research with interpersonal dynamics and professional development. The Counselor Education faculty strive to cultivate skills and competencies which enable our graduates to function as contributing members of school and community counseling settings.

ORGANIZATION OF THE PROGRAM

The Counselor Education Program is a graduate program in the Department of Education and is a part of the Professional Education Unit. It is located in the Hazel Hall Building. The department's phone number is (410) 651-6217. The Department of Education is one of the academic departments in the School of the Arts and Professions.

Some information about the organization and administration of the program will be useful in helping you understand how decisions are made and whom you should see about various types of problems. The Counselor Education Program is a unit within the Office of Graduate Studies. The Dean of Graduate Studies is the chief executive to whom the coordinator of the program reports. Many matters of importance to students, such as program changes, assistantships, etc., must receive approval from the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Council.

The Chair of the Department of Education is Dr. Karen Verbeke, and the Coordinator of the Counselor Education Program is Dr. Cheryl Bowers. Dr. Verbeke has final departmental authority for most matters affecting students. It is the practice, however, to share the responsibility for many activities among the Counselor Education faculty.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MISSION

The mission of the Department of Education is to advance the science and practice of education, and to promote related careers in counseling and mental health. Toward this end, the Department of Education offers state-of-the-art undergraduate and graduate teacher education programs, a Master of Arts in Teaching and a graduate Counselor Education program. The Department of Education seeks to nurture minds, to advance knowledge, to promote life-long learning and adjustment, and to elevate the human spirit.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The University of Maryland Eastern Shore professional education programs prepare professionals who are reflective, innovative, value diversity and are effective (**PRIDE**). Our candidates are professionals who are dedicated and committed to excellence and have specialized knowledge and intensive academic preparation. They continuously reflect on and evaluate their practices and demonstrate a willingness to make changes that enhance student growth and learning. Moreover, candidates are innovative in employing the best contemporary practices using creative problem-solving techniques and connections to real world experiences. Our paradigm for valuing diversity centers on understanding and interacting with individuals in various educational, social and cultural environments. Finally, professional education candidates demonstrate the knowledge, skills and dispositions that support effective student learning outcomes.

CREDENTIALS AND LICENSES RELATED TO COUNSELING PROGRAMS

Counselor education programs and higher education institutions are accredited, while counselors themselves are either certified or licensed, depending on the state in which they will practice. This differentiation is often confusing.

The School Counseling K-12 specification of the Counselor Education Program at UMES is accredited by the Maryland State Department of Education according to the standards of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. This accreditation has reciprocity in a number of other states. In order to become a certified school counselor in Maryland, you must successfully complete an accredited counselor education program. This requirement does not pertain to community/agency counseling in Maryland.

The UMES Counselor Education Program encourages *both* school counseling and community/agency counseling students to pursue national counselor certification upon graduation. The non-profit National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC) provides the national standard in the counseling profession. The Maryland Licensing Board uses the NBCC as its test. The title “NCC”- National Certified Counselor – is a highly regarded indicator of professionalism. NCC professionals must hold at least a master’s degree in counseling or a closely related field from a regionally accredited institution, must have at least two years professional counseling experience, and must sit for the national written counselor certification exam. The Counselor Education Program recommends its graduates sit for the challenging

NBCC exam as near to graduation as possible. National Certified Counselors are certified for five years and must earn continuing education credits to remain certified.

For information on the NBCC, please write to:

National Board of Certified Counselors
3 Terrace Way, Suite D
Greensboro, NC 27403-3660
(336) 547-0607
(336) 547-0017 (FAX)
1-800-398-5389 (Application Line)
Webpage Address: www.nbcc.org

In 1998 the Maryland State legislature voted to recognize “licensed professional clinical counselors (LCPC)”. This recognition enables individuals with this license to practice and be eligible to receive third party payments. Successful performance on the National Counseling Examination is one of the first criteria toward attaining LCPC status.

FACULTY DIRECTORY

The following list includes all current regular and adjunct members of the Department of Education and Counselor Education faculty. Tenure-track and tenured faculty have a regular University appointment, teach courses each semester, and are generally available to advise students. Adjunct faculty may or may not have continuing University appointments, are available to teach courses as needed and/or to advise students on research problems in their area of interest.

