



Alabama Board of Examiners in Counseling

2777 Zelda Road • Montgomery, Alabama 36106

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSURE

Following discussion and consideration by the Alabama Board of Examiners in Counseling (ABEC) at its board meeting on July 22, 2022, the ABEC has approved the following:

Code of Alabama §34-8A-7(4):

The applicant has received a master's degree, from a regionally accredited institution of higher learning, which is primarily professional counseling in content based on national standards, or the substantial equivalent in both subject matter and extent of training. The board shall use the standards of nationally recognized professional counseling associations as guides in establishing the standards for counselor licensure.

and

ABEC Administrative Rule 255-X-3-.01(2):

(a) Prior to January 1, 2024, a master's degree in counseling is defined as a single conferred/awarded master's degree in counseling, consisting of a minimum of forty-eight (48) graduate semester hours, or seventy-two (72) graduate quarter hours at a regionally accredited college or university (e.g., Southern Association of Colleges and Schools). The master's degree must contain and encompass the academic areas specified below in paragraph 2(b). Beginning January 1, 2024, a master's degree in counseling is defined as a single conferred/awarded master's degree in counseling from a CACREP accredited program, consisting of a minimum of sixty (60) graduate semester hours, or ninety (90) graduate quarter hours at a regionally accredited college or university (e.g., Southern Association of Colleges and Schools). The master's degree must contain and encompass the academic areas specified below in paragraph 2(b). No less than these hourly requirements and academic areas in a single program will be accepted.

(b) All applicants shall have a master's degree from a CACREP (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs) or CORE (Commission on Rehabilitation and Education) accredited program, or the content equivalent of CACREP or CORE in the hours specified above in paragraph 2(a). Content equivalent is minimally defined as graduate course work in each of the following academic areas (acceptable area content must be based on focal content (primary) rather than ancillary (secondary) emphasis in the courses used to meet each area requirement:

To reiterate, the master's degree that an ALC or LPC license is based upon must be a single completed degree program in counseling that fulfills the required minimum of academic hours acquired in a program degree at a regionally accredited college or university [ABEC Administrative Rule 255-X-3-.01(2)(a)] and contains within that program the eleven (11) academic areas as defined in ABEC Administrative Rule 255-X-3-.01(2)(b). Multiple degrees cannot be used to meet the academic requirements for licensure. The Board does not accept additional course work added on to fulfill the academic areas after the completion of the degree, and additional coursework or degrees will not be considered.



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Academic Areas

1. **Counseling Theory:** Includes studies of theories, principles and techniques of clinical mental health counseling and their application to professional counseling settings and treatment of mental and emotional disorders.
2. **Human Growth and Development:** Includes studies that provide a broad understanding of the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental levels; normal and abnormal behavior; psychopathology; personality theory; life-span theory; and learning theory within cultural context.
3. **Social and Multicultural Foundations:** Includes studies that provide a broad understanding of societal changes and trends; human roles; societal subgroups; social mores and interaction patterns; multicultural and pluralistic trends; differing lifestyles; and major societal concerns including trauma, crisis, stress, person abuse, substance abuse, discrimination and methods for alleviating these concerns.
4. **The Helping Relationship:** Includes studies that provide a broad understanding of philosophic bases of helping processes; counseling theories and their clinical applications; basic and advanced helping skills, consultation theories and their applications; client and helper self-understanding and self-development; facilitation of client or consultee change; diagnostic process including differential diagnosis; etiology, nomenclature, treatment, referral, and prevention of mental and emotional disorders.
5. **Group Dynamics, Processing and Counseling:** Includes studies that provide a broad understanding of group development, dynamics, and counseling theories; group leadership styles; basic and advanced group counseling methods and skills; and other group approaches.
6. **Lifestyle and Career Development:** Includes studies that provide a broad understanding of career development theories; occupational and educational information sources and systems; career and leisure counseling, guidance, and education; lifestyle and career decision-making; career development program planning, resources, and effectiveness evaluation.
7. **Appraisal of Individuals:** Includes studies that provide a broad understanding of group and individual educational and psychometric theories and approaches to appraisal and assessment; data and information gathering methods; validity and reliability; psychometric statistics; factors influencing appraisals; and use of appraisal results in diagnostic and helping processes. Additionally, the specific ability to administer and interpret tests and inventories to assess abilities, behaviors, interests, and identify career options is necessary.
8. **Research and Evaluation:** Includes studies that provide a broad understanding of types of



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research and their application and use in clinical mental health counseling practices; basic statistics; research-report development; research implementation; program evaluation; needs assessment; publication of research information; and ethical and legal considerations.

9. Professional Orientation: Includes studies that provide a broad understanding of clinical mental health counseling roles and functions; professional goals and objectives; professional organizations and associations; professional history and trends; ethical and legal standards of clinical mental health counseling; clinical mental health counselor preparation standards; professional licensure and credentialing; and legislation and government policy relevant to clinical mental health counseling.

10. Practicum: Provides for the development of individual and group counseling skills under supervision. The practicum must be taken through a regionally accredited institution, for a total of one hundred (100) clock hours. A minimum of forty (40) clock hours must be direct service work with clients. At least 80% of the direct service work with clients in the practicum must be in counseling sessions with clients. Assessment activities with clients may not account for more than 20% of the direct services in the practicum. A minimum of one (1) clock hour per week must be of individual supervision by program faculty, and a minimum of one and one-half (1 ½) clock hours per week must be group supervision.

11. Internship: Provides an opportunity for the student to perform all the activities that a regularly employed staff member in the setting would be expected to perform. The internship must be a minimum of six hundred (600) clock hours, to include: a minimum of two hundred and forty (240) hours of direct service work with clients. At least 80% of the direct service work with clients in the internship must be in counseling sessions with clients. Assessment activities with clients may not account for more than 20% of the direct services in the internship. A minimum of one (1) clock hour per week must be of individual supervision by program faculty, and a minimum of one and one-half (1 1/2) clock hours per week must be group supervision.