

# A Guide to Completing the Application for the University of Hawai'i at Hilo

## Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology

### (Specialization: Clinical Mental Health Counseling)

#### M.A. Checklist

- UH Hilo Graduate application form
- Application fee, \$50
- Official transcripts from all colleges or universities (must be received in a sealed envelope)
- Baccalaureate degree transcripts from international institutions must be submitted to an independent [transcript evaluation service](#)
- Psychology Personal Statement including short- and long-range goals (see page 2 of this Guide)
- Resume
- 3 Recommendations from academic and/or professional referees
- GRE scores (general test only) [UH Hilo code: 4869]

#### For international applicants:

- [International Graduate Student Supplemental Information Form](#)
- TOEFL or IELTS scores (non-native speakers of English; see Eligibility Criteria)

**Priority deadline for receipt of all  
application materials in the  
Graduate Division:  
February 1**

#### Program Mission

The mission of the Master of Art program in Counseling Psychology is to provide multiculturally-focused, student-centered graduate training in counseling psychology with a specialization in clinical mental health counseling. The program is designed to train students to become knowledgeable, skillful, ethical and multiculturally competent counselors, who will be able to help people in need of professional counseling services. For students who may wish to pursue a doctoral degree in psychology, the program provides training in advanced statistics and research methodology and also offers opportunities for students to gain research experience by participating in ongoing projects and/or by initiating their own research projects. The program assigns a high priority to meeting the educational and personal needs of its students and is based on a scientist-practitioner model.

#### Program Goals

- provide students with the knowledge and skills to counsel clients from diverse backgrounds (e.g. ethnic/racial, socioeconomic, age, gender).
- provide students with a broad understanding of general counseling theory and practice and evidence-based practice.
- provide students with a strong scientist-practitioner foundation.
- provide students with both knowledge of the social, psychological, health, and economic problems that citizens of Hawai'i face and the professional skills to help people cope with and manage these problems in the future.
- prepare students for licensure as a Mental Health Counselor in the state of Hawai'i; graduates also may be eligible for licensure in other states.
- prepare students for the academic requirements of a doctoral degree in counseling psychology or a related field.

#### Application Process

New students are accepted for Fall semester only. The priority application deadline is February 1. Complete applications received after the priority deadline will be considered on a space available basis. Apply on line at: <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/admissions/Apply.php>

The UH Graduate Division receives applications and supporting documents and maintains the applications through final notification. Applications that meet the admission requirements will be forwarded to the Psychology Department where they will undergo a comprehensive review. Priority will be given to students applying for full-time enrollment, but a few outstanding applicants for part-time enrollment may be admitted. Admission decisions will be made by the Graduate Admissions Committee of the Psychology Department and forwarded to the UH Hilo Graduate Division, which sends the final notification to the applicant. Acceptance to the program is competitive and meeting all of the minimum requirements does not guarantee that the applicant will be admitted.

#### Admission Status

The applicant's admission status is valid only for the semester to which the applicant is accepted. Applications for students who do not register or who withdraw from the University are voided but retained for a period of one (1) year. Students may reapply for admission the next year by submitting a new application with the application fee.

## Eligibility Criteria for Admission

### An applicant must:

- 1) have earned a baccalaureate from a regionally accredited institution.
- 2) have a GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale in the last 60 semester credits.
- 3) have a strong background in psychology, with a minimum of 15 semester credits of work in psychology. Highly recommended are an introductory class in psychology, statistical techniques, research methods, and two 300-level or higher courses in psychology. Courses in closely related fields may be acceptable.
- 4) have taken at least one 3-credit course in statistics and one 3-credit course in research methods from any discipline.
- 5) obtain a score of 550 (paper based), 213 (computer based), or 79 (internet based) on the TOEFL (applicants for whom English is not the native language). The IELTS score must be 6.0. Students with degrees from colleges whose language of instruction is English need not submit TOEFL scores).