REGULAR FACULTY:

AGNEW, Mary L. Associate Professor, Ph.D., University of Georgia, Reading Education

BING, Sarah B., Associate Professor, Ph.D., University of Georgia, Education Psychology and School Psychology

BOWERS, Cheryl D., Assistant Professor, Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania, Professional and Scientific Psychology

CARRINGTON, Andrew T., Professor, Ed. D., Virginia Polytechnic and State University, Educational Administration

GOSLEE, Patricia, A. Coordinator of Professional Development Schools and School-based Programs, Ed.D., Wilmington University, Educational Leadership

LARSON, W. Corry, Associate Professor, Ph.D., Special Education, University of Nebraska – Lincoln

NUGENT, Michael A., Coordinator of Praxis, Advising and Special Projects, Ph.D., University of Maryland Eastern Shore

POOLE, Kimberly, Associate Professor, Ph.D., Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL, Rehabilitation Counseling

VERBEKE, Karen, A., Professor and Chair, Ph.D., University of Maryland College Park, Special Education and Mathematics Education

Adjunct Faculty for Counselor Education:

Foust, Gretchen Ed.D., Pennsylvania State University

Hargis, Cynthia, Ph.D., University of Maryland Eastern Shore

Jeter-Twilley, Rhonda, Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania

ADVISORS AND COURSEWORK

THE ADVISOR

Upon being accepted to do graduate work in the Counselor Education program, each student is assigned a faculty advisor. The assignment is designed to reduce the problems of transition from previous academic settings or employment to graduate school at UMES. Advisors follow the University's formal system of review and advising. They assist students with a proposed schedule of courses and timetable for graduation. Advisors can be of great assistance in helping you get settled and plan a program of study. However, advising is viewed as an on-going process, and students are encouraged to communicate with their advisors whenever necessary. It is recommended that students meet with their advisor AT LEAST once during each semester. Students wishing to change advisors may do so by requesting a new assignment to the Counselor Education Coordinator.

THE COURSEWORK

The Master of Education degree (M.Ed.) is primarily a practitioner-oriented degree and is offered in two specializations: (a) School Counseling K-12 (elementary, middle and secondary); and (b) Community/Agency Counseling. Both programs require a minimum of 48 hours. A seminar (research-based) paper, practicum experience, and a comprehensive examination are required.

The overall format of the program mandates a variety of instructional procedures. The provision of didactic information is interspersed with experiential activities to enhance both cognitive learning and professional growth and development. A variety of instructional strategies are employed to achieve the objectives of the program. Evaluation is integrally related to the achievement of a specific body of knowledge and skills.

Generally, the program seeks candidates with solid academic credentials who possess important experiences in the human services. Although there is no single preferred undergraduate major, we do expect candidates to have substantial coursework in the humanities and social sciences. Those applying from technical programs may be required to take a prerequisite course, EDGC 610 Introduction to Advanced Psychology. Evidence of leadership potential and personal qualities demonstrated by effective counselors is also expected. Candidates who are applying directly from undergraduate programs are expected to demonstrate these experiential and leadership qualities through unusually strong activity records in their undergraduate years.

The following two pages outline the required and elective courses needed for students in the School and Community/Agency Counseling specializations. Each student is required to meet with their advisor to plan a course of study based on background and interests.

REQUIRED COURSES

The following courses are required for the School Counseling Specialization:

EDGC 601	(3)	Introduction to Counselor Education
EDGC 604	(3)	Theories and Techniques of Counseling
EDGC 605	(3)	Individual and Group Appraisal
EDGC 606	(3)	Clinical Applications in Counseling
EDGC 631	(3)	Career Life Development
EDGC 640	(3)	Group Processes in Group Counseling
EDGC 643	(3)	Counseling Children & Adolescents
EDGC 645	(3)	Cross-Cultural Perspectives in Counseling
EDGC 660	(3)	Crisis Management in Counseling
EDGC 670	(3)	Ethical, Legal & Professional Issues in Counseling
EDGC 677	(3)	Practicum in School Counseling
EDGC 697	(3)	Advanced Practicum in School Counseling
EDGC 698	(2-6)	Seminar Paper
EDUC 620	(3)	Human Growth and Development
EDUC 690	(3)	Introduction to Behavioral Research

