

## Graduate Studies in Clinical-Counseling Psychology

Clinical-counseling psychology is a merging of two sub-disciplines of psychology that share much in common. Clinical psychology traditionally has had a focus on the diagnosis and therapeutic treatment of abnormal psychological conditions that arise from an interplay of biological and sociocultural risk factors. Counseling psychology has traditionally addressed the stressors and life challenges that are experienced by everyone, even those whose backgrounds or psychological states are abnormal. Both sub-disciplines share an approach to working with distressed individuals that is empirically-based, ethically-sound, and involves critical thinking. See the Graduate Programs in Illinois for the Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor sections near the bottom of this document for additional information.

### Required Degrees

There are several degrees in psychology that allow an individual to diagnose and treat people with abnormal conditions or normal life stressors. In graduate school, students can obtain a Ph.D. or a Psy.D. in clinical psychology, or an Ed.D. or Ph.D. in counseling psychology.

In 2006, Illinois created the Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor license, which requires a master's degree. The master's degree requirements are two years of graduate study involving a specified list of courses. Following receipt of the master's degree, an individual seeking licensure would spend two years of paid employment with supervision. After the supervision has been completed, the individual could become licensed as a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor. With this license, an individual is entitled to diagnose and treat people with a wide range of psychosocial difficulties, including people who traditionally have been the focus of both clinical psychology and counseling psychology.

A doctorate in counseling psychology creates additional career options for individuals who wish to work in the field as opposed to those individuals who have only a master's degree. Students considering which direction to go (i.e., doctorate or master's degree) generally weigh their chances of getting into a doctoral program and the cost of a doctoral program against the fact that the Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor license allows an individual to diagnose and treat the same type of people served by individuals with a doctorate.

### Graduate Program Admission

In Illinois, students can find graduate programs that are housed in departments of psychology, education, or counseling. Students should carefully review the descriptions of any graduate program they are considering and make sure that the program states that it prepares students for a state license. Graduate programs are all two years of academic coursework and an internship. To gain admittance to these programs, it is often very helpful if the applicant has obtained some applied experience in an undergraduate internship. Graduate programs housed in departments of psychology will be the most competitive, and will require strong academic records as well as good scores on the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE).

Doctoral degree (Ph.D.) programs in clinical or counseling psychology typically have the highest entrance requirements. Students must excel in the classroom and receive excellent scores on the GRE. Doctoral programs will look for students who have experience with research and who are interested in pursuing research agendas as graduate students. Many graduate programs will also look favorably upon students who have completed an internship or who volunteered at an organization that provides a clinical experience.

To gain admittance to a professional program in clinical psychology (i.e., resulting in Psy.D.), students need to have good academic records. Psy.D. programs are not as selective as the Ph.D. programs, but they are much more expensive. The extra cost is because these programs are generally not housed at universities, but are private businesses that award the graduate degree. There are a few remaining Psy.D. programs that are affiliated with universities, and the tuition for these programs is much lower than for the private programs.

## Graduate Programs for the Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor

Illinois offers a license for individuals who wanted to provide counseling services. This license is for the Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC). Individuals with a master's degree in clinical psychology are eligible for the LCPC license. With this license, an individual can provide counseling services. There are several graduate programs in Illinois that offer a master's degree in clinical psychology. Students are encouraged to apply to several graduate programs.

Dr. Alvin House, a psychology professor emeritus at Illinois State, has prepared a website that students may find helpful if they are interested in applying for LCPC graduate programs. It contains some good advice and tips about [applying to graduate school](#).

### Education Departments

Most degrees earned in education departments grant a Master's in Education. Others award degrees in Counseling. There is not usually a minimum grade point average (GPA) requirement. See below for a list of LCPC Programs in Education Departments.

### Psychology Departments

The programs housed in psychology departments have a GPA requirement from no minimum to 3.00 for overall undergraduate work, last 60 hours of undergraduate work and psychology courses. A few of the courses that are preferred include statistics, research methodology, and cognitive psychology. The courses that are required for several programs include introductory psychology, developmental psychology, social psychology, and abnormal psychology. See below for a list of LCPC Programs in Psychology Departments in Illinois.

### Professional Schools

Professional programs that lead to the LCPC license have the advantage of accepting a large and diverse range of students. The major disadvantage is the cost of the program. These programs are private businesses that offer degrees in counseling and other related fields. For many students, their location and easy access make them attractive options. See below for a list of LCPC Programs in Professional Schools in Illinois.

### Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC) in Education Departments

Identified below are some graduate programs in Education Departments in Illinois.

