

Palo Alto University

Counseling Program
Student Handbook 2017-2018

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The Palo Alto University Counseling Program's Student Handbook covers the official policies and procedures of the Program. Students are provided a copy of this document at the time of enrollment, and this document is maintained on the PAU Student Portal.

Additional general information concerning all academic programs offered by Palo Alto University (PAU) is contained in the Palo Alto University Catalog. Copies of the Catalog may be obtained from the Admissions Office. Documents pertaining to the licensing, approvals to operate, and accreditation of PAU by the **WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC)** are available in the Research Library.

This document, and the policies and procedures described herein are subject to change without notice as the University deems necessary and appropriate. The University will make a good faith effort to communicate changes in policy and procedure to all students via their PAU email. Students are expected to keep themselves apprised of any changes and are held responsible for knowledge of them.

Any disputes regarding compliance with the contents are subject to exclusive resolution under the Institutional Grievance Procedure.

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Welcome to the Counseling Program

Creating a Sense of Community

Upon enrollment, PAU Counseling Students become part of a professional and learning community that nurtures them to develop as individuals within the larger professional community. PAU provides tools and resources for students to feel connected and stay up-to-date in campus and virtual learning environments. It is the student's responsibility to take advantage of these resources.

On-Campus Community

On-campus/hybrid students in the Counseling Program primarily attend classes in residence while also attending about of a third of the classes using distance learning/ virtual campus formats. All students (residential and distance learning) have access to traditional student amenities, such as student lounges, libraries, study areas and cafes. They can attend student government, student organization, University, and Alumni Association events in person.

Online Community

PAU's virtual campus includes the Canvas E-Learning Platform, Zoom video conferencing, the MyPAU portal, Google Apps, and other online resources. An online hotline/helpdesk and ticketing system ensures that requests for information or assistance are tracked and resolved in a timely manner. An online orientation is provided to all newly enrolled students to ensure that they can effectively participate in the online community.

Code of Ethics

All faculty and students in the Counseling Program are subject to the Code of Ethics of the American Counseling Association (ACA). Copies are available at www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/ethics.

Classroom and Online Etiquette

Students are expected to conduct themselves with professionalism at all times. Appropriate professional etiquette is expected in all communications with other classmates, instructors and external professionals and personnel who have a professional relationship with PAU.

Professionalism and classroom etiquette requires student attentiveness and engagement. It is unprofessional to utilize computers, tablets and smartphones in class for purposes that are not directly related to the current class topic and presentation. Residential course instructors have the option to make their classrooms "computer, tablet and smartphone free" and are authorized to take away participation and professionalism points for unauthorized technology use during class. That violation can result in the loss of half a grade for the class (e.g., an A will be reduced to an A-). When residential students ask to take notes in class with their computer, tablet and smartphone the faculty can request the student verify notes were taken and the technology was used as agreed. For online classes students should abide by the same principles as they self-regulate their own professional conduct during Zoom Meeting course discussions.

Behavior and written or verbal exchanges that are disrespectful, harassing, or otherwise professionally inappropriate are not acceptable. Students engaging in these behaviors will be counseled immediately. Students need to treat classroom engagements in a similar manner as they would engage with colleagues in a professional environment. Incidents of unprofessional conduct will be referred to the program advisor and noted on the student's advising record. Repeated offenses will result in referral to the Student Evaluation Committee to determine the appropriateness of the student's continuation in the program.

Students engaged in coursework via video teleconference should seek to have the most professional setting and background as possible with minimal visual and noise distraction. It is expected that while in class and on microphone/camera that professional behavior is maintained at all times.

Commitment to Diversity

Palo Alto University is committed to providing an educational environment that respects cultural and individual differences. We work to foster a diverse student body and support the aspirations of all students.

The institutional policies on diversity and non-discrimination follow:

[Diversity](#)

[Nondiscrimination Policy](#)

About the Counseling Program

Our Mission

The MA in Counseling Program is a diverse and dynamic community dedicated to the development of highly effective mental health counselors, future leaders and innovators in the counseling profession. In and through its training of burgeoning counselors, the program strives to benefit society and reduce human suffering by promoting mental health, wellness, social justice, education, and vocational wellbeing. The program is committed to five core values; creating and nurturing a diverse and inclusive learning community for all students, faculty, and staff; providing excellent education and clinical supervision for students; promoting healing and empowerment by addressing social privilege and oppression; generating knowledge through research and scholarship of the highest level; and providing services to the local, national and international community informed by science and scholarship.

Program Goals and Learning Outcomes

The M.A. Counseling prepares students to excel as counselors in a multicultural and pluralistic society. Objectives of the program are to help the student achieve the following:

- Assessment and Research Acumen. Graduates will acquire, refine, and demonstrate appropriate Master's level ability to assess client issues and to incorporate evidence-based counseling practices in a variety of settings.
- Professional identity. Graduates will develop a professional identity as a counselor as well as the dispositions related to effective practice, including integrity, sensitivity, flexibility, insight, compassion, and personal presence.
- Leadership. Graduates will become an organizational leader, a group process expert, and a positive force in achieving high levels of participation, cooperation and cohesion.
- Social justice. Graduates will develop an understanding of various cultures and the implications of diversity for social justice. They will demonstrate insight into the social and psychological implications of socioeconomic position and how poverty and social stress can affect an individual's mental health and recovery.
- Wellness and Resilience Orientation. Graduates will incorporate the principles of optimal career and lifespan development towards promoting a resilience and wellness across the lifespan.
- Ethical Compliance and Risk Management. Graduates will learn to manage the risks of a professional counseling practice, ensure personal and client safety, and remain compliant with all laws and regulations and moral and ethical guidelines.
- Systemic Practice. Graduates will integrate a systems approach to conceptualizing client development, presenting issues, and counseling strategies and approaches.
- Credentialing and Licensure. Graduates will demonstrate knowledge of how to become a licensed Professional Clinical Counselor or Marriage or Family Counselor in California or achieve a similar license in the other states and territories of the United States, Canada and other international partners.
- Marriage, Child and Family Counseling Professional Practice. Graduates will acquire, refine, and demonstrate appropriate knowledge, skills, and dispositions to effectively work with couples, families, and other systems in a variety of settings.
- Clinical Mental Health Counseling Professional Practice. Graduates will acquire, refine, and demonstrate appropriate knowledge, skills, and dispositions to effectively assess, diagnose, and treat clients in a variety of settings.

Counseling Program Leadership

The M.A. Counseling degree is administered by the M.A. Counseling Program core faculty led by the Program Director. This program and the M.A. Counseling core faculty have oversight of all major components of the curriculum, faculty, course delivery, clinical oversight and administration. All courses are taught by core faculty members or adjunct instructors approved by the core faculty.

The Program Director is the professional accreditation liaison with the American Counseling Association (ACA) and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

- Counseling Program Director, William Snow, Ph.D.
- Program Manager, Samiyah Currimbhoy, MSW

Faculty Advisors

All matriculated students are assigned a Faculty Advisor once enrolled in a cohort. The purpose of the Advisor is to provide academic guidance, program planning, and to serve as the first level of contact in case of academic or personal adjustment issues while in the program. Students are encouraged to meet regularly with their faculty advisors to develop themselves as professionals both academically and professionally.

It must be cautioned that Faculty can support growth through advising and mentoring but are prohibited from serving as a mental health counselor/psychotherapist for students. Whenever counseling/psychotherapy is recommended/required the Faculty member can help with referrals for that purpose.