## Psychology Personal Statement

Your personal statement should address the following:

1. Your short and long-term academic and career plans.
2. Your reasons for pursuing a Master's degree in Counseling Psychology.
3. How graduate study at UH Hilo will help you accomplish your goals.
4. How your experience has prepared you for graduate study and work in the field of counseling psychology.
5. Attributes that make you well suited to the field of counseling psychology.

## Transfer of Credits

Requests for transfer of credits must be made during the first semester in which the student is enrolled in the program; departmental approval for all credit transfers is required. Only credit hours with a grade of B or better from accredited universities are transferable. Credit hours for practicum and internship courses are not transferable. Transfer credit hours must have been completed within five years prior to admission. Students may transfer a maximum of 12 semester hours (or its equivalent). On rare circumstances, requests for an exception to this limit could be considered by the program faculty. All requests for transfer of credits must be accompanied by a transcript and course syllabi.

## International Admissions

Official college transcripts in the original language and official translations into English must be provided. To expedite your application, all graduate applicants with international transcripts are required to send the baccalaureate transcript for professional evaluation by one of the credential evaluation services listed on our web site:

<http://www.uhh.hawaii.edu/academics/graduate/intlgraduate.php>

Only graduates of accredited universities will be considered for acceptance.

## Employment Opportunities

Graduates from the program will be able to work in a variety of counseling settings that include, but are not limited to, state and federal counseling agencies, a variety of mental health programs, schools, and the private mental health care industry. Employment prospects for professional counselors are good in Hawai'i and in many other areas of the United States. Currently a shortage of qualified counselors exists, and employment opportunities in this field are expected to grow at a faster than average rate over the coming years.

## Course of Study

The Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology program's curriculum was designed to satisfy the educational requirements for licensure in mental health counseling in Hawai'i. The core curriculum consists of course work in methods, concepts, and skills of the profession and the evidence-based practice of counseling psychology. Program electives will enable students to choose courses in family counseling, school and career counseling and special topics courses. During the second year of study, students will complete a practicum course and an internship designed to provide counseling experience in real-life practice settings. Students who wish to prepare and defend a Master's thesis may do so. Overall, students will take 60 credits of graduate course work. It is expected that full-time students (12-15 credits per semester) will complete the degree in two years. Students begin in the summer with an online class. Students will need to maintain a 3.0 GPA to remain in the program.

*For more information, please contact:*

Dr. Bryan Kim, Director  
 MA Program in Counseling Psychology  
 UH Hilo Department of Psychology  
 (808) 932-7090  
[bryankim@hawaii.edu](mailto:bryankim@hawaii.edu)

*For questions regarding the application process, contact:*

Māhealani Jones  
 UH Hilo Graduate Division  
 200 W. Kāwili Street, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720-4091  
 (808) 932-7926  
[amyj@hawaii.edu](mailto:amyj@hawaii.edu)

**REQUIRED COURSES (51 Credits)**

Course	Cr	Title
PSY 601	(4)	Applied Multivariate Statistics
PSY 602	(3)	Research Methodology and Program Evaluation
PSY 603	(4)	Psychological Assessment
PSY 604	(3)	Professional Identity, Ethics, and Legal Issues
PSY 611	(3)	Lifespan Human Development
PSY 612	(3)	Career Development
PSY 613	(3)	Psychopathology over the Lifespan
PSY 620	(3)	Counseling Theories
PSY 622	(4)	Group Work and Counseling
PSY 623	(3)	Social and Cultural Foundations
PSY 624	(3)	Counseling Skills
PSY 640	(6)	Counseling Practicum
PSY 659	(9)	Internship

**ELECTIVES (9 Credits)**

PSY 614	(3)	Family System
PSY 641	(3)	School Behavior, Adjustment, and Problems
PSY 642	(3)	Educational and Vocational Assessment
PSY 643	(3)	School and Career Guidance and Consultation
PSY 651	(3)	Theories of Family Counseling
PSY 652	(3)	Couple Counseling
PSY 694	(3)	Advanced Topics
PSY 699	(3)	Directed Studies
PSY 700	(3)	Thesis Research (repeatable)