The following courses are elective courses that students in the School Counseling Specialization are encouraged to choose:

EDGC 602	(3)	Introduction to Community Counseling
EDGC 610	(3)	Introduction to Advanced Psychology
EDGC 612	(3)	Marriage and Family Counseling
EDGC 655	(3)	Social Diversity in Counseling
EDGC 665	(1)	Special Topics (maximum 6 credits)
SPED 600	(3)	Introduction to Special Education

REQUIRED COURSES

The following courses are required for the Community/Agency Counseling Specialization:

EDGC 602	(3)	Introduction to Community Counseling
EDGC 604	(3)	Theories and Techniques of Counseling
EDGC 606	(3)	Clinical Applications in Counseling
EDGC 612	(3)	Marriage and Family Counseling
EDGC 631	(3)	Career Life Development
EDGC 640	(3)	Group Processes in Group Counseling
EDGC 645	(3)	Cross-Cultural Perspectives in Counseling
EDGC 655	(3)	Social Diversity in Counseling
EDGC 660	(3)	Crisis Management in Counseling
EDGC 670	(3)	Ethical, Legal & Professional Issues in Counseling
EDGC 679	(3)	Practicum in Community Counseling
EDGC 698	(2-6)	Seminar Paper
EDGC 699	(3)	Advanced Practicum in Community Counseling
EDUC 620	(3)	Human Growth and Development
EDUC 690	(3)	Introduction to Behavioral Research

The following courses are elective courses that students in the Community Counseling specialization are encouraged to choose:

EDGC 601	(3)	Introduction to Counselor Education
EDGC 605	(3)	Individual and Group Appraisal
EDGC 643	(3)	Counseling Children & Adolescents
EDGC 665	(1)	Special Topics (maximum 6 credits)

THE PRACTICUM

A practicum is required for all students. The practicum is a supervised counseling experience which requires students to integrate and apply the knowledge and skills acquired throughout the Counselor Education program. Students seeking school certification are placed in elementary, middle, and high school settings where they participate in all activities that a professional school counselor is expected to perform. Community/agency students are placed in appropriate agencies where they can participate in all activities expected by a community/mental health provider. Each student is required to do a 500-hour practicum, which includes a 100-hour pre-practicum. The pre-practicum experience is to be undertaken after the completion of 9-12 credits. Its purpose is to provide students with the opportunity to apply some of the concepts and models found in early courses to helping settings. These settings must be approved by Counselor Education coordinator. After the completion of the pre-practicum, students must submit a letter from their supervisor verifying hours and activities performed.

An application for the practicum must be filed with the department one semester prior to the student's plan to take the practicum course. Please note that this course entails the field placement itself *and* a weekly class. Placement approval is arranged by the coordinator.

SEMINAR PAPER

Students must satisfy the research requirement for the degree by completing a seminar paper. The seminar paper consists of the following:

1. Introduction
2. Purpose and significance of the study
3. Definitions
4. Limitations
5. Literature Review
6. Implications for Counseling and Conclusions

This is a research activity wherein data are drawn from the Literature Review.

THE SEMINAR PAPER IS A GRADUATION REQUIREMENT AND WILL REQUIRE APPROVAL FROM THE INSTRUCTOR OF THE COURSE, THE PROGRAM COORDINATOR AND THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

Students must pass a *written* comprehensive examination to fulfill the requirements for the Master of Education degree in Counselor Education.

PURPOSE

The written comprehensive examination is designed to assess students' competencies in the professional core areas of the program. This experience provides students with an

opportunity to integrate, synthesize, and review the material that has been learned in coursework, readings, research experience, and informal interactions with the faculty and other professionals. The examination also allows students to ascertain their strengths and limitations in the competencies required by the program. Finally, the examination provides faculty with information that can be used to ascertain how the curriculum may be improved.

PROCEDURE

The comprehensive examination is taken in or subsequent to the semester in which coursework for the degree is substantially completed.

Students must apply to take the examination the semester prior to when they plan to take the exam and receive approval from their advisor. The examination is usually given in August, the first Saturday of the Fall semester and the third Saturday in January.

EVALUATION

The examination responses are evaluated by faculty members blind to the student's identification. The answer to each question is evaluated independently by the faculty members. Responses are rated as proficient, acceptable or unacceptable.

