

## Information and Advice About Applying

### Strengthening Your Application

Admission to the Master's in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program is very competitive. We carefully review all applicants to the program and admissions decisions are made based on the strength of the *entire* application, including the interview. We consider the entire package! As such, you should carefully prepare your application and take the following points into consideration:

**The Graduate Record Examination:** The GRE General Examination scores are not required for admission, but are highly recommended. It is not necessary to submit the GRE Psychology Subject Test Scores. We do not use "cut scores," and GRE scores are only one of the indicators of potential success that we consider when reviewing an application. Finally, it is strongly suggested that you prepare for this exam before you take it.

**The Statement of Objectives:** Mental health counseling is a rewarding, but often difficult profession. You should first consider why you are interested in the field and what strengths you may bring to the field. Be sure to research the field of professional counseling and how it differs from other similar fields (e.g. psychology and social work). We are interested in how you view your potential to be a professional counselor, as well as your career aspirations. Additionally, we are interested in your writing ability. Be sure to proofread your statement carefully, as spelling mistakes or grammatical errors will detract from the overall presentation of your application.

**Academic Background:** You should highlight your academic and professional experience as it relates to the field of counseling. This should include any relevant coursework, research experiences, and field work/internships. We maintain preadmission requirements of at least 12 undergraduate credits in Psychology, including at least one course in Abnormal Psychology, one course in Statistics, and one course in Advanced Research Methods. If you are missing some of these courses, it is still possible that you could be offered admission, contingent upon completion of these courses. Our program is academically rigorous and requires that you have a solid academic background. If you do not have strong academic skills, you might want to consider taking additional undergraduate coursework before applying to the program in order to demonstrate your potential in graduate school.

**Practical Experience:** Having practical experience with a client population can be very helpful preparation for this program. In the second year of the master's program, students apply for practicum placements in the field. While we assist students in applying for these placements, the spots are competitive. As such, students should be able to demonstrate on their CVs applicable experience that would prepare them for placements. In your application, you should discuss this practical/clinical experience (if you have had it) and describe what you perceive your strengths and weaknesses to be in this setting. You could also discuss which counseling skills you would like to enhance. If you have never had any contact with a client population, you might want to consider obtaining some experience before coming to the program. It is possible that you may be offered admission, contingent upon engaging in practical/clinical experience. Also, some people

who are "natural helpers" for their families and friends find it is more difficult than they anticipated to work with clients experiencing more serious mental health problems.

**Research Experience:** The Master's in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program offers two tracks: The Thesis Track and The Advanced Clinical Track (see [Two Track Options](#)). While the Thesis Track entails more in-depth research, both tracks require successful completion of courses in statistics and research methods to meet the national standards for licensure (LAC/LPC). It is, therefore, highly recommended that you obtain additional research experience (outside of undergraduate courses) to help prepare you for graduate-level work. An example of this would be volunteering in an undergraduate faculty member's lab. Be sure to identify any additional research experience on your application.

**Letters of Recommendation:** These letters are intended to be from individuals who are able to comment on your ability to succeed in a graduate-level program. As such, you are advised to seek out individuals who can best comment on this ability. This might include past professors, supervisors/employers with advanced degrees, or academic advisors. This rarely includes family members or friends.

## **Applying to the Program**

Applications to the program are accepted on a rolling basis up until February 15th. All applications received prior to that date will receive a full programmatic review. Some applicants will be invited for an in-person interview after the initial review of their application. The in-person interview is a required part of the application process. Applications received after the above date may be reviewed if there are open slots remaining in the program.

Admissions to all graduate programs at Rowan University are first submitted to Rowan Global. If you have any questions about the admissions process, feel free to call Rowan Global Admissions at 856.256.2500 x 4747. When your application is complete, it is then forwarded to the graduate program to which you have applied. If you are interested in applying to the program, you may [apply online](#). Once your application is complete, it will be forwarded to the Program Coordinator for review.