

PASTORAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING (M.A.)

This program is offered on campus.

Effective fall 2022, this program has been renamed to M.A. in mental health counseling and spiritual integration. Students admitted to the program from fall 2022 onwards will pursue the renamed program.

The Master of Arts degree (M.A.) in pastoral mental health counseling is a 60-credit program that provides the professional education requirements needed for licensure as a mental health counselor in New York state. In addition to academic coursework emphasizing counseling theory, psychosocial assessment, diagnosis, ethics, and clinical intervention, students also take courses that prepare them to work with the spiritual concerns of their clients. A professionally supervised internship is an integral part of the professional education requirement.

The Master of Arts degree (M.A.) in pastoral mental health counseling program is accredited by the Masters in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council (MPCAC) for the period of May 2017 through May 2027.

For more information regarding the MPCAC, visit mpcacaccreditation.org.

Program Mission Statement

The overarching mission of the program is to prepare students to become social-justice-minded, licensed, professional counselors with a specialization in integrating spiritual and religious content into the professional counseling relationship when ethically appropriate.

Learning Objectives

The faculty of the pastoral mental health counseling program have identified learning objectives to ensure that the goals associated with the program's mission are achieved.

Upon graduation, the 60-credit Master of Arts degree (M.A.) in pastoral mental health counseling students will be able to

- demonstrate an understanding of and ability to practice a pastoral approach to the care of persons grounded in the Ignatian principle of cura personalis;
- articulate an ethic of care grounded in an understanding of professional ethical principles, including issues of self-care, appropriate boundaries, cultural difference, and social justice;
- demonstrate the ability to integrate counseling theory and research, varied theological perspectives, and the practice of self-awareness in order to effectively and ethically provide mental health services to clients from diverse spiritual and cultural backgrounds; and
- demonstrate the ability to build a therapeutic relationship in a clinical context, assess clinical and spiritual themes in a clinical case, and write a corresponding treatment plan to include long-term and short-term clinical goals.

The pastoral mental health counseling program assesses various data on a continuous basis to understand how well the program is meeting

the learning objectives each year. This includes internship evaluation data, integrative case paper scores, graduation rates, National Counselor Examination (NCE) and National Mental Health Counselor Exam (NMHCE) scores, employment rates post-graduation, and employer satisfaction with alumni working as professional counselors. Outcome data from the evaluation process can be found on the program website and is updated each year.

Are you interested in attending the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education? Request more information or schedule an information session today.