

## Counseling/Therapy and Related Professions

- Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC)
- Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)
- Substance Abuse Counselor
- Applied Behavioral Analysis (BcABA)
- Rehabilitation Counselor
- School Counselor
- Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT)
- School Psychologist

The best course of action to truly understand this field and related fields, would be to **speak with professionals** in these fields, but maybe we can help you understand the basics first:


Most of these professions require a Master’s Degree, but requirements may differ based on each particular job title. Specific course and education requirements for mental health counseling, marriage and family therapy, and social work licensure are dictated by state laws and regulations. However, most states follow the guidelines established by:

- **CACREP – Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs – LMHC**
- **COAMFTE – Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education – LMFT**
- **CSWE – Council on Social Work Education – LCSW**

*You do not have to attend an accredited program to be licensed – just make sure your graduate program meets state licensing requirements.*

Do an **Informational Interview**: Chat with a counselor or social worker to learn more about those fields!

- Counselors near UCF
- UCF Alumni on LinkedIn
- Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) 407-823-2811

	<p><b>UCF Graduate Programs</b> related to counseling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College of Community Innovation &amp; Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Counselor Education MA:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Clinical Mental Health Counseling</li> <li>▪ School Counseling</li> <li>▪ Marriage and Family Counseling</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>School Psychology, EdS</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• College of Sciences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Clinical Psychology MA</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• College of Health Professions &amp; Sciences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Social Work MSW</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Go to UCF Graduate Catalog online. Click on Programs by College on right side menu</p>
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### Counselor vs. Psychologist

- There is a fair amount of overlap between what these two professionals do, who they work with and how they provide treatment. The biggest difference has to do with the level of education attained. Most psychologists will need to have a doctoral degree while most counselors will need to have a master’s degree to practice. Psychologists are accredited by APA and Counselors are accredited by CACREP. Psychologists may be more involved in the research aspect of the field than a counselor. Neither should be confused with a *Psychiatrist*, who is a medical doctor who has attended medical school and is able to prescribe medication. Some psychologists and counselors may work with a psychiatrist if medication is needed for a client’s stability.

### Counselor vs. Social Worker

- You can provide one-on-one counseling with either job title. Many social workers provide counseling services to their clients in addition to assisting their clients with putting social services in place to help their client. These services may include connecting their clients with employment assistance, housing programs, support groups, and contacting other resources that would improve the lives of their client. (Social work and Clinical Psych MA may help with going towards Clinical Psych Doctorate)

## Did you know?

- You do not need your PhD., PsyD., or M.D. to have your own practice. You just need a Master’s Degree and a few years of counseling experience and business experience before attempting to open your own practice. Talk to Professionals in the field to find out more about this.

## Preparing for Graduate Programs/Careers in Counseling and Related Fields

### Program Prerequisites

- One thing you will want to do is visit the websites of different graduate programs or request information from them. Some programs do have prerequisites. This happens more often with specialty counseling programs.
- Traditional mental health or rehabilitation counseling don’t really have specific prerequisites (aside from having a Bachelor’s degree), though some general programs do require social science coursework.
- In some states, you can't become a school counselor without a teaching background. In the majority, though, you can. Some schools favor candidates who do have backgrounds in education or a related social service field. If you have enough experience outside the classroom, this may be adequate.

(From: <http://www.counselor-license.com>)

### Specializing

- You can still find a way to specialize (eating disorders, substance abuse, art therapy, etc.) even in a very general counseling/therapy program. You will be networking with your faculty in these programs who may have the same area of interest as you. Also, you typically find your niche and tailor your papers, presentations, and research to your “specialty” area while in your Graduate Program.

### Relevant Experience

- For counseling or any other related “helping” field, any experience related to working with/helping others, is beneficial to prepare you for a Master’s program.
- Many states even certify individuals who have less than a master’s education in counseling-related positions. *Substance abuse counseling* is often a possibility.
- You may look to your state’s Department of Mental Health (i.e. Mental Health Association of Central Florida) for volunteer or paid employment options.
- As a prospective school counselor, you will want to get involved in the K-12 system (i.e. as a substitute teacher). You may also tutor individuals and small groups – in the process, you’ll learn a little about classroom management.

#### Examples of Relevant Internship/Volunteering Experience:

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| • ASPIRE Health Partners                       | • Give Kids the World                     |
| • Children’s Home Society of Florida           | • Musician’s On Call                      |
| • The Center or Zebra Coalition                | • Registered Behavior Technician (RBT)    |
| • Mental Health Association of Central Florida | • Daycare centers, childcare, nanny       |
| • Harbor House – Women’s Shelter               | • Substitute teacher, or school volunteer |

#### Examples of Related Jobs with a Bachelor’s Degree:

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| • Crisis Intervention Counselor                        | • K-12 or Special Education Teacher                  |
| • Rehab Counselor                                      | • Daycare centers, childcare, nanny                  |
| • Substance Abuse Counselor                            | • Substitute teacher, or school volunteer            |
| • Child Life/Development Specialist                    | • Caseworker/Case Manager                            |
| • Child Welfare or Protection Social Worker            | • Social and Human Services Aide or Assistant        |
| • Board Certified Assistant Behavioral Analyst (BCaBA) | • Academic Advisor (at a Community or State College) |