Faculty members should include comments that will be helpful to the student and advisor in understanding unacceptable ratings. Students who are not successful in passing the comprehensive examination may retake it during the next semester in which the examination is scheduled. The outcome regarding passing or failing is communicated to the student in writing. After students receive notification of a negative outcome, it is highly recommended that they confer with their advisor and review the raters' evaluation and comments of the responses given to each test item.

APPLICATION FOR THE DEGREE

Students must complete the application for graduation in the first three weeks of the semester in which they intend to graduate. *Failure to do so will result in the student having to wait until the next semester to apply for graduation!* This application is filed with the Office of Admissions and Registration. If, for any reason, the student does not graduate at the end of the semester in application was made, they must re-apply.

TIME LIMITS

All requirements for the M.Ed. degree must be completed within five calendar years, beginning with the date the student begins courses applicable to the degree program. Extensions are granted only in the most unusual of circumstances.

ACCEPTABLE GRADES

The Counselor Education Program expects its graduate students to achieve “A” and “B” grades in all letter-graded courses. Students in the program must maintain a 3.0 grade point average. Please note that it is possible for a grade of “C” to be offset by an “A,” etc. Please refer to the University of Maryland Eastern Shore Graduate School Catalog for additional information.

INCOMPLETE GRADE

The “I” (Incomplete) grade is a temporary one. It is given at the discretion of the instructor of a course not completed because of a serious interruption in a student’s work not caused by her/his negligence. An Incomplete (I) grade must be made up by the end of the next regular semester (not including summer sessions) during which the student is registered, unless the instructor involved is unable to allow the makeup. The instructor will notify the student of the date by which the Incomplete grade must be removed. The student must not register again for the course where the Incomplete grade stands. Any Incomplete grade not removed within one full academic year will automatically become a Withdrawn (W) grade and will count as a course attempted.

While occasional receipt of Incomplete grades creates no problems, students should be aware that too frequent requests for such delays in course completion suggest the sort of scheduling difficulty which ought to cause one to re-evaluate the compatibility of one’s various outside commitments and the demands of a graduate education.

COURSES AT OTHER INSTITUTIONS

Generally, up to six credit hours of work towards the M.Ed. will be accepted from other regionally accredited institutions.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Registration at UMES is done using a web-based system entitled HawkWeb. In order to access this system, students must have a UMES email account. This can be accomplished by contacting Information Technology which has offices located in the Waters Hall. Students must present a valid driver's license and complete the necessary paperwork. More specific details regarding HawkWeb and online registration can be found at www.umes.edu/it.

Students admitted into the Counselor Education program are required to pay a one time fee of approximately \$105 to register with TK20 Campus Tools Higher Education (TK20 Assessment System). This fee will cover your enrollment in all education courses during your matriculation in the program. TK20 is a comprehensive assessment and reporting system for collecting and managing class assignments. Students may purchase TK20 by credit card, check or money order at: <https://umes.tk20.com/campustoolshighered/start.do>. TK20 may also be purchased at the UMES bookstore.

REGISTRATION

About two-thirds of the way through each semester, a one-week period is set aside for students to register for the following semester. ***PLEASE DO NOT NEGLECT THE IMPORTANCE OF REGISTERING.*** Moreover, a student obviously cannot move ahead on the completion of needed coursework unless they are properly enrolled. Pre-registration is vital to ensure your continuing status. A student should be alert to relevant deadlines and register on time. Once a student has registered for a given semester, there is an extended period of time during which they may make a request without jeopardizing their status.

ADDING AND DROPPING COURSES

Courses may be added freely during the first week of the semester, provided that space is available and prerequisites are met. Only in exceptional cases, and with the permission of the Dean of the Graduate Studies, will a student be able to add a course after the add period is over. Courses may be dropped during the first two weeks of the current semester, and then a withdrawal can be made until mid-semester.

CHOICE OF COURSES

By and large, a student's choice of graduate courses is dictated by the proposed plan of study. During the first semester, the student and advisor will meet to plan a tentative course of study for each semester. If a student needs to rearrange courses after completing the plan of study, it needs to be approved by their advisor. This is not necessary if the student switches the order of coursework. If, however, the student plans to substitute one course for another, they must get approval so that it becomes a part of their permanent record. With approval from their advisor, the student may proceed to pre-register for the substituted course before completing the paperwork for modifying the plan of study. It is, however, a good idea to take care of the official

change as soon as possible so that there are no unexpected snags at the end of the student's program.