#### **Bradley University**

**Peoria, IL**

Degree: MA Human Development Counseling

Bradley's graduate program in human development counseling offers a strategic blend of theory and practice. The program is designed to help students become professional counselors who are prepared to work with a diverse population of clients in a variety of educational, community, and mental health settings, and to help counselors develop as professionals and as persons. Areas of specialization include community and agency counseling and school counseling, which is NCATE accredited and ISBE approved.

### **Governors State University**

#### **University Park, IL**

Degree in MA Counseling

Governors State has three Master of Arts Counseling programs:

- Community Counseling
- Marriage and Family Counseling
- School Counseling

### **Loyola University**

#### **Chicago, IL**

Degree: MEd in Community Counseling

Degree: Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology

The MEd degree in Community Counseling prepares professionals who are knowledgeable of cultural influences on human development and who can meet client concerns from diverse cultural perspectives. A central goal of the program is to prepare culturally sensitive practitioners who, regardless of the setting, base their practices on scholarly inquiry. Graduates of the Community Counseling program are prepared to serve in a wide variety of professional roles including counseling and consultation on issues of personal, interpersonal, educational, and career development and adjustment.

The Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology is for students who want a career in the professional practice of psychology. The program is accredited by the American Psychological Association.

### **Northeastern Illinois University**

#### **Chicago, IL**

Degree in MA in Counseling

- Community Counseling: This program prepares students for employment in settings such as mental health agencies, community counseling agencies, chemical dependency programs, hospitals, marriage and family counseling clinics, crisis centers, and court services.
- School Counseling: This program prepares students for employment as a school counselor in elementary, middle, and high schools. Graduates are eligible to apply for and obtain Type 73 certification upon successful completion of the Guidance component of the Basic Skills Test.
- Rehabilitation Counseling: This sequence prepares students for employment in settings such as state vocational rehabilitation locations, Veterans Affairs, Social Security Administration, schools, mental health systems, developmental disability agencies, and state Human Services departments.
- Family Counseling: This sequence prepares students for employment in settings such as mental health agencies, community counseling agencies, chemical dependency programs, hospitals, marriage and family counseling clinics, crisis centers, youth agencies, court services, and others.

**Northern Illinois University  
DeKalb, IL**

Degree: MS Ed in Counseling

The MS Ed degree is intended to provide students with entry-level skills to work as counselors in schools, in community or private sector agencies, or at higher education institutions.

**Southern Illinois University  
Carbondale, IL**

Degree: MS Ed in Counselor Education

General Objectives: The Master's degree in Counselor Education is designed to develop students' potential as professional counselors (School Counseling, Community Counseling, and Marital, Couple, and Family Counseling). All faculty in the program recognize the uniqueness of human beings and are dedicated to helping students obtain the knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to facilitate development as counseling professionals. Uniqueness is emphasized in the program in that each student is expected to develop his or her counseling approach with clients.

**University of Illinois  
Springfield, IL**

Degree: MA in Human Development Counseling

The Human Development Counseling (HDC) Program bases its educational program on a belief in the inherent worth and dignity of each person; in the importance of developing self-awareness and continuing personal growth throughout the lifespan; in the need to enhance skills in self-expression, self-management, and interpersonal relations; and in the need to understand and experience diversity across cultures and subcultures. The program expects graduates to be able to help persons as individuals, couples, or as members of a family system to cope successfully with life tasks throughout their lifespans in our pluralistic society.

**Western Illinois University  
Macomb, IL**

Degree: MS Ed in Counseling

The Department of Counselor Education offers a Master of Science in Education in Counseling at the WIU-QC campus. The counseling department offers a unique blend of courses designed to provide the skills and knowledge necessary for becoming a competent counseling professional:

- Community Counseling emphasis prepares persons for work as professional counselors in a variety of community settings, including mental health centers, colleges, rehabilitation hospitals, recovery centers, and employee assistance programs.
- School Counseling emphasis prepares persons for work as elementary and/or secondary school counselors in public and private schools. The school counselor emphasis of the counseling program is the only program at Western Illinois University that prepares students for school counselor certification.

## Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC) in Psychology Departments

Identified below are some graduate programs in Psychology Departments in Illinois.

### **Concordia University Chicago**

#### **River Forest, IL**

Degree: MA Clinical Training

Students who hold or are completing B.A. or B.Sc. degrees may apply for admission to either the research (general) or research and clinical training options at the master's level. One requirement for admission is completion of an undergraduate honors program in psychology or an acceptable equivalent. Students with other educational backgrounds, such as in cognitive sciences or neurosciences, will be considered for admission if they have gained relevant research experience. If admitted, such students may be asked to take some extra undergraduate courses in psychology. All students are expected to continue in our Ph.D. program after they complete the master's level requirements.