Student Disclosure of Personal Information

Self-growth is an expected component of counselor education. Counselor educators are mindful of ethical principles when they require students to engage in self-growth experiences. Counselor educators and supervisors inform students that they have a right to decide what information will be shared or withheld in class. (ACA Code of Ethics E.8.c)

Students are expected to make their own decisions about what to disclose or not disclose in growth oriented classroom experiences. Students should also be aware that these experiences are NOT considered confidential experiences and information shared is not considered privileged information.

Student course grades are not contingent on what they share or the extent of their self-disclosure. The implications of a student's self-disclosure, however, may include disclosing information to other faculty for consultation purposes, program remediation, program dismissal, ethical charges, requirement to attend counseling, and/or notification to authorities.

Counseling Program Governance Committees

The Counseling Program Committees implement their committee mandate, review policies and procedures, report back to the full Counseling Faculty on actions taken, and submit changes to policy for a full vote. The committee lead coordinates the scheduling of the meetings, records official minutes and submits them for archive in the Faculty Minutes Drop Box.

Accreditation and Assessment Committee: The Accreditation and Assessment Committee works with the WASC and CACREP Liaisons to ensure the program meets and exceeds compliance requirements in its practices. It regularly monitors changes to WASC and CACREP standards and policy documents and recommends program changes. This committee also works to ensure that the program maintains a robust

outcomes assessment program to provide empirical evidence of its success in meeting all accreditation standards.

Clinical Training Committee: The Clinical Training Committee assists the Clinical Directors in reviewing current practicum sites, recommends the addition or removal of sites, and works towards developing and maintaining excellence in clinical training throughout the Counseling Program.

Curriculum Committee: The Curriculum Committee regularly reviews academic courses and course content, and recommends the addition, removal and/or re-sequencing of specific courses. The Curriculum Committee also hears grade appeals.

Diversity Committee: The Diversity Committee works to ensure that the program is living up to the diversity mission of the Palo Alto University, including making the program an inclusive and welcoming place to all faculty, staff, and students. This committee also ensures themes and issues related to diversity are appropriately addressed in the curriculum, advising, and general structure of the program. This committee serves in an advisory role in providing recommendations to the program.

Student Evaluation Committee (SEC): Composed of designated core faculty members, the SEC meets as required to address disciplinary problems, including academic performance, ethical violations, and other behaviors that are not in keeping with the program standards and guidelines.

Student Progress Committee (SPC): Conducts an annual review of each student's progress in consultation with each student's faculty advisor. This review takes into account all available sources of information including data gathered from course instructors, performance on comprehensive exams, practicum evaluations, practicum performance, ethics and professional behavior. For more information, see "Annual Student Evaluations and Portfolios," below.

Professional Organizations and Opportunities for Professional Involvement

All M.A. Counseling students are required to obtain membership with the American Counseling Association (ACA).

<https://www.counseling.org/>

Eligible students can also join the PAU chapter of Chi Sigma Iota, the international honor society of professional counseling and for professional counselors. The mission is to promote scholarship, research, professionalism, leadership and excellence in counseling, and to recognize high attainment in the pursuit of academic and clinical excellence in the profession of counseling. The following website lists the current leaders and faculty advisors.

<https://www.paloaltou.edu/about/departments-and-offices/student-services/student-organization-directory/chi-sigma-iota>

Students are also encouraged to become members of one of the ACA's 20 Specialty Divisions and/or its regional/state affiliates. These include:

- Association for Adult Development and Aging (AADA)
- Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling (AARC)
- Association for Child and Adolescent Counseling (ACAC)
- Association for Creativity in Counseling (ACC)
- American College Counseling Association (ACCA)
- Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES)
- The Association for Humanistic Counseling (AHC)
- American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA)
- American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA)
- American School Counselor Association (ASCA)

- Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC)
- Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW)
- Counselors for Social Justice (CSJ)
- International Association of Addictions and Offender Counselors (IAAOC)
- International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors (IAMFC)
- Military and Government Counseling Association (MGCA) formerly ACEG
- National Career Development Association (NCDA)
- National Employment Counseling Association (NECA)

Students can also find numerous opportunities for membership and involvement in more than 20 affiliated student organizations at PAU. These organizations offer students the opportunity to network and socialize with like-minded students who share their interests and goals. For details about and contact information, consult the Student Organization Directory on the PAU website at

<http://www.paloalto.edu/about/programs-and-offices/student-services/student-organization-directory>

Research Opportunities

Students interested in working with faculty in research or service projects should review the faculty CVs in the campus online directory and contact faculty they are interested in working with.

Program Administration, Policies and Procedures

Registration Requirements

Registration for all Counseling Program's students is managed by the University Registrar. Students register by using PAU's online registration system, Jenzabar. The Jenzabar system can be accessed at my.paloalto.edu under the Portal tab.

The Jenzabar system will issue automated email reminders of required actions and deadlines, however, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to understand registration deadlines, and to access, complete and submit registration forms to the Registrar by the posted due dates. In addition, any supplemental paperwork (e.g. faculty or program approvals) must be received by the deadlines indicated in the Academic Calendar (www.paloalto.edu/admissions/admissions-resources/academic-calendar). Registration is not complete until all required tuition and fees are paid in full.

Degree Plan and Course Schedule

You should register for classes on the degree plan and course schedule issued to you. If not see your advisor and/or email scurrimbhoy@paloalto.edu. If you need to modify your degree plan it must be approved by your academic advisor and the Program Director.

Personal Therapy Requirements

Students starting the program Fall of 2017 or later are required to receive a minimum of 10 hours of their own clinical counseling / therapy prior to graduation. Any form of therapy is acceptable. Students may receive individual, group, couple, or family therapy, or any combination thereof. Students may receive credit for attending therapy with a Professional Clinical Counselor, Marriage and Family Therapist, Clinical Social Worker, Psychologist, or Psychiatrist. It is acceptable to either see a licensed professional or intern working under the appropriate supervision. Students are strongly encouraged to be active in their own clinical counseling throughout their practicum placement.

In order to verify the completion of this requirement, students should submit a letter to the Program Director that includes the following information: The full name, address, and license/registration number of the mental health professional seen for service, and the date range seen for this requirement (please note, we will only verify hours between the day you started the program and your date of completion). It is not necessary for the therapist to indicate exactly how many sessions you had - only that you have completed our requirement of 10 hours.

Students who started the program prior to Fall 2017 are strongly encouraged to meet this requirement, but are not required.

It must be clarified that Faculty can support growth through advising and mentoring but are prohibited from serving as a mental health counselor/psychotherapist for students. Whenever counseling/psychotherapy is recommended/required the Faculty member can help with referrals but cannot serve as a counselor/therapist.

Transfer Credit Policy

Students may transfer in units of prior graduate work offered at other institutions if the classes are similar to courses offered in the PAU program. Prior coursework cannot be more than 5 years old. Transfer coursework is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Students must submit a course description and syllabus for each transfer course. A Palo Alto University faculty member then reviews the documentation,

and either accepts or rejects the course for transfer credit. Students may transfer prior graduate units within limits:

- M.A. Counseling. Up to 15 units can be transferred in from another institution. (If transferring from the PAU M.S. Psychology program, up to 12 units may be transferred in.)

