

SESL Counseling Programs FAQ

I want to apply for the counseling programs? How do I do that and what is the process?

- Both the mental health and professional counseling programs require that interested persons apply to the program through the Office of Graduate Studies at <https://www.nsu.edu/graduate-studies/forms>. After the application is completed with the necessary document, the department sets up interview dates with the faculty. The process can take up to 3 (three) weeks from the time of the interview to a decision being rendered by the department admission committee.

How many credit hours are required for the degree? How many courses are in the program?

- Each counseling program is 60 semester hours or 20 courses. 15 courses are standard counseling courses, and 5 are degree tracks specific courses exclusive to professional school or mental health counseling.

How many hours are required for financial aid? How many hours are normally taken during the semester?

- 6 credit hours or two courses are required for financial aid. Typically, students take 9 to 12 hours or 3 to 4 courses per semester.

Can I get both a degree in school and mental health counseling?

- No. Students can earn a degree in either track. However, they can also take courses in the sister track for an additional endorsement for licensure.

How are the classes offered in the program?

- The classes are offered online (mini-term) and in person (full term & mini-term) on the NSU main campus, the Virginia Beach Higher Education Center or the Norfolk Naval Base.

Does the program offer assistantships?

- The department does not directly offer assistantships. Graduate assistantships are offered through the Office of Graduate Studies. Students are encouraged to apply for all financial assistance opportunities on and off campus and the private sector.

What courses are being offered next semester?

- It depends. Some courses are only offered at certain times during the academic year. Courses are only sometimes guaranteed to be offered based on student enrollment. Please check with your advisor about the courses you are interested in or need to take.

How do I enroll in courses that I need? Can I be enrolled over the phone?

- Once you are accepted as a degree-seeking or non-degree-seeking student, you have the choice to enroll yourself for courses or wait to meet with your advisor. For degree-seeking students, please consult with your advisor about the courses you want to take to ensure they fit within your chosen counseling program. For non-degree-seeking students, the best practice is to email the program coordinator or department chair your requested courses, and your request will be forwarded to the registrar. Once enrolled in the course, as a non-degree-seeking student you have 48 hours to pay for the course before you are dropped. Reenrolling in that same course may be difficult once a student is dropped from the course.

I cannot get in touch with my advisor. They are not returning my telephone calls to their office.

- The professors have office hours but also have university responsibilities. Even during their office hours, they have meetings. It is best to email your professor, including contact information, and they will return your email or contact you, usually in 48 hours or less. If you email the professor, they may choose to respond to their email if they are in a meeting or out doing university business. Please remember that faculty members do not reply to emails on holidays and weekends. Emails sent during those times will be answered in the 48-hours starting the next business day.

Can I use my job as my internship?

- For school counseling, no. The Office of Clinical Experiences and Student Services places professional counseling students at internships in local school systems. There is no guarantee the students will be placed in their own school or even home district.
- For mental health counseling, no. Mental health students are responsible for securing their own practicum/internship placements based on their schedules. While students may use their job as a practicum or internship site, their internship **must** be different from their actual job and duties. Getting a different practicum/internship site encourages students to experience counseling in another setting.

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I graduated from the program when it was less than 60 hours. Can I return to complete the additional courses for the updated degree?

- Yes, you can return as a non-degree seeking student to enroll in anywhere from 4 to 8 courses depending on your degree transcript as you have already completed a degree in the program.
- ◆ If you were enrolled and graduated with 48 hours (Fall 2012-Spring 2018), then you will need these four courses: Intro to Counseling Supervision (COED 680), Psychopathology (COED 700), Counseling Practicum (COED 710C), Crisis and Intervention (UED 720).
- ◆ If you were enrolled and graduated with 36 or 39 hours (Fall 2006-Spring 2012) then you will need these courses which vary according to your transcript: Ethics (COED 620), Family Systems (COED 640), Multiculturalism (UED 606), Addictions (COED 644), Diagnosis & Treatment (COED 650), Intro to Counseling Supervision (COED 680), Psychopathology (COED 700), Counseling Practicum (COED 710C), Crisis and Intervention (UED 720) and Internship II (UED 794 or 794C) to make a 600 hour internship. All internships at 36 and 39 hours were only 400 hours and will **not** meet the Virginia Board of Counseling's internship requirements for QMHP or LPC.

You can check the website for the 60-credit hour course list then compare the courses you have completed.

Is there any financial aid for the extra courses past my degree?

- No. Only degree-seeking students receive financial aid. However, students are encouraged to search for scholarships both locally and nationally to assist with tuition. Check to see if your employment provides tuition reimbursement which means payment out of pocket might have to come first.

The Virginia Board of Counseling states that the university completes licensure documents. Can I get that done in a week?

- No. After submitting the release for verification form, the process can take 10 business days to complete excluding holidays and weekends. Once the release form is received, a notification is generated when completed forms are emailed to VA Counseling Board. There is no expediting process.

I need my licensure paperwork filled out. Can I drop it off at the office to be filled out and have it emailed to me?

- Completed QMHP documents will be directly emailed from the university to the QMHP Dropbox. Completed licensure documents for LPC will be submitted to the licensure board's email to be added to the applicant's online application. A verification form to release this information must be completed by the applicant and returned before the request is put in que as these documents contain personal identifying information. Applicants will receive email notification upon submission.

When I checked with the Virginia Board of Counseling, they did not have any paperwork from the university. What is the delay?

When applying for LPC or QMHP, it is best to complete the application online which creates an applicant portal. The university will submit NSU verification documents to the board and the board will upload the documents to the applicant's portal. The Virginia Board of Counseling gets thousands of applications monthly, so allow extra time from when NSU submits the completed documents to the board via email to the applicant's portal. Once you submit the application and the university emails the verification documents, please allow the licensure board at least 3 weeks to process the entire application in the portal.

If I do not have a 600-hour internship, how do I get the extra hours needed for the 500 hours QMHP requirement or the 600-hour LPC requirement?

- Extra hours must be completed through a former or current place of employment for QMHP requirements.
- Extra hours must be completed through an internship course for LPC requirements.
- Please remember the department can **ONLY** verify what hours were completed while enrolled in the counseling education program.
- The counseling department **cannot** verify hours from another graduate program on or off campus or undergraduate program.

Note: When applying for QMHP, once NSU submits the applicant's verification documents to the QMHP Dropbox and emails the applicant with the submission notification, the applicant needs to follow-up with the board with any questions.

Note: When applying for LPC, once NSU submits the applicant's verification documents to the VA Board of Counseling email, the applicant needs to follow-up with the board with any questions.