*For financial aid assistance, please contact:*

UH Hilo Financial Aid Office  
200 W. Kāwili St.  
Hilo, HI 96720-4091  
Ph: (808) 932-7449, Fax: (808) 932-7459  
[uhhfao@hawaii.edu](mailto:uhhfao@hawaii.edu)

*Native Hawaiian students* who need assistance with applications and/or scholarships please contact:

Kipuka Native Hawaiian Student Center  
(808) 932-7418  
<http://kipuka.uhh.hawaii.edu/>

**Frequently Asked Questions**

Cost:	\$479 per credit hour 2016-2017 resident tuition \$1097 per credit hour 2016-2017 non-resident tuition
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- 1. How long does it take to complete the program?**  
The program is designed to be completed in 2 years, including practicum and internship. Students have the option to participate in summer school courses.
- 2. What are the entrance requirements?**  
See Check List and Criteria for Admission on front of this form.
- 3. Do I have to take the GRE?**  
Yes, applicants are required to submit General GRE exam scores to UH-Hilo.
- 4. Is there a passing GRE score?**  
No, there is no minimum required score.
- 5. Can I transfer credits?**  
Yes, up to 12 graduate credits excluding Practicum and Internship may be transferred, subject to program approval.
- 6. How much will it cost to live in Hilo?**  
You should budget approximately \$25,000 (residents) and \$30,000 (non-residents) per year for tuition, books, housing, food, and personal expenses.
- 7. Is financial aid available?**  
Contact the UH Hilo Financial Aid Office for information: (808) 932-7449.
- 8. Do I need a computer?**  
Yes, or at least daily access to one.
- 9. Is there a website for the program?**  
Yes, the website has information on pertinent program information:  
<http://counseling.uhh.hawaii.edu/>
- 10. Do I need to write a Master's Thesis?**  
Some students may elect to write a Master's thesis in preparation for application to a doctoral program.

# University of Hawai'i at Hilo

Department of Psychology

## Letter of Recommendation Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology

**To the Applicant:** Please complete this section and deliver to 3 people who know you and can respond to the questions. It is recommended that you select instructors, employers or clinical supervisors to complete this form.

**Name of Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle

In accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, if accepted and enrolled, you have the right of access to any and all letters of recommendation. Waiver of this right is voluntary.

**Applicant:** Please sign below if you wish to make this a confidential recommendation by waiving your right of access.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**To the Recommender:** The person whose name appears above is seeking admission to the Master of Arts program in Counseling Psychology at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo and is requesting your evaluation as part of the application and selection process. Please provide your candid appraisal of the applicant's strengths and limitations with regard to the applicant's potential as a graduate student and professional counselor.

**Mail this form by Feb 1 to: UH Hilo Graduate Division, 200 W. Kāwili St, Hilo, HI 96720-4091.**

Name of Recommender (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Position/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency/School/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of time and capacity in which you have know the applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

- I  **strongly recommend** that the applicant be admitted to the UH Hilo MA in Counseling Psychology program
- recommend**
- recommend with reservations**
- do not recommend**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ability to Handle Scholastic Demands**

*Outstanding Above Average Average Below Average Poor Unable to Rate*

Ability to think clearly and logically						
Ability to comprehend theoretical material						
Ability to assimilate theoretical material and comprehend its relevance to real life situations						

**Motivation for Counseling Career**

Commitment to professional growth						
Desire to help people						

**Personal Qualities**

Ability to cope effectively with his/her own life stresses						
Ability to work with people who are under stress						
Ability to assume responsibility; carry out assignments and tasks; dependability						
Demonstrates initiative, resourcefulness						
Ability to maintain amicable relationships with others						
Humanitarian orientation: empathy, altruism, compassion						
Ability to exercise sound judgment; emotional maturity						
Evidence of personal integrity						
Ability to be flexible and capable of change						

**Ability to Communicate**

Verbal ability						
Writing ability						
Listening ability						

In an attached letter, please elaborate on any details you think would help the admissions committee make a decision regarding this applicant’s suitability for graduate work and a career in counseling psychology.

Thank you very much for your time and thoughtful consideration in responding to the applicant’s request for your recommendation.