In accordance with the CACREP Guiding Statement on Best Practices for Transfer of Credit students must "... complete all clinical courses, where counseling skills, client interaction, and clinical competencies are supervised and evaluated, within the CACREP-accredited program from which they plan to graduate".

PAU Program Crossovers

Graduate programs at PAU (Ph.D., Psy.D., and Counseling programs) are separate and distinct programs with their own curriculum and admission requirements. Students enrolled in one program at PAU are not allowed to enroll in or take courses in another program without permission from the director of their original program, the director of the program in which they seek to enroll, and the Provost.

PAU Transfers to the Counseling Program's

Transferring students should be clearly aware that the Counseling profession is a distinct field with its own professional identity, professional organization (The American Counseling Association <https://www.counseling.org/>) and its own accrediting body (<http://www.cacrep.org/>).

Students from the Ph.D. and Psy.D. programs are eligible to transfer up to 15 units of prior graduate work.

Students from the M.S. Psychology program are eligible to transfer up to 9 units of prior graduate work (Psychopathology sequence — 6 units and Clinical Interviewing — 3 units).

In all cases transfer coursework is evaluated on a case-by-case basis and all transferring coursework must achieve the same learning objectives as those in the Counseling program course syllabi. Despite similar course titles, differences may exist which prevent transferring of specific courses.

The 12 or 15 unit transfer cap may be exceeded upon appeal but prior coursework cannot be more than 5 years old.

Students who wish to proceed with the transfer process must apply to the program like any other applicant. Internal transfers must ensure that at least one of their letters of reference is from a PAU faculty member who can provide insight into the applicant's ability to successfully engage in personal counseling and psychotherapy.

Students who do obtain acceptance and transfer within PAU to a Counseling Program's pay the tuition and fees of the academic year they enter the Counseling Program's, not the year they entered PAU. In addition, internal transfer students are placed on the degree plan of the academic year they transfer. If the student has been gone (inactive and not enrolled in courses) from PAU for over a year, they must apply through the Admissions Office. If the student has been inactive and not enrolled in courses for less than a year, they use the Program Transform Form process initiated by the Program Manager.

Students from other PAU degree programs wanting more information about transferring into the MA in Counseling program may contact Dr. William Snow at wsnow@paloalto.edu.

Registration Process

Newly enrolled students are invited to register for classes upon enrollment in the Counseling Program. Students pre-enroll for each upcoming quarter during each registration period, as designated in the Academic Calendar, or published information from the Registrar. Students pre-enroll for classes during spring quarter for the following fall.

Please note: Each academic program at PAU is a separate and distinct program with its own curriculum and admission requirements. Students enrolled in one program may not register for courses in another program without permission from the directors of the program in which they are enrolled and program in which they seek to enroll, and from the Provost.

Academic Calendar

The Academic Calendar provides all deadlines for registration as well as adding, dropping and withdrawing from classes. This calendar is online at www.paloalto.edu/admissions/admissions-resources/academic-calendar.

Late Registration Fees

A closing date is established for the regular registration period. This is the date by which registrations must be received in order to avoid late registration fees.

Students who fail to register by the published deadline will be assessed a late registration fee by the Business office when they register.

Students who do not register by the first day of the quarter are subject to dismissal from their program. They will be dismissed if they have not registered by the end of the Add/Drop period. The reinstatement fee is \$300.00, however, reinstatement is not guaranteed.

Add/Drop Policy

The Add/Drop period is normally the first two weeks of the Fall, Winter, and Spring Quarters, and the first week of Summer Quarter. Once the Add/Drop period has ended students may no longer add a class. An Add/Drop fee will be charged for all Add/Drop forms submitted after the end of the regular Add/Drop period.

Withdrawal from Classes

Withdrawals before the deadline. A student may withdraw from a class up until the last day for permitted withdrawals as designated in the Academic Calendar. Reasons for withdrawing from a course may include family emergency, illness, potential failure, etc. Plans to withdraw from a class should always be discussed with the instructor, the student's Academic Advisor and the Registrar. Withdrawal from a course must be done VIA THE DROP FORM LOCATED ON THE JICS STUDENT PORTAL It is considered an appropriate courtesy for a student to inform an instructor when planning to withdraw from a course.

Withdrawn courses appear on transcripts with a "W" (Withdrawal) as the permanent grade for that quarter.

Request for withdrawal after the deadline. Requests to withdraw after the quarterly deadline for withdrawal, but before the end of the quarter, will be considered in extenuating circumstances. The student should talk with the instructor to examine which of the following grading options is most appropriate. These options are at the instructor's discretion.

- The instructor may give a grade of “I” (Incomplete), with missing work to be completed by one of the methods described under “Requirements for Incompletes” below, as agreed upon with the instructor.
- A grade of “W” may be given with the written approval from the course instructor.

If the instructor is not willing to allow a grade of “I” or “W,” the student may appeal to their Program Director in writing.

Attendance

Attendance at sessions is required. Please see the attached university attendance policy.

[Attendance Policy](#)

Student Evaluation of Faculty

At the end of every quarter, students are asked to fill out a Course Evaluation Form for all of their instructors. This is an opportunity to comment on both course content and instructor effectiveness.

In most instances, this form is completed electronically, and students may be required to acknowledge that they completed the form. This acknowledgment is not connected with the student’s feedback, and all student responses are private and confidential.

Occasionally, mid-quarter evaluations will also be conducted for new faculty or instructors teaching a course for the first time. These mid-term provide important feedback that enables new instructors to optimize their classroom performance.

Faculty evaluation results are reviewed by the Program Director and Curriculum Committee for the program offering the course

Although the formal faculty feedback process occurs quarterly, informal feedback to faculty and to Counseling Program’s leadership is highly valued and welcomed at any time.

Books and Test Materials

Instructors are requested to provide lists of required texts to all students at least four weeks before the date of the first class meeting. This enables students to begin course readings before the first day of class, and to mitigate unanticipated shipping delays,

Students may purchase assigned books, new or used, wherever they choose. Students may find the best prices at online booksellers, such as Amazon, Barnes and Noble, Guilford Press, www.cheapesttextbooks.com, etc.

Course materials such as books, articles, and other items may be placed on 2-Hour Reserve at the PAU Library. Course syllabi and auxiliary instructional materials should be posted on a course website in the Canvas Learning System. Instructors are encouraged but not required to create websites for their courses. When copyrighted materials are distributed to students, password protection is important, and passwords may be required to access course materials. Contact the instructor or the PAU Library staff for more information about accessing protected materials.

Requests for Transcripts

Unofficial transcripts. Students may request unofficial transcript printouts from the Registrar’s office at any time. Such transcripts are generally adequate for applications to practicum and other counseling experiences.

Official transcripts. When official transcripts are required, students must submit a written request to the Registrar two weeks in advance of the date the transcript is needed.

Transcript fees. A \$4.00 fee is charged for each official transcript. Any unpaid balance on the student's account must be paid before the transcript is sent.

Please note that transcripts will not be faxed.

Policy on Religious and Cultural Holidays

Although the Counseling Program does not observe religious holidays and many important cultural holidays as official institutional holidays, the Counseling Program recognizes that students and faculty may choose to make adjustments in the academic calendar for important religious and cultural obligations. Schedule changes for this reason are made without penalty, and early planning for them by students and faculty is encouraged. Faculty may choose to dismiss classes that fall on religious holidays. Makeup sessions for canceled classes, while encouraged, are optional. Students may request to be excused from classes that fall on religious and important cultural holidays. Rescheduling class time missed, while optional, is encouraged, and should be made by the student in consultation with the instructor.