SUMMER COURSES AT UMES

UMES offers two intensive, six-week sessions each summer. The Counselor Education Program generally offers courses each summer, depending upon the need of its students.

FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Usually, the Department of Education has a limited number of graduate assistantships each year. Graduate assistants receive tuition remission, salary and benefits competitive with other institutions in the University of Maryland system. Applications for assistantships are accepted during the Fall semester and decisions are made immediately thereafter. A letter stating interests and qualifications and a current resume are required. There are also scholarships available through the Hazel Scholarship Foundation. Other scholarships are available as well for graduate students. Updates can be found on the departmental website at www.umes.edu.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

University policy statements on non-discrimination, academic integrity, and disclosure of student records are printed in the appendices of the Graduate School Catalog. Generally, the Graduate School adheres to all undergraduate policies in the undergraduate catalog. The University policy statement on sexual harassment is available from the Office of Human Resources in JT Williams Hall.

There are several levels of procedures for resolving academic and professional grievances involving graduate students. When problems arise, reconciliation may involve the Department, the Dean of the Arts and Professions, and the University successively.

Within the Department of Education, problems between a graduate student and a faculty member or members should be settled by open communication and suitable compromise. If an outside mediator is needed, student advisors and the Chair of the Department are available to serve in this capacity.

***POLICY ON PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL
STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR
HANDLING VIOLATIONS OF STANDARDS***

Students in the University of Maryland Eastern Shore Counselor Education Program are required to join the American Counseling Association (ACA), the national professional organization for counseling. The ACA offers student membership rates. Students are also strongly encouraged to sign up for insurance through ACA. The Counselor Education Program also encourages its students to join Maryland's state counseling organization, the Maryland Counseling Association.

The Counselor Education Program at UMES complies with the Ethical Standards of the American Counseling Association. These standards are stressed throughout the curriculum. These standards properly describe the ethical and professional behavior necessary to students seeking degrees in the Department.

STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO FAMILIARIZE THEMSELVES WITH THESE STANDARDS.

If, in the professional judgment of a faculty member, student's behavior appears to be professionally inappropriate or unethical, the following steps provide a guideline:

1. A faculty member who has become aware of the possibility of a problem should attempt to meet with the student to discuss the matter. Depending upon the faculty member's assessment of the situation, she/he may offer the student guidance and suggestions for change.
2. If, in the judgment of the faculty member, the student's behavior is sufficiently serious or of such a character as may best be handled by the Department, she/he should write a confidential letter to the student's advisor and the coordinator of the Counselor Education Program describing the problem and the meeting with the student. The faculty member should attempt to concurrently inform the student in writing that the above individuals have been notified.
3. If, in the judgment of the coordinator of the Counselor Education Program, the matter is sufficiently serious or of such a character as may best be handled by the Department, she/he should inform the Chair and recommend the case be referred to the Department's Appeal Committee for investigation and a recommendation. The student shall be informed of the committee's investigation and shall be offered an opportunity to appear before the committee and be interviewed. If, on the other hand, the coordinator, in consultation with the Chair, determines the matter is not suitable for the Appeals Committee, she/he shall proceed, taking care to provide the student an opportunity to meet with her/him before any final action is determined.
4. The Appeals Committee shall make written findings and recommendations to the Counselor Education Program Coordinator, who will share the results with the Chair

and the student's advisor. A determination in the case will be reached through this consultation.

5. If, in the judgment of the Chair, the matter is sufficiently serious or of such a nature as may result in the removal or suspension of the student from the program, she/he will refer the case to the Dean of the School of Arts and Professions or Vice President for Academic Affairs, who will investigate and make a recommendation to the Chair. The decision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs is final and will be conveyed to the student in writing by the Chair, the coordinator, and the advisor.

SOME PRIMARY UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

PROFESSIONAL MATERIALS CENTER

The Department of Education Professional Materials Center is located in the Hazel Hall Building, and is available for use to Department of Education students. The Center provides materials related to school and community/agency settings, special populations, specific counseling issues, and other related areas. Curriculum resources are also available that may be checked out and used in the student's practicum settings. The Professional Materials Center is staffed by the Department's graduate assistants who maintain posted office hours.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The UMES Campus has a police department that is open and available to students 24 hours a day.

