

## **Matriculation Requirements**

In general, students must successfully pass through **four portals** to complete the Master of Arts in Counseling. (Portals I-IV are designated for undergraduate programs in the College).

### **Portal V: Entry to NSU Graduate Studies (Regular or Conditional Admission)**

### **Portal VI: Admission to the Counseling Program**

To be admitted to the Counseling program, prospective students must first attain regular or conditional admission to the Graduate School at Northwestern State University. In addition to the application materials for Graduate Studies, applicants must submit a completed application portfolio to the Counseling Program Admissions Committee, which includes the following:

1. A letter requesting consideration for program admission to a Counseling Program concentration (School Counseling or Clinical Mental Health Counseling), including the applicant's reasons for selecting that particular program concentration.
2. A current resume including full name, address, phone numbers, e-mail address, academic experiences, prior related work experiences, degrees held, honors, awards, special interests, and other appropriate information.
3. Three (3) reference forms from individuals familiar with the applicant's academic abilities and potential for success as a professional counselor.
4. An autobiographical narrative showing evidence of life experiences and personal maturity indicating appropriateness for the counseling field.

Admission to the Counseling Program and each concentration is selective and requires a favorable evaluation by the Counseling Program Admissions Committee. Successful applicants will be notified by a letter of acceptance from the Counseling Coordinator into the Counseling Program within two weeks after participation in the mandatory program admission interview.

### **Portal VII: Admission to Practicum**

In order to be admitted to the Practicum in Counseling (COUN 5570 or COUN 5550), students must earn a minimum of 12 hours in counseling specific coursework and complete the following courses with a grade of "B" or better: COUN 5000, COUN 5530, COUN 6500, and COUN 5580. Additionally students enrolled in the School Counseling concentration must have the pre- or co-requisite of COUN 5540; students enrolled in the Clinical Mental Health Concentration must have the pre- or co-requisite of COUN 5830. Experiential or skills courses taken at another university may not substitute for equivalent courses at NSU and must be re-taken before admission to practicum. An application for Practicum must be submitted to the Field Experiences Coordinator by March 1 for the Fall Semester and October 1 for the Spring Semester.

### **Portal VIII: Exit Program with M.A.**

To successfully exit the Counseling Program, the student must meet the graduation requirements for the Counseling Program. These requirements include the following:

1. Completion of all coursework with a 3.0 GPA or better, and no more than six semester hours with a grade of "C."
2. Successful completion of all components of the Comprehensive Exam.
3. Successful completion of thesis or paper-in-lieu of thesis.