Leaves of Absence

Continuous study and a commitment to one's cohort are important aspects of a PAU education. The decision to take a break from Master's studies should not be taken lightly.

A student who discontinues graduate study with the intention of resuming study during a later year must file a Leave of Absence Request. Typically grounds for a leave of absence include medical or psychological problems, the arrival of a child during the current and/or the following term, or other compelling personal reasons. Medical or other documentation to support a leave request should be submitted by the student as appropriate. Return from a medical leave also requires documentation that the student is prepared and ready to resume degree studies.

Leave requests are granted for only one quarter at a time and must be renewed if additional leave time is needed. A student is not charged for a leave request.

Leave request forms are available from the Registrar's Office. This document must be completed, signed and dated by the student. The form must then be approved by the student's Academic Advisor, the Clinical Training Director and/or their program's Director. It is also important to inform the Financial Aid Office plans to take a leave of absence because Financial Aid may be impacted.

During a leave, students are considered enrolled, and the leave does not extend the period of time to advance to graduation (five calendar years from the beginning of the first quarter matriculated).

Administrative Leave

Palo Alto University reserves the right to place a student on administrative leave in response to instances of disruptive behavior or other behavior that, in the judgment of the University, interferes with the Counseling Program's community's well-being.

If the University determines that the behavior might be caused by, or related to, psychological or other health issues, the University may require a mandatory independent medical evaluation; temporary or indefinite withdrawal; and/or other administrative action as deemed appropriate. Such action is subject to the review of the Counseling Program's Advisory Committee and the approval of the Provost, with possible consultation by others.

Administrative Withdrawal

PAU reserves the right to administratively withdraw a student for (1) failing to pay tuition and fees or (2) failing to register for classes (inactive status for a quarter) or notify the University of a Leave of Absence. All students must be continuously enrolled in the program. Failure to register each quarter will result in administrative withdrawal from the program. Students who do not register by the first day of the quarter are subject to dismissal from the program, and will be dismissed if they have not registered by the end of the Add/Drop period. Students should check with the business office regarding applicable fees. However, reinstatement is not guaranteed. Students are not registered until after all required tuition and fees are paid in full.

Total Withdrawal from Program

A student who is considering withdrawal from a degree program is encouraged to meet with their Academic Advisor or the Program Director to discuss the implications of withdrawing. A Program Withdrawal form, available from the Registrar's Office, must be completed by the student upon his/her decision to leave the program. If the student withdraws after the Add/Drop period during a quarter, a "W" will appear on the student's academic transcript. Please see the Registrar's Office for more information.

Reinstatement or Re-admission

Students who withdraw or have been administratively withdrawn can re-apply for admission to a Counseling Program's. Students who do obtain acceptance to re-enter a PAU Counseling Program's or have been reinstated after being inactive, but not withdrawn pay the tuition and fees of the academic year they re-enter the Counseling Program's, not the year they originally entered PAU. Students are generally placed on the degree plan of the academic year they originally entered PAU, but the Program Director makes the final decision as to whether the re-nstated student is placed on the original degree plan or the degree plan for the year the student reinstated the Counseling Program's.

Impact of Leave on Financial Aid

See the "Financial Aid" section of the PAU website

<http://www.paloaltou.edu/admissions/admissions-resources/financial-aid-and-scholarships>

How We Measure Success and Help You Achieve It

Academic and Professional Integrity Policy

Students are expected to maintain the highest professional and ethical standards of conduct in all activities that are associated with their degree and to abide by University and Counseling Program's policies. The full policy is at the following web link.

[Academic and Professional Integrity Policy](#)

Suitability for the Counseling Program

The Counseling program faculty conducts a systematic developmental assessment of each M.A. Counseling student's progress throughout the program, including academic performance, professional development, and personal development. Consistent with established institutional policy, the American Counseling Association's (ACA) Code of Ethics, and other relevant codes and standards of practice, if evaluations indicate that a student is not appropriate for the Counseling program, faculty members will help facilitate the student's transition out of the program and, if possible, into a more appropriate area of study.

Grading Policies

Students are evaluated throughout their graduate career on their knowledge of the theoretical concepts; awareness and comprehension of relevant research findings; ability to synthesize, communicate and apply knowledge; and mastery of counseling theory and skills. Faculty are encouraged to provide feedback to students early in the term, return all student work to student's in a timely manner, with feedback explaining grading.

Qualitative and quantitative evaluations are used to evaluate student work. Most Counseling Program's course grades are based on papers and/or in-class or take-home examinations. A majority of courses also include an experiential component, with a portion of the grade based on class attendance, participation, individual and group student presentations, etc. As a general guideline, presentations should not comprise more than half of in-class time.

Final course grades reflect the following criteria:

- A+ awarded for extraordinary excellence
- A awarded for excellent performance
- A- awarded for very good performance
- B+ awarded for good performance
- B awarded for average performance
- B- awarded for below average but acceptable performance
- F is given for unacceptable performance
- I awarded for incomplete assignments/extenuating circumstances only
- FI is assigned if the I is not completed within the subsequent quarter

Pass/Fail grades are assigned in non-didactic courses such as practicum, doctoral project research, and internship, and may be assigned in other courses as well.

Letter grades become official transcript notations at the end of each quarter.

Consequences of Failing Grades

A grade of "F" is given when, in the judgment of the instructor, the quality of a student's work is not at the passing level for graduate students. A grade of "I" (Incomplete) becomes a grade of "FI" when the Incomplete is not cleared by the agreed-upon deadline. This is equivalent to an "F" grade, and reflects how the grade became a failing grade.

Students receiving a grade of “F” must retake that course. The retaking of the course does not eliminate the original “F” grade from the student’s academic record. However, when a course is successfully repeated, a notation of “R” is placed next to the “F” on the transcript to indicate that the course has been repeated, and the earlier failing grade is no longer calculated in the student’s grade point average.

An “F” grade results in a student being required to retake a course. Two or more “F” grades on a student’s record will ordinarily lead to recommendation for Dismissal. Such matters are handled by the advisor and the degree program’s Student Evaluation Committee (SEC). See the “Academic, Clinical and Administrative Sanctions” section for details.

Requirements for Incompletes

An “I” (Incomplete) is given in a course when the student is unable to completely fulfill the requirements during the quarter or extenuating circumstances necessitate withdrawing from the course. Though an occasional “I” may be necessary, taking Incompletes is strongly discouraged as a general practice. A student who has nine units or more of “I” grades will be reviewed by the Student Evaluation Committee.

For an “I” (Incomplete) to be given rather than an “F,” the student must have been in attendance for at least 75 percent of class meetings, must have satisfactorily completed 75 percent of the work for the class (as defined by the instructor), and must make arrangements with the instructor about how and when the work will be completed.

There are two ways to clear an Incomplete. The student should discuss options with the instructor:

- The instructor may, at their discretion, give a grade of “I” (Incomplete), with missing work to be completed before the end of the subsequent quarter. Approval of the instructor, as indicated by instructor’s signature on a “Change of Grade Form,” is required.
- The student may carry that grade until the following quarter or until the course is offered again provided the student completes a Petition to Extend a Grade of Incomplete. At that time, the student would secure written approval from the course instructor and his/her Academic Advisor and also inform the Registrar’s Office of the intent to attend the course. The student would not need to formally register for the course but only provide the Registrar’s Office with appropriate notification. A student only receives a grade for the initial course; therefore, all work completed during the subsequent course fulfills the requirements necessary to clear the “I” in the initial course.