The clinical training option is based on the scientist-practitioner model. That is, clinical students fulfill the same research requirements as other students, but they also receive professional training in the delivery of psychological services. The program's goal is to train doctoral-level clinical psychologists who not only conduct research and contribute to the scientific base of the discipline but who are also competent mental health professionals. Because research is such an important part of our program, students seeking only professional training or who do not intend to continue to the Ph.D. degree should apply elsewhere.

### **Eastern Illinois University**

#### **Charleston, IL**

Degree: MA in Clinical Psychology

The Clinical Psychology program is designed for students who have interests in applied psychology. Graduates with this degree become eligible for employment in settings such as mental health agencies, psychiatric hospitals, substance abuse treatment facilities, and the private sector. In addition, the program provides an adequate background for students who may wish to pursue doctoral training in psychology.

### **Illinois State University**

#### **Normal, IL**

Degree: MA or MS in Clinical-Counseling Psychology

### **Roosevelt University**

#### **Chicago - Schaumburg**

Degree: MA in Clinical Professional Psychology

Roosevelt University offers two M. A. programs in clinical psychology: Clinical Psychology and Clinical Professional Psychology. The two programs share a mission of educating students in the psychological theory and research that directs contemporary assessment of, and intervention, for human emotional/behavioral disorders and more general challenges/difficulties in living. In both programs, students will be prepared to approach clinical/counseling issues in a spirit of active and critical inquiry and to use the fruits of traditional research in particular practice settings.

The two programs are different in the student populations they seek to serve. The Clinical Psychology M.A. program is designed for those who wish to prepare for doctoral (Ph.D. or Psy.D.) programs in clinical psychology.

In contrast, the Clinical Professional Psychology M.A. program is designed for students who are interested in clinical practice at the M. A. level. This program seeks to train students thoroughly in contemporary assessment, counseling, and intervention techniques and in the professional scholarship from which these techniques are derived.

### [Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor \(LCPC\) graduate programs at professional schools](#)

Identified below are two graduate programs available at Professional Schools in Illinois.

#### **Adler School of Professional Psychology Chicago, IL**

Degree: MA in Counseling Psychology

**The Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology** program provides students with a foundation in theories and methods of counseling psychology with hands-on, practical, supervised training in counseling psychology techniques with an emphasis on Adlerian Psychology. This broad-based program can be completed in two years. Graduates of the program are prepared for entry-level professional work in a variety of human service agencies and organizations in the public or private sector.

**The Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology: Art Therapy** program combines the theories and techniques of Counseling Psychology with education and clinical training in the field of art therapy. The program provides students with the academic and pre-degree clinical experiences required to apply for registration as an art therapist as well as sit for the Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) examination in the state of Illinois. Art therapists work in a wide variety of clinical and educational settings, including hospitals, schools, wellness centers, children's agencies, correctional facilities, and geriatric settings.

**The Master of Arts in Counseling and Organizational Psychology** program combines the theories and skills of counseling psychology with organizational theory, design, and development to prepare graduates for positions in business and industry, especially in organizational psychology and the related areas of personnel management, team building, performance enhancement, executive coaching, organizational development, training, and employee assistance programs.

**The Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Counseling** program is designed to prepare entry-level counselors to specialize in working with couples and families. Students in this program complete course work and practicum experiences focused on the understanding and integration of individual life style dynamics with marital and family systems. Graduates of the program have a theoretical understanding of individual, marital, and family systems, including developmental issues and major variations; assessment skills in life style and systemic diagnosis; and intervention skills based upon major models of marital and family therapy, with the theory and methods of Individual Psychology as a foundation.

#### **The Chicago School of Professional Psychology Chicago, IL**

Degree: MA in Clinical Psychology

**The Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology** program teaches students to develop essential diagnostic, therapeutic, and consultative skills to work with a variety of clinical populations ranging from children to elderly, with a variety of emotional, intellectual, and psychological conditions and problems. The Counseling specialization provides strong preparation for students wishing to begin professional practice at the master's level. The program focuses on the development of essential clinical skills that are reinforced via intense course work and field placement. While a strong theoretical foundation is presented, classes emphasize practical skills development. As such, the program emphasizes a generalist approach to theory, conceptualization, and technique. During clinical placement, students learn to work with populations ranging from children through adolescents, adults, and the aged. The Counseling specialization incorporates the eight content areas outlined by the National Board of Certified Counselors and provides the academic requirements to prepare students seeking professional counselor licensure in Illinois (LPC and LCPC).

**Illinois School of Professional Psychology  
Chicago, IL**

Degree: MA in Professional Counseling

**The Master of Arts in Professional Counseling** has been designed to meet the guidelines of the National Board of Certified Counselors and is intended to prepare students for licensed careers in counseling. Students are required to complete two full years of study which currently is taught in a weekend format and a one year practicum with a seminar taught with a focus on the development of counseling skills on the practicum.