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING CENTER

All University of Maryland Eastern Shore students have access to personal, academic, and career counseling at the University Counseling Center located at the Student Services Center. Their phone number is 410-651-6449.

LIBRARY

The Frederick Douglass Library has numerous resources available to students in the Counselor Education discipline, as well as related disciplines. Books, professional journals as well as computerized searches, interlibrary loans, research book/materials, and a microfiche and microfilm are just to name a few. The library hours and numbers associated with the different department are as follows:

HOURS:	Monday – Thursday	8:00 am – 1:00 am
	Friday	8:00 am – 5:00 pm
	Saturday	9:00 am – 5:00 pm
	Sunday	2:00 pm – 1:00 am

CIRCULATION	(410) 651-7691
DOCUMENTS	(410) 651-6610
DIRECTOR'S OFFICE	(410) 651-6621
INTERACTIVE VIDEO	(410) 651-7738
INTERLIBRARY LOAN	(410) 651-7690
LEARNING TEACHING CENTER	(410) 651-7691
MEDIA CENTER	(410) 651-6275
REFERENCE	(410) 651-7937
SERIALS	(410) 651-6610
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS	(410) 651-7695

CAREER AND PLACEMENT OFFICE

The Office of Career Planning and Placement provides job placement services for all University graduates. Students in the Counselor Education Program are encouraged to register with the placement office and to use student personnel services

UNIVERSITY HEALTH CENTER

The Student health Center is open and available to students during the evening when most Counselor Education classes are offered.

STUDENT SERVICES CENTER

The Student Services Center (SSC) is the cultural, recreational, and social center of the UMES campus.

More information regarding available student services can be found at www.umes.edu/students.

SOME ANSWERS TO SOME FREQUENT QUESTIONS

How many classes do I have to take to get my Master's degree?

The program is a 48-hour credit program. Part-time people usually spread their program out over five years, full-time students usually take 2-2 1/2 years to complete the program.

Is the program accredited?

The School Counseling track is approved by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). This approval shares reciprocity with a number of other states.

What's the program enrollment like? How large are the classes?

We have 40-50 students enrolled in the program and most are part-time students. Class size averages about fifteen (15) students.

What time of day are classes offered?

Classes in the Counselor Education Program are geared toward individuals who are working, therefore, classes are offered in the evening. Most meet once a week from 4-6:30 pm, 5 – 7:30 pm; and 5:30 – 8:00 pm. There are times when a course may meet later. There are a few courses that are offered in a weekend format.

Where do I park? Is the campus accessible?

There is parking adjacent to Hazel Hall. Students must purchase a parking sticker. Most of the campus parking lots allow student vehicles.

Do I need a school ID? Where do I get one?

Yes! All students need an ID to get materials out of the library and for other means of identification. ID's may be obtained at the Hawk Express Office in the SSC. For more information go to www.umes.edu/students

What kind of student organizations are available at the University?

The Department of Education has a chapter of Kappa Delta Pi, an international education honor society. Counselor Education students can be recommended for the campus chapter of Chi Sigma Iota, the honor society for counselor education.

Can I transfer in any credits?

Students are allowed to transfer in **up to** six approved credits from a regionally accredited institution.

What's the difference between school and community/agency counseling?

School and community/agency students take similar coursework. The school counseling specialization enables students to be eligible to become a certified school counselor.

Do I have to write a thesis?

At this time, only a seminar paper is required to graduate.

Can a working person do this program part-time? What about the practicum?

Yes, but the practicum could be problematic. Keeping in close communication with your advisor about what type of practicum setting you are interested in is key. Attempts will be made to make some of the practicum hours flexible. Nevertheless, in order to successfully complete this aspect of the program, it will probably require you to make some temporary adjustment in your work schedule.

Do I really need to purchase the Tk20 Assessment System?

Yes, all undergraduate and graduate students in the Department of Education are required to purchase the Tk20 Assessment System. Tk20 is an assessment system that allows you to upload your assignments electronically. A link to Tk20 can be found at the Department of Education website: www.umes.edu/education.