An “I” grade may be carried for a maximum of one quarter or one year if the class is only offered yearly, and may not be extended by any leaves of absence. An “FI” (Fail) will automatically be given if this deadline is passed. A satisfactory grade to clear an “I” must reach the Registrar no later than the day grades for the deadline quarter are due. Example: The last day for instructors to turn in Fall Quarter grades is also the last day to clear a spring “I” grade. It is the responsibility of the student to make sure this deadline is met.

A student may petition to extend the deadline to make up an “I”. The instructor of the course and the Director of the student’s degree program must approve the extension, as well as specify when and how the work will be completed.

Grade Appeals

Student grade appeals are handled according to the institutional [Grade Appeals](#) policy linked within.

Academic Progress

Masters students are required to make satisfactory academic progress, which is defined as follows:

- Maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 (B);
- Receive no grade of “F” in any graduate course;
- Receive no more than two (2) grades of B- in a single quarter *;
- Receive a passing grade in practicum;
- Have fewer than nine (9) units of incomplete;
- If not on a Modified Course Plan approved by the student’s Academic Advisor the student must complete a minimum of:
 - 24 units a year in the M.A. Counseling Residential-Hybrid program
 - 24 units a year, M.A. Counseling Distance Learning program
- Complete the program within five (5) years of starting the program.

Failure to make satisfactory academic progress may lead to academic review, probation suspension or dismissal.

Modified Course Plans

Students who have taken a Leave of Absence, dropped a course, or withdrawn from a course must develop a Modified Course Plan with their Academic Advisor. A Modified Course Plan may contain fewer number of units per year than the standard course plans. Students should be aware that in the event of leaves, dropped courses, and course withdrawals, that some quarters in their Modified Course Plan they may not have enough units to qualify for financial aid. Or, there may be quarters in which needed coursework is not offered. Both Standard and Modified Course Plans must be completed within five (5) years of starting the program.

Annual Student Evaluations and Portfolios

Students are systematically evaluated to determine the extent to which they are meeting program requirements and performance expectations. To facilitate this process, PAU uses an online e-portfolio system, called Clinical Training Manager (CTM), which supports standards-based student assessment in counselor education. Clinical Training Manager (CTM) e-portfolios are accessible to the student and their advisor.

In the first year of the program students conduct a self-assessment using the Counselor Competency Scales (CCS-R). The CCS-R focuses on the assessment of counseling skills, the ability to facilitate therapeutic conditions, and professional dispositions and behaviors. During the Clinical Interviewing course the students role play a counseling session which is also evaluated using the CCS-R standards. Each student must achieve success in this course as well as the Clinical Advancement Project before moving on to practicum. The results of the CCS-R self-assessment, Clinical Interviewing assessment, Clinical Advancement project and overall academic success (GPA and courses completed) are stored in the student’s Clinical Training Manager (CTM) portfolio.

By the end of the first year the student and their Academic Advisor will review overall progress to determine student’s suitability to move to the second year, which focuses on practicum work with actual clients. If the student is recommended for practicum this is noted in the student’s portfolio.

Students who successfully progress to the practicum phase will receive quarterly feedback from their site supervisor, practicum instructor and Academic Advisor. Results of clinical hours gained, the Capstone course, practicum evaluations and self-evaluation using the CCS-R are reviewed by the advisor in the second year and prior to graduation.

Academic, Clinical and Administrative Sanctions

Disciplinary Procedures

The disciplinary process at PAU has four general phases: identification of the issue with the advisor, meeting of the Student Evaluation Committee, notification of the student, and decision.

1. Identification of the issue. The ongoing advising and feedback process, including grades, practicum evaluations, annual evaluations, and regular meetings with advisors, is intended to identify and remediate any issues in academic course work, progress toward degree, research, practicum performance, and professional conduct. Academic Advisors will initiate an Informal Academic Review at the first sign of potentially serious problems. If the informal review process is not sufficient to remediate issues, then any faculty member, Academic Advisor or practicum supervisor can relay their concerns to any member of the Counseling Program Student Evaluation Committee to initiate a formal review by the SEC.
2. Meeting of Student Evaluation Committee (SEC). This committee meets as necessary to address disciplinary problems. All relevant data from the student's portfolio and other sources will be made available to the SEC, which may also refer the matter to other ad hoc committees for further consideration if appropriate. The recommendations of ad hoc groups, if any, will be referred back to the SEC, which will make the decision.
3. Notification of the student. Two weeks before the SEC's deliberation, the student will be sent written notification of a pending academic suspension or dismissal along with a request for the student to appear before the SEC at its next meeting. The student may choose to respond in writing and/or to have someone of his/her choice attend the meeting as an advocate. If the student chooses not to appear before the SEC, he/she must provide a written response to the issues raised. The student's response must be received by the SEC Co-chairs one week prior to the meeting date.
4. Decision. The SEC will review all information and come to a decision about whether the concerns warrant action and the type of action, including probation, suspension, or dismissal. If the SEC recommendation is for no action or probation, the student will be informed in writing by the committee. If the SEC recommendation is suspension or dismissal, this recommendation will be forwarded to the Provost and then to the University President for a final determination. The student will be informed of the decision in writing within three weeks of the SEC's recommendation.

Disciplinary Actions

If there are academic issues the student may be placed on:

- Academic Review,
- Academic Probation,
- Academic Suspension, or
- Recommended for Dismissal

Similarly, if clinical issues are present, the student may be placed on

- Clinical Review
- Clinical Probation
- Clinical Suspension
- Recommended for Dismissal.

All disciplinary actions are noted in the student's Clinical Training Manager (CTM) portfolio and also communicated to the Counseling Program's Student Progress Committee (SPC) as factors in the student's annual review.

Academic Disciplinary Actions

PAU follows informal and formal procedures for academic review:

- Informal Academic Review. The Academic Advisor may initiate an informal review at initial indications that a student is having problems (e.g. poor midterm grade).
- Formal Academic Review. Students will be subject to Academic Review in consequence of the following:
 - The first quarter with an F in any course, or
 - The first time the overall GPA is below 3.0, or

Academic Review requires the student to meet with their Academic Advisor and to develop a remediation plan. If the issue cannot be resolved informally with the Academic Advisor, the remediation plan will be submitted to the M.A. Counseling Student Evaluation Committee (SEC).

Formal Academic Review lasts for one year. If, during that time, the student maintains a 3.0 or higher GPA and/or resolves clinical standards issues, the Academic Review status is removed. If the GPA remains below 3.0, the student remains on Academic Review until one year has passed. If the student continues to receive substandard grades or clinical ratings while on Academic Review, the Academic Advisor may refer the student to SEC for consideration of probation, suspension or dismissal, particularly when continued low grades and poor performance represent a failure to benefit from the remediation plan and processes offered through the Academic Advisor.

