

Masters of Science in Applied Psychology (MAP)

Department of Applied Psychology

Counseling Psychology

Bouvé College of Health Sciences

I. Purpose of the 30 Credit MAP, Counseling Psychology

A one-year 30 credit Masters of Science in Applied Psychology (MAP) is proposed with the purpose of providing evidence-based knowledge and counseling skills to students at the Post-Baccalaureate level who are interested in pursuing a PhD in Counseling Psychology or who seek to further develop competencies in critical areas of applied psychology. This one year MAP emphasizes counseling theory, intervention, research and statistics, career and vocational counseling, developmental approaches throughout the life span, family systems, risk and resilient factors, adverse events during childhood, clinical skills, multicultural competencies across differences, diagnosis and treatment of substance use and mental illness, as well as treatment modalities for individuals, groups, and family.

Designed to provide graduates with training for achieving better functional outcomes in their work with persons who contend with behavioral health disorders, the MAP is not duplicative of existing degree programs in the Department of Applied Psychology and does not replace the existing 60-credits Master of Science in Counseling Psychology (MSCP). On July 1, 2017, the Massachusetts Board of Allied Mental Health, which is the regulatory body for licensed mental health counselors in the Commonwealth, decreed that the 30 credit Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies (CAGS) was no longer a pathway to counseling licensure. Historically, the 30-credits CAGS at Northeastern was used to supplement previously obtained Master's degrees that did not meet the required 60-credits threshold for counseling licensure. The proposed MAP, unlike the existing MSCP, would not lead to licensure eligibility as a mental health counselor.

The MAP is timely, impactful, and agile. Students who desire a relevant and vibrant graduate education from an esteemed private university would be excellent candidates for this unique degree. In addition to individuals, families, employers, and communities bear mental health burdens associated with loneliness and depression, domestic violence, gun violence, sexual assault, discrimination, and poverty. Although effective mental health treatment has been shown to improve occupational, educational, psychological, physical, and social functioning, the majority of people with a diagnosable mental health disorder do not receive treatment from a professional with advanced training in applied psychology.

II. Unique Aspects of MAP

This 30 credit degree provides a leaner and faster way for entry into PhD Counseling Psychology programs requiring completion of a Master's degree. Several factors make the MAP attractive. First, not all students who seek training in applied psychology desire pursuit of a two-year Master's program which takes four years or more to get licensed as a mental health counselor. Second, the 30 credit MAP would enable students to pursue and complete an advanced graduate degree in Applied Psychology within one year.

Third, the MAP would encourage Post-BA admission into our PhD Counseling Psychology. Fourth, a MAP would allow PhD students to receive the MAP-only if continuation with the PhD

is neither feasible nor desired. Fifth, The MAP could facilitate transfer into the 60 credit MSCP after the end of the first semester upon student's request, faculty review, and approval.

MAP courses are currently populated by students who are enrolled in the two-year Master of Science in Counseling Psychology program, which honors both practitioner and scientist models. Northeastern avows global citizenship and supports an ecological framework where intercultural competencies are supported. The MAP would reflect this ecological model.

III. Clientele

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, mental health professionals are among the top 30 fastest growing jobs in 2020. Projected increase is 36%. Graduates of the MAP would be prepared to work in a variety of settings, such as community mental health agencies, higher education, residential facilities, forensic settings, and within health care organizations. Across these settings, competency in behavioral health prevention and intervention are essential given rising stress loads related to poverty, racial, gender, and LGBT discrimination, substance use disorders, economic instability, gun violence, and immigration trauma. The targeted clientele for the MAP include students who seek entry into a PhD in Counseling Psychology Program. Graduates of Baccalaureate degrees in Human Services, Psychology, and Health Sciences and desire quality training in Applied Psychology but do not seek to become Licensed Mental Health Counselors are also ideal for the MAP.

Case management, telemedicine at hospitals, intakes, suicidality risk assessments, prevention programming in residential centers describe but a few functions across integrated health and patient care that this innovative graduate degree would support.

- 1) The MAP is relevant for post-baccalaureate students from behavioral science programs who seek entry into our PhD in Counseling Psychology program and who do not wish to pursue a path to licensure as a mental health counselor. All of the didactic pre-requisite Counseling Psychology PhD coursework at Northeastern is fulfilled through the MAP.
- 2) The MAP is relevant for students who have completed a Bachelor's degree in Psychology or related field, are gainfully employed, do not wish to pursue licensure as a mental health counselor, but seek to complement their current professional knowledge and training with advanced training in applied psychology. More specifically, Bachelor level health professionals, such as case managers, case workers, public health professionals, dietitians, registered nurses, occupational therapists, corrections officers, administrative assistants, human service professionals, audiology technicians, and Bachelor-level paralegals would benefit from the MAP to acquire knowledge of counseling and developmental theory, psychopathology, clinical skills, and multicultural competencies that would inform and elevate provider care.

