The Twenty Most Frequently Asked Questions by Ed.M. Students in Psychological Counseling

Advisors

1. How do I get an advisor?

At the beginning of your first semester at Teachers college, you will automatically be assigned an advisor. Depending on various circumstances like sabbaticals or leaves, all effort will be made to maintain the same advisor-student relationship during your stay at TC. Only full-time faculty members are available as advisors.

2. What if I would like to have a different Advisor after I’ve been in the Program awhile?

If you wish to change advisors you may do so by filling out a new Advisor Request Form. Indicate that you are requesting a change in advisor. Out of courtesy, you should inform your previous advisor about your desire to change. Once again, to keep faculty loads even, we may not be able to honor your request.

3. When and how can I see my advisor?

During the academic year, all Counseling Psychology Faculty are available during their office hours that are scheduled each week. You should pick up a list of office hours from the Counseling Office at the beginning of each semester. If you are unable to meet with a faculty member during his/her office hours, you should contact the faculty member directly for an appointment. Faculty email addresses and phone numbers can be found on the list of office hours. Most faculty are also very responsive to email queries. During summer sessions, only some of the faculty may be available to meet. Please check with the Counseling Office to see which faculty are holding office hours.

Master of Arts degree/Comprehensive Exam

4. What is the M.A. (en passant)?

The M.A. (en passant) is a 32-point Master of Arts degree that students may elect to earn en route to the Ed.M. It can serve two purposes: (a) makes it clear on students’ resumes that the Ed.M. is a more advanced degree, and (b) allows graduates to be considered for salary increments that some employers provide when their employees have 30 additional credits beyond a M.A. In order to earn the M.A. (en passant) students must take a Comprehensive Examination in Counseling Psychology.

5. What is the Comprehensive Examination?
The Comprehensive Examination is a take-home exam that provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate their capacity to integrate the variety of learning experiences that have constituted their graduate training to that point.

6. When can I take the Comprehensive Examination?

The Comprehensive Examination can be taken when a student has completed or is in the process of completing a total of 45 points toward his/her Ed.M. degree. Please note that the Comprehensive Examination can only be taken in the fall and spring semesters. The Comprehensive Exam is a take-home exam which students complete in a week. Students pick-up the Exam on the third Monday in October in the fall and the first Monday in March in the Spring.

7. When and how do I apply for the M.A. (en passant)?

Students are eligible to apply for the M.A. (en passant) in or after the semester in which they complete at least 45 credits toward the Ed.M. A green M.A. degree application must be filed with the Registrar’s office on or before the stated deadline (February 1st for the May degree award; August 1st for the October degree award; November 1st for the February degree award). When listing course work on the degree application please refer to the Ed.M. Program information, obtainable in 428 Horace Mann. Students should only list 32 credits on the degree application.

8. I have heard that students can earn a joint degree in Counseling and Organizational Psychology. Is this true?

Unfortunately we are no longer able to offer the joint degree in Counseling and Organizational Psychology due to changes in degree requirements. Students who are interested in obtaining both degrees may apply to and complete each Program separately.

Fieldwork

9. What is Fieldwork?

Fieldwork is a two-semester practical counseling experience done in an agency, hospital, school, etc., setting with a client population appropriate to the student’s area of interest. Students work as counselor trainees, involving themselves in the life and daily activities of the field setting. Students have a supervisor at the site, as well as regular contact with the Placement Coordinator here at the college. You are expected to work in the field setting a minimum of two days per week for two full academic semesters. Students working toward a certification in rehabilitation should expect to spend three days a week in the field.

10. When and how do I enroll in Fieldwork?

For full-time students, fieldwork is normally done during the second year of study after
completion of the prerequisites. Students interested in beginning fieldwork must attend an orientation meeting one semester before they plan to engage in fieldwork. Before a student can actually register for the course, he/she must have approval from the Placement Coordinator’s office. Check with the Placement Coordinator for deadlines.

11. Do I have to choose my own fieldwork site?

Yes. It is important that each student picks a site in tune with his/her interests. No one can do that for you. Just as a person interviewing for a job wants to ensure that the place and people he/she will be working with is right for him/her, so should a student want to ascertain firsthand whether a fieldwork site is appropriate.

12. When and how do I start looking for a fieldwork site?

Students should begin the search for their fieldwork site early in the academic semester prior to the one in which they intend to register for fieldwork (e.g. if you plan to register for fieldwork in the fall, you should start looking in February). To assist you in your search, there is a file cabinet in the Counseling Program office (428 Horace Mann) filled with information on sites where students have previously done fieldwork. After attending the fieldwork orientation meeting, students can begin contacting the sites he/she is interested in and arranging for interviews. You may also seek advice from the Placement Coordinator.