Academic Probation

Students will be placed on Academic Probation in consequence of any of the following:

- A second quarter with an overall GPA below 3.0, or
- A second letter grade of “F” in any course, or
- More than 2 B-s, or
- Nine or more units of Incomplete (“I”), or
- Failure to satisfactorily complete the annual minimum unit requirement in the Standard Course Plan (36 units per year residential-hybrid, 30 units per year online) without a Modified Course Plan approved by the student’s Academic Advisor, or

If Academic Probation is recommended by the SEC, the student will receive written notification of this decision. The student will be required to meet with his/her Academic Advisor prior to the SEC meeting to discuss the probation and to develop a plan to address the deficiencies identified. A written summary of that plan must be submitted by the student to the SEC prior to the SEC meeting.

The period of Academic Probation lasts for one year, during which time the student must correct the deficiencies identified. If the student satisfactorily rectifies the deficiencies in less than a year, he/she may apply to the SEC for removal from Academic Probation.

Students may not advance to practicum, nor schedule a capstone project proposal or oral defense during the period of Academic Probation. Failure to correct the deficiencies by the end of the probationary period is grounds for suspension or dismissal from the program.

Academic Suspension

A student is suspended from the Counseling Program if concerns are of such a nature that they cannot be remediated within a short time while remaining a student. If the student is suspended, the student will receive No Credit (NC) for registered courses and course work in progress at the time of suspension. Suspension typically extends for a specified period of time, up to one year, after which the student may seek re-admission by petition in writing to the program via the Counseling Program Director.

Academic Dismissal

In cases of extreme or persistent difficulties, the M.A. Counseling SEC will consider recommending a student for permanent dismissal from the degree program. Grounds for such dismissal include but are not limited to the following:

- Receipt of two or more letter grades of “F” graduate courses, or
- Receipt of a letter grade of “F” in Practicum (i.e., field experience), or
- Failure to correct the deficiencies during the period of Academic Probation, or
- Failure to pay financial obligations to PAU.

Note that an adequate or even an outstanding academic record cannot compensate for impaired or unethical professional behavior.

In exceptional circumstances, a student’s behavior might be deemed so egregious as to warrant direct dismissal from the program without prior probation or suspension.

If grounds for dismissal are identified, the student will be given two (2) weeks notice that they must appear before the M.A. Counseling SEC and will receive a written explanation of the reason they may be dismissed from the program. The student will be given the opportunity to address the possible dismissal and provide an explanation to the SEC why they should not be recommended for dismissal.

Before recommending a student for dismissal, the SEC will determine whether the issue can be resolved or warrants further attempts at remediation. The SEC will provide written feedback to the student regarding the extent to which corrective actions have or have not been successful in addressing the issues of concern.

Clinical Disciplinary Actions

Students with non-academic but clinical concerns may be placed in one of the following statuses:

- Clinical Review
- Clinical Probation
- Clinical Suspension
- Recommended for Dismissal.

PAU follows informal and formal procedures for academic review:

- Informal Clinical Review. The Academic Advisor may initiate an informal review at initial indications that a student is having problems that unresolved may prevent the student from obtaining or succeeding in the Practicum clinical training portion of the program.
- Formal Clinical Review. Students will be subject to Academic Review in consequence of the following:
 - Failure to maintain ethical and professional standards described in the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics, including cheating, plagiarism, manufacturing or falsifying data, sexual harassment, or other violation of these principles, or
 - Failure to maintain the counseling competencies and professional conduct appropriate for a student enrolled in a graduate counseling training program, including behavior that poses serious risks to clients, research subjects, faculty, staff, or colleagues (e.g., behavior resulting from psychosis or other psychopathology or active dependence on substances, etc.), or
 - Demonstrating serious problems that prevent the student from obtaining or succeeding in the Practicum clinical training portion of the program.

Informal Clinical Review requires the student to meet with their Academic Advisor and to develop a remediation plan. If the issue cannot be resolved informally with the Academic Advisor, the remediation

plan will be submitted to the M.A. Counseling Student Evaluation Committee (SEC). In the event of egregious non-academic or non-clinical issues (e.g. illegal behavior on campus) the student may be referred directly to the SEC. The SEC may request a meeting with the student and/or advisor to discuss the remediation plan, if necessary.

Informal Clinical Review lasts for one year. If, during that time, the student resolves clinical issues, the Informal Clinical Review status is removed. If the student continues to receive substandard clinical ratings while on Clinical Review, the Academic Advisor may refer the student to SEC for consideration of probation, suspension or dismissal, particularly when poor performance represents a failure to benefit from the remediation plan and processes offered through the Academic Advisor.

Clinical Probation

If Clinical Probation is recommended by the SEC, the student will receive written notification of this decision. The student will be required to meet with his/her Academic Advisor prior to the SEC meeting to discuss the probation and to develop a plan to address the deficiencies identified. A written summary of that plan must be submitted by the student to the SEC prior to the SEC meeting.

The period of Clinical Probation lasts for one year, during which time the student must correct the deficiencies identified. If the student satisfactorily rectifies the deficiencies in less than a year, he/she may apply to the SEC for removal from Academic Probation.

Students may not advance to practicum, nor schedule a capstone project proposal or oral defense during the period of Clinical Probation. Students in practicum may be required to withdraw during the period of probation. Failure to correct the deficiencies by the end of the probationary period is grounds for dismissal from the program (see Academic Dismissal below).

Clinical Suspension

A student is suspended from the Counseling Program if concerns are of such a nature that they cannot be remediated within a short time while remaining a student. The most typical cause for suspension would be for unprofessional behavior that requires extended time to remediate through individual psychotherapy or other psychological treatment.

Suspension typically extends for a specified period of time, up to one year, after which the student may seek re-admission by petition in writing to the program via the Counseling Program Director. If the student is suspended, the student will receive No Credit (NC) for registered courses and course work in progress at the time of suspension.

Clinical Dismissal

In cases of extreme or persistent difficulties, the M.A. Counseling SEC will consider recommending a student for permanent dismissal from the degree program. Grounds for such dismissal include but are not limited to the following:

- Receipt of a letter grade of "F" in Practicum (i.e., field experience), or
- Failure to correct the deficiencies during the period of Clinical Probation.

Note that an adequate or even an outstanding academic record cannot compensate for impaired or unethical professional behavior.

In exceptional circumstances, a student's behavior might be deemed so egregious as to warrant direct dismissal from the program without prior probation or suspension.

If grounds for dismissal are identified, the student will be given two (2) weeks notice that they must appear before the M.A. Counseling SEC and will receive a written explanation of the reason they may be dismissed from the program. The student will be given the opportunity to address the possible dismissal and provide an explanation to the SEC why they should not be recommended for dismissal.

Before recommending a student for dismissal, the SEC will determine whether the issue can be resolved or warrants further attempts at remediation. The SEC will provide written feedback to the student regarding the extent to which corrective actions have or have not been successful in addressing the issues of concern.

Other Reasons for Student Discipline

In the event of egregious non-academic or non-clinical issues (e.g. illegal behavior on campus) the student may be referred directly to the SEC. The SEC may request a meeting with the student and/or advisor to discuss the remediation plan, if necessary.

Students may also be disciplined for reasons including, but not limited to, the following:

- Disruption of the educational or administrative process of the Counseling Program's or member entity;
- Physical abuse or destruction of Counseling Program's or member property;
- Physical abuse, including sexual assault or other sex offense, or threat of abuse to other PAU or member students, employees, or their families;
- Harassment of other PAU or member students, employees or their families;
- Theft of PAU or member property;
- Sale or knowing possession of illegal drugs or narcotics;
- Possession or use of explosives or deadly weapons;
- Lewd, indecent, or obscene behavior on PAU or member property;
- Soliciting or assisting another in an act which would subject a student to a serious sanction;
- Any action which would grossly violate the purpose of the Counseling Program's or the rights of those who comprise it or reasonably suggest that the student is unfit to pursue or practice the profession.

