

Approved by the Board of Trustees
March 12, 2020

Board Meeting
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ESTABLISH THE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING,
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND THE GRADUATE COLLEGE, URBANA

Action: Establish the Master of Science in Mental Health Counseling, College of Education and the Graduate College

Funding: No New Funding Required

The Chancellor, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Vice President, University of Illinois with the advice of the Urbana-Champaign Senate recommends approval of a proposal from the College of Education and the Graduate College to establish the Master of Science in Mental Health Counseling.

While there is a growing nation-wide gap in the number of mental health workers available to meet need, the state of Illinois faces a significant shortage, with approximately 18 providers for every 10,000 residents, which is well below the national average. In parallel, the American Psychological Association (APA) has ended its nearly seven-decade debate around educational requirements for entry into professional practice. The APA is now developing an accreditation process to promote master's-level preparation in the practice of scientifically-based, culturally-responsive counseling and psychological services. Timing is perfect for a research-oriented department such as the Department of Educational Psychology to establish such a master's program. The proposed Master of Science in Mental Health Counseling (M.S. in MHC) will

complement the department's APA-accredited doctoral program in counseling psychology. Graduates of the M.S. in MHC will receive broad training in mental health counseling, with an emphasis on evidence-based practice, cultural responsiveness, and outreach. They will thus be able to help provide services to address the unmet mental health needs of residents in Illinois and bordering states. The program has been designed to meet the Illinois Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) requirements, and given the department's strength of training in research, cultural diversity, and practice, the M.S. in MHC is poised to meet accreditation requirements currently under development by the APA.

Current facilities, including library resources, are adequate to support the program. Of the 61 credits required for the M.S. in MHC, 57 will be fulfilled by students enrolling in currently existing courses taught by counseling psychology faculty. Impact on class size will be addressed through the assignment of additional teaching assistants, the cost of which will be covered by tuition revenue created from the program. Based on anticipated enrollment, a full-time, tenure-track faculty in counseling psychology will be hired to teach courses, supervise master's students, and participate in the doctoral program. In addition to this faculty member, a program coordinator/supervisor who will serve as a liaison to program practicum training agencies, provide students with clinical placement support, and teach a professional development seminar will be hired. Tuition revenue from the program is anticipated to be adequate to cover the costs of these hires as well, and additional support will be provided if needed by the College of Education.

The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes*, *The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The Executive Vice President and Vice President for Academic Affairs concurs with this recommendation. The University Senates Conference has indicated that no further Senate jurisdiction is involved.

The President of the University recommends approval. This action is subject to further review and approval by the Illinois Board of Higher Education.