It is possible for students to explore new settings if they are interested in a specific target population or want to do fieldwork in a special setting that has not been used before. However, this should be done only after consultation with the Placement Coordinator’s office.

**Practicum at the CEPS**

13. What is Practicum (CCPJ 5360)?

*Practicum in educational and vocational appraisal and counseling* (CCPJ 5360) is a one-semester course in individual counseling done here at Teachers College, with clients from the Center for Educational and Psychological Services (CEPS). The Center is open to the public and operates on a sliding scale fee basis. Each student will be assigned to a group, consisting of up to four students and a supervisor. The group will meet once a week for three hours of supervision. In addition, students meet with clients on their own time and are responsible for attending Case Conference a minimum of five times.

14. What is Case Conference (CCPX 5630)?

*Case Conference* (CCPX 5630) is a zero-credit course students must register for when participating in Practicum. Ed.M. students are required to attend a total of five sessions of Case Conference, *including an orientation*, during the semester they are enrolled in Practicum. Since the orientation usually happens very early in the semester, students
should be in touch with either the CEPS or the Counseling Program secretary to find out
the date(s) of Case Conference orientation.

If your schedule does not permit you to attend Case Conference, it is possible to be
waived from attending. This may be done if you are enrolled in fieldwork and are
participating in a similar experience at your fieldwork site. Students interested in
requesting a waiver should do so in written format to the Program Coordinator. Please
note that even if you are waived from attending Case Conference, you must register for
the course.

15. When and how do I arrange Practicum?

For full-time students, Practicum is normally taken in the second year, either fall or
spring semester (please note that Practicum is generally NOT offered in the summer).
The Program must hire supervisors in advance based on the number of students planning
to enroll in Practicum for a given semester; therefore, students are required to fill out a
Practicum application between April 15th and June 1st of the academic year prior to the
academic year they plan to enroll in Practicum. For example, if you plan to take
Practicum in the spring semester of 2004, you must fill out an application before June 1,
2003.

Although we make every effort to assign students to their preferred semester, we cannot
guarantee it. You will receive written notification about registration procedures prior to the
semester you have been assigned to Practicum.

Ed.M. degree/Special Project

16. When and how do I apply for the Ed.M. degree?

Students should apply for the Ed.M. in the semester in which they will complete 60
credits, including all the required courses for that degree. A blue Ed.M. degree
application must be filed with the Registrar’s office on or before the deadline indicating
for the degree award (February 1st for the May degree award; August 1st for the October
degree award; November 1st for the February degree award). Completion of the Special
Project is part of the requirements for the Ed.M. degree.

17. What is the Special Project?

The Special Project is an integrative case study on a client or group that a student has
worked with in fieldwork or practicum. It is normally completed in the student’s final
semester (Spring or Fall only). If the student is completing the Program over the summer,
he/she would complete the Special Project during the previous Spring semester. Students
pick up the instructions for the Special Project on the third Wednesday in October (Fall)
and the first Wednesday in March (Spring) and return the completed project a week later.
Jobs/Doctoral Programs

18. What kind of jobs am I qualified for with the Ed.M. in Psychological Counseling?

Our graduates currently work as counselors in a variety of settings such as schools, hospitals, mental health centers, colleges, businesses, prisons, and substance abuse programs.

19. Does the Counseling Program provide job placement?

While the Counseling Program does not provide job placement, we do post any job notices we receive on the bulletin board outside the office. Teachers College does have a Career Services Center, located in 44 Horace Mann (basement), which serves our students. Students may go there in person or call the Center at 212-678-3140.

20. What should I do if I am interested in pursuing a doctorate after I complete the Ed.M. degree?

Certainly, many Ed.M. students have this as a long-term goal. There are, however, several details, which students need to consider:

The Ed.M. is a terminal degree, and its completion is no guarantee of admission to the Counseling Ph.D. Program. Also, we do expect students to complete the Ed.M. even if they are accepted into our doctoral program.

Ed.M. students can choose selected courses at the doctoral level as part of their program, but should keep the following in mind. If these courses are taken without the basic foundation courses, there is a strong possibility of receiving lower grades. These lower grades can adversely affect the strength of a doctoral application.

For more information on the Ph.D. Program in Counseling Psychology please pick up the Ph.D. program information, obtainable in 428 Horace Mann.