Administrative Leave of Absence

Notwithstanding any other policy, the School reserves the right to place a student on administrative leave in response to instances of disruptive or other behavior that interferes with School community wellbeing in the judgment of the School. Where the School believes that the behavior may be caused by, or related to, psychological or other health issues, the School may require a mandatory independent medical evaluation; temporary or indefinite withdrawal; and/or other administrative action as deemed appropriate by the circumstances of the individual situation. Such action must be approved by the Provost or his/her designee, with possible consultation by others. If independent medical evaluation is required, the School will first offer to consult with the student or his/her health adviser in order to obtain relevant information.

Appeals

The Counseling Program's respects the right to due process, and provides written notice of the nature of the charges, a fair opportunity to refute the charges, and the opportunity to appeal.

A student may appeal a decision of academic review, probation, suspension or dismissal or under the auspices of the Counseling Program's Grievance and Appeals Policies Procedure. Students must do so within the quarter following notification of a final decision of probation, suspension, or dismissal.

Faculty Endorsement of Students for Credentialing and Employment

M.A. Counseling faculty members are encouraged to assist trained, and qualified students in obtaining employment in their chosen field. This support typically takes the form of written reference letters and recommendations. Students should solicit the support of appropriate faculty who can accurately attest to their academic work and clinical ability. A recommendation may be withheld if it is determined that the student is not suitable for a specific position, and programal faculty reserve the right to decline the request for any reason.

At minimum, the Director of the Counseling Program will issue a letter for all successful graduates stating that the individual has:

- Successfully graduated from the M.A. in Counseling program
- Successfully completed a clinical practicum with 280 face to face client hours and 700 total clinical hours
- Completed the end of program capstone project and has demonstrated the basic competencies to practice as a post-Master's intern in the pursuit of professional licensure.

Who and Where to Turn for Help

Academic Issues

- Academic Advisor
- Course Instructor (if issue is specific to certain class)
- [Academic and Professional Integrity Policy](#)
- [Attendance Policy](#)
- [Classroom and Online Etiquette](#)

Discrimination Issues

- [Nondiscrimination Policy](#)

Financial Issues

- PAU Business Office (billing issues) bohotline@palloatou.edu
- PAU Financial Aid Office (Financial Aid issues) financialaid@palloatou.edu

Grade Appeals

- [Grade Appeals Policy](#)

Institutional Policies

- <https://www.palloatou.edu/institutional-policies>

Non-Curricular Issues (e.g., general professional development issues, list of therapist referrals, adjustment difficulties, need to take leave, program questions, CV editing, etc.)

- Academic Advisor

Orientation Information

- The Canvas Course- MA Online Student Orientation

Practicum Issues (e.g., application procedures, list of practicum opportunities, etc.)

- The first source of information is the Canvas Course- M.A. Counseling Program Information Page
- Director or Clinical Training Management Support Systems- (Vacant)
- Director of Clinical Training for Residential Programs, Dr. Tim Baima (tbaima@palloatou.edu)
- Director of Clinical Training for Distance Learning Programs (US), Dr. Donna Sheperis (dsheperis@palloatou.edu)
- Director of Clinical Training for International Students, Dr. Jennie Ju (jjju@palloatou.edu)
- Practicum Course Instructor
- Academic Advisor

Requests for Accommodations (e.g., international students, students with special needs, etc.)

- PAU Director for Student Services, Tom Shepard, tshepard@palloatou.edu
- Associate Director for Student Services, Office of Accessible Education, Ana Castrillo (acastrillo@palloatou.edu)
- Associate Director of Student Services for International Student Advising, Lisa Harris (lharris@palloatou.edu)

Research Questions

- Academic Advisor
- Institutional Review Board

Sexual Misconduct

- PAU Sexual Harassment Officer, Luli Emmons (lemmons@paloaltou.edu)
- PAU Academic Dean, Jim Breckenridge (jbreckenridge@paloaltou.edu)
- <https://www.paloaltou.edu/palo-alto-university-sexual-misconduct-policy>

Teaching Assistant Applications

- Counseling Program Office, Samiyah Currimbhoy (scurrimbhoy@paloaltou.edu)

Navigating PAU

Contact Information

The Counseling Program is offered in a residential blended format on the main campus and its Clinic Classrooms:

Palo Alto University Main Campus

1791 Arastradero Road
Palo Alto, CA 94304
Phone: 800-818-6136
Fax: 650-433-3888
www.paloaltou.edu

Counseling Program Main Office

5150 El Camino Real
Los Altos, CA 94022
mastersprograms@paloaltou.edu
650-417-2016

Official University Communication

Official communications are sent by email directly to students' Palo Alto University email accounts. Students are responsible for checking their PAU e-mail daily, or having their PAU email forwarded to an email address they do check daily.

Resources and Facilities

Video Conferencing Live Classroom (Zoom)

Zoom video conferencing technology is used for live weekly online classes for every course. Zoom enables instructors to share their computer screen with all students simultaneously. Students and instructors can then participate in a videoconference call while viewing the same materials. This creates a learning experience similar to that found in a classroom.

Student Portfolio (Clinical Training Manager (CTM))

The Counseling Program uses an online e-portfolio system, called Clinical Training Manager (CTM), that supports standards-based student assessment in counselor education. Clinical Training Manager (CTM) e-portfolios are accessible to M.A. Counseling students and their advisors. Students use Clinical Training Manager (CTM) to build and maintain an assessment portfolio, a file repository, and a presentation portfolio.

Learning Management System (Canvas E-Learning Platform)

Canvas E-Learning Platform is a password protected online learning management system. It is used by students in on-campus and online programs as well as PAU staff and faculty to introduce discuss, share and archive information and ideas. This forum is not used for official dissemination of school policies.

PAU Research Library

The Research Library exists to meet the educational needs of the institution and to support its instructional, research, and service programs. The Library offers a full range of resources and services to PAU students, staff, alumni, faculty, and Friends of the PAU Library. Students must have a PAU ID to borrow materials from the PAU Library. For information on the library please go to the library web page at:

<https://www.paloalto.edu/about/programs-and-offices/library>

WiFi and Computer Labs

PAU provides wireless access on its main campus and the Los Altos classroom location. For assistance connecting contact support@paloalto.edu.

The PAU computer lab is located at the PAU library on the main campus. All computers in the computer lab have SPSS®, Microsoft Office® and End Note® software, as well as high-speed Internet access. The Lab is open the same hours as the library, including evenings and weekends.

Student Services

Identification Cards

All students in both on-campus and online programs may obtain a Palo Alto University ID Card. This is a photo ID issued by the PAU Student Services office at the beginning of the student's first quarter of enrollment. Students in on-campus programs will have a photo taken for the ID Card at the in-person orientation. Online students and residential students who cannot attend the orientation may email a current digital photo, similar to a passport photo, in jpeg format, to the Counseling Program's Manager. They will then be sent their ID card by mail.

Students are expected to use the same ID card throughout their degree program. If lost, contact Student Services (www.paloalto.edu/about/programs-and-offices/student-services) for a replacement. A fee is charged for replacement ID cards.