- 3) The MAP is relevant for professionals who have completed a non-counseling Master's degree (e.g., Education, Anthropology, Sociology, and Criminal Justice) and are interested in elevating their current practice and earning potential with advanced training in behavioral health.

IV. 30 Credits Curriculum for MAP

Table 1.

30 Credits MAP

Fall I (Fall 2020)	Spring 1 (Spring 2021)
CAEP 6200: Introduction to Counseling: Theory and Process in an Ecological Context	CAEP 6242: Psychopathology, Diagnosis, & Treatment
CAEP 6255: Early Intervention: Family Systems	CAEP 6203: Understanding Culture & Diversity
CAEP 6220: Development Across the Life Span	CAEP 6287: Group Counseling
CAEP 6235: Vocational, Educational, and Career Counseling	CAEP 6202: Research, Data Analysis, and Evaluation
CAEP 6399: Clinical Skills	CAEP 5125: Introduction to Statistics

V. Focus of the Proposed MAP and Comparison to the MSCP

The current proposal is focused on the 30 credits MAP which serves as entry into a PhD in Counseling Psychology program when a Master's degree is required. The MAP course work fulfills all of the existing pre-requisite education hours for PhD in Counseling Psychology at Northeastern.

- 1) The proposed MAP for PhD entry is 30 credit hours. The MSCP is 60 credit hours and is in compliance with the Board of Allied Mental Health's criteria for LMHC approval once post-Master's hours have been fulfilled. To become licensed as a mental health counselor in MA as in most states, students must graduate from a 60-credits Master's program.

- 2) The MAP would **not** lead to licensure eligibility as a mental health or clinical counselor. The MSCP leads to licensure-eligibility as a mental health counselor in Massachusetts as well as in other states once specific state requirements are fulfilled (e.g., California requires professional counselors to have a 3 credit course in Psychopharmacology).
- 3) The MAP supports transfer from the MAP into the MSCP program after the first semester with approval by the faculty. Enrollment into the MSCP program after the completion of the MAP is not possible.
- 4) The MAP does not require a practicum. The MSCP requires a 100-hour practicum and the 600-hour internship are part of the 60-credits curriculum.
- 5) The proposed MAP is designed to be completed in 2 semesters of full-time study. The MSCP at Northeastern requires 4 semesters of full-time study plus one summer.
- 6) The proposed MAP meets **all** of the pre-requisites for prospective PhD students in Counseling Psychology. MSCP graduates who enter the PhD in Counseling Psychology program meet all PhD pre-requisites
- 7) According to 2019-2020 data, each credit in the Bouvè College of Health Sciences is \$1,560. The 30 credit MAP will cost \$46,800.

<https://studentfinance.northeastern.edu/billing-payments/tuition-and-fees/>

Primary differences between the proposed MAP and the existing MSCP program are summarized below in Table 2:

Table 2.**The MAP and MSCP Comparison**

Program of Study	MAP	MSCP
1. Total Number of Credit Hours	30	60
2. Degree Level	Masters in Applied Psychology	Masters of Science in Counseling Psychology
3. Eligibility for State Counseling Licensure as LMHC	NO	YES
4. Transfer to 60 credits MSCP Program	Yes, after first semester with faculty approval	N/A
5. Entry into MSCP program after MAP completion	NO	N/A
6. Third Party Insurance Reimbursement	NO	YES. LMHCs can work independently and bill insurance
7. Practicum Required	NO	YES
8. Time for Full-Time Program Completion	2 Semesters	4 Semesters plus summer
9. Meets PhD in Counseling Psychology pre-requisites	YES	YES
10. Graduate coursework is taken in conjunction with Baccalaureate sequence	NO	NO
11. Cost	\$46,800 (30 credits)	\$93,600 (60 credits)

VI. Additional Resources Required for the Proposed MAP

No additional resources would be required for the proposed MAP. Dr. Robinson-Wood has offered to coordinate this program. An advanced PhD student who is proficient in statistics could teach CAEP 5125, Introduction to Statistics.

VII. Analysis of Potential Competitor Programs

Boston College offers a 48 credit Master's in Mental Health Counseling that would not lead to licensure as a Mental Health Counselor. The courses are as follows:

- 1) Theories of Personality and Counseling I
- 2) Theories of Personality and Counseling II
- 3) Issues in Life-Span Development
- 4) Multicultural Issues

- 5) Psychopathology
- 6) Ethical and Legal Issues
- 7) Foundations of Counseling I
- 8) Foundations of Counseling II
- 9) Internship
- 10) Research and Statistics
- 11) Electives, 15 credits.

VIII. Non-Licensure Status

The MAP does not lead to mental health counseling licensure and is not subject to a regulatory body.