By enacting our values and supporting the synergy between instruction, research, creativity, and service, the Department of Counselor Education at Western Illinois University—Quad Cities prepares a socially responsible, diverse student, faculty, and staff population to lead in the global society. The Department of Counselor Education prepares counseling professionals in school counseling and clinical mental health counseling. The curriculum, aligned with our mission, (1) emphasizes applied and conceptual skills; (2) affirms diversity of values, ideas, and persons; and (3) promotes educational excellence and ethical commitment. The faculty provide a challenging and supportive environment that encourages personal growth and development.

Admission Requirements

Admission consideration for graduate training in Counseling involves acceptance by the Western Illinois University School of Graduate Studies, completion of a Department of Counselor Education application packet, invitation to and participation in a screening interview, and invitation into the department.

- A Departmental Selection Committee must recommend applicants for admission to the graduate program. The Committee requires references, transcripts, a screening interview, Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores (for applicants with GPA less than 2.75), Basic Skills Test Scores (for school counseling applicants), and an essay. Applicants who are required to submit GRE scores must submit official GRE general test scores (no more than five years old). Applicants seeking school counseling licensure for Illinois or Iowa should contact the chairperson of the Department of Counselor Education for those requirements. Considerations for screening interviews will not take place until all required documents are received and approved by the deadline. We are a selective admission department. Meeting minimum requirements does not guarantee an invitation for screening or admission into the department.
- Fingerprint-based Illinois State Police and FBI criminal background investigations are required as part of the admission process. The department will provide successful applicants with an Authorization Form for the background check.
- Applicants must have completed a bachelor’s degree (undergraduate coursework) in any field from a regionally accredited university.
- Applicants must have a cumulative undergraduate grade point average of 3.0 or higher (includes all undergraduate work attempted at all institutions), or 3.25 for the last two years (60 semester hours [s.h.] of undergraduate work).
- Applicants failing to meet the minimum undergraduate requirements may be considered for probationary admission with a cumulative undergraduate GPA of 2.75 to 2.99. Applicants with a cumulative undergraduate GPA between 2.6 and 2.74 may request consideration for probationary admission—an additional portfolio (including official GRE scores) must be submitted by the applicant at the time of application. All applicants admitted as probationary students must petition for full admission after completing 9 s.h. at the graduate level from any of the following courses: CN 540, CN 541, CN 545, CN 551, CN 554, or EIS 500.
- Applicants not meeting the above requirements may request individual consideration based upon exceptional circumstances. This is done only with rare exception. Applicants must contact the chairperson of the Department of Counselor Education prior to applying to the department.
- If applicants already have a completed master’s degree from a regionally accredited university, they must have a cumulative graduate GPA of 3.0 or higher (includes all graduate work attempted at all institutions).
- All students must register for a Comprehensive Examination while enrolled in their practicum. The exam will be given during the student’s internship semester, and a passing score is required to advance to degree completion.
- Deadlines—All application materials (both online and mailed) must be received by the Department of Counselor Education by the following deadlines:
  - September 1 for Fall screening consideration and possible Spring admission
  - February 1 for Spring screening consideration and possible Summer/Fall admission

Degree Requirements

The Department of Counselor Education offers two high-quality programs in counselor training: the Master of Science in Education in Counseling with specializations in (1) School Counseling or (2) Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC). The School Counseling option requires 56 s.h., and the Clinical Mental Health Counseling option requires 61 s.h. The curriculum offers a blend of courses designed to provide the skills and knowledge necessary to become a competent counseling professional. Solid academic performance and experiential mastery are required.
School Counseling
The School Counseling option prepares graduate students to promote the academic, career, and personal/social development of K-12 students, including collaboration, consultation, leadership, counseling, prevention, and intervention skills.

Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC)
The CMHC option prepares graduate students in the development of professional knowledge, skills, and practices necessary for the diagnosis, treatment, referral, and prevention of mental and emotional disorders.

Accreditation
The Counseling programs are accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

The School Counseling option is also accredited by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

Organizations
Chi Sigma Iota (CSI) is the international honor society for Counseling students, counselor educators, and professional counselors. Its mission is to promote scholarship, research, professionalism, leadership, and excellence in counseling. The Xi Chapter of CSI is housed at WIU-QC.

The WIU-QC Counseling Association promotes counselor development through education and community involvement. This association is a Chapter of the Illinois Counseling Association (ICA).

Graduate Assistantships
Graduate assistantships are awarded through a competitive process to full-time Counselor Education students enrolled in 9 SH of coursework. Recipients of graduate assistantships receive a tuition waiver and a stipend in exchange for working for the department.

Contact Information
For admissions process and general program information, contact the School of Graduate Studies, Western Illinois University, 1 University Circle, Macomb, IL 61455, (309) 298-1806, (877) WIU GRAD toll-free, Grad-Office@wiu.edu, wiu.edu/grad.

For specific program questions, contact Dr. Holly Nikels, Program Coordinator, Department of Counselor Education, Western Illinois University–Quad Cities, 3300 River Drive, Room 2427, Moline, IL 61265, (309) 762-3999, ext. 6272, HJ-Nikels@wiu.edu, wiu.edu/counselored.

Western Illinois University is an Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity employer with a strong commitment to diversity. In that spirit, we are particularly interested in receiving applications from a broad spectrum of people, including, but not limited to, minorities, women, and individuals with disabilities. WIU has a non-discrimination policy that includes sex, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, religion, age, marital status, national origin, disability, and veteran status.

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