Professional Liability Insurance

PAU carries school professional liability insurance through American Homes Assurance Company. All Master's students who see clients under supervision of a licensed professional as part of a practicum or internship must also be insured by the agency with whom they complete the practicum or internship.

In addition, M.A. Counseling students are required to purchase American Counseling Association student membership which provides liability insurance in the United States.

Accessible Education

Palo Alto University complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. In order to assist students with qualified learning, physical, and other disabilities who request reasonable disability accommodations, a student must provide to PAU's Office of Accessible Education, current documentation of any disability and other relevant information from a Health Care Professional. Once registered with the Office of Accessible Education, in order to request disability accommodations, **no later than 7 business days after the start of any academic quarter**, complete the request form available from the Office of Accessible Education. If the Office of Accessible Education has this form on record and your request has been approved, the Office of Accessible Education will notify your professors that you are eligible for reasonable accommodations. The Office of Accessible Education will also notify the professor of the nature of the accommodations that have been approved (e.g., extended time and or private room for exams). You may request the forms from Ana Castrillo, Director for the Office of Accessible Education/Associate Director for Student Services, at

acastrillo@paloaltou.edu

<https://www.paloaltou.edu/about/programs-and-offices/student-services/office-accessible-education>

Accommodation of Disabled Students

Palo Alto University complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Accordingly, no otherwise qualified disabled student shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any academic, research, counseling, financial aid or other postsecondary education program or activity which PAU provides for all students. PAU's disabled students meet the requirements and levels of competency, required of all students in the program. In order to assist students with qualified learning physical and other disabilities, which request reasonable disability accommodations, a student must provide current documentation of any disability and other relevant information to the Office of Accessible Education.

Details of the accommodation request will be discussed interactively with the student and determined according to individual student needs. All applicants with disabilities are advised of this policy at the time of their application to the school. For purposes of reasonable accommodation, a disabled student or applicant is a person who: (a) has a physical or mental impairment which limits one or more major life activities (such as walking, seeing, speaking, learning, or working); (b) has a record with the School of such impairment; or (c) is regarded by the School as having such an impairment, or who is otherwise defined by law as a qualified disabled student or applicant. The individual must meet the qualifications and requirements expected generally of PAU students, and must be able to perform the essential requirements of the curriculum, either with or without reasonable accommodation. PAU's Palo Alto campus has wheelchair access to all areas. Rest rooms are wheelchair accessible. Every attempt is made to work with the disabled student to meet his/her special needs.

In order to request disability accommodations, students must fill out the request for accommodations forms, available from the Office of Accessible Education no later than seven days after the start of the academic quarter. When this form is on record with Office of Accessible Education and the request has been approved, the Office of Accessible Education will notify appropriate faculty that the student is eligible for accommodation. Faculty will also be informed as to of the nature of the accommodations that have been approved.

If a student's request for accommodation is refused by the Office of Accessible Education, he or she may appeal the decision to the Institutional Grievance and Appeals Committee.

Disability accommodation forms and additional details on the application process can be found on the [PAU Portal](#), by clicking on 'Student Resources' tab.

For more information, contact:

Ana Castrillo, Associate Director of Student Services
1791 Arastradero Road - Building. 3, Room #334
Palo Alto, CA 94304.
acastrillo@paloaltou.edu
Ph: [650-433-3836](tel:650-433-3836)

International Student Services

The International Student Services office assists international master's students who are living overseas in obtaining required documentation for entry F-1 visas so that they may attend the one-week summer Clinical Interviewing course held at Palo Alto University.

Interested students should contact Lisa Harris (lharris@paloinfo.org) at least two months prior to the start of the Clinical Interviewing course start date. The summer Clinical Interviewing course is the only section of any PAU Counseling Program's for which an F-1 international student visa can be used.

Student Government

Students have the opportunity to take an active role in helping to shape their program. Student Councils for each degree program articulate student issues and goals and work with program leadership to ensure that student concerns are addressed.

The Student Council is the primary conduit for student communication to program leadership. Council members actively solicit student feedback on specific issues, organize class meetings, and are available for students to communicate concerns confidentially. They work with program leadership to craft responses to student questions and develop appropriate proposals to address student concerns. Council members also represent students in various standing Counseling Program's committees, as well as at meetings of the PAU Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the Board.

The Counseling Program Student Council consists of student officers who represent each of the learning modalities: (1) a residential-blended program representative, (2) an online program representative, and (3) a GACE China representative. Representatives are elected in the fall quarter once entering students have acclimated to each other and to the program—by the end of September. At the discretion of the student body, the President and other Council members may be provided with a stipend drawn from the President's annual budget.

Voter Registration

Palo Alto University provides emails and links so that students can become active and vote in national, state, and local elections. You can register to vote online at: <http://registertovote.ca.gov>. Santa Clara County voter registration information: Registrar of Voters, 1555 Berger Drive, Bldg. 2 San Jose, CA 95112. (408) 299-VOTE, Email registrar@rov.sccgov.org, Website: www.sccvote.org. To be eligible to vote, you must be a U.S. citizen, a resident of California, and 18 years old on the day of the election. Other restrictions apply. You must be registered to vote at least 15 days before an election in order to cast your ballot.

Tuition and Fees

2017-18 Tuition and Fees

<https://www.paloalto.edu/graduate-programs/masters-programs/ma-counseling/faqs-tuitionfees>

Refund Policy for Program Withdrawal

Students who withdraw from the program or drop a course must complete and submit an Add/Drop form to the Registrar. Students withdrawing from the program must also complete the proper withdrawal paperwork. Failure to attend classes does not constitute withdrawal and will result in an "F" for the course. Students may not withdraw from a practicum course without the concurrence of the Counseling Program's Practicum Committee.

Tuition will be refunded to students without federal financial aid who withdraw from the Counseling Program's, temporarily or permanently, according to the following schedule (California Education Code).

Students with federal financial aid are subject to a different process. Please check the financial aid portion on this handbook further information:

Time Elapsed in Quarter Refund Amount

- Through the first week of the quarter 100%
- During the second week of the quarter 90%
- During the third week of the quarter 80%
- During the fourth week of the quarter 70%
- During the fifth week of the quarter 60%
- During the sixth week of the quarter 50%
- There is no refund of tuition after the sixth week of the quarter.

Refunds are processed in accordance with Federal guidelines.

Financial Aid

Financial assistance is available to eligible PAU master's students in the form of loans (repayable with interest) and on-campus Federal Work Study employment (teaching assistants, research assistants and student assistants).

While independent professional schools have no state support or extensive endowments, some type of government subsidized and/or alternative student loan funding is available to almost all students.

For more details please refer to: www.paloalto.edu/admissions/admissions-resources/financial-aid-and-scholarships

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Standards

Palo Alto University has the following academic standards for students who receive federal student aid. These standards require students to enroll in an eligible program and courses to receive Federal Title IV aid. Students must make reasonable and timely advancement toward the completion of their educational goal. This is known as Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).

The details of the SAP standards are listed in the college catalog on page 33

<https://www.paloalto.edu/sites/default/files/2017-18%20Catalog%20FINAL%209.13.17.pdf>

Veterans Benefits

Palo Alto University is committed to serving its military and veteran community in recognition of, and appreciation for, the service and sacrifices that military personnel, veterans, and their families have made. PAU's Veteran Student Service Office in the Academic Affairs Program exists to help veterans and active military personnel to meet their educational challenges and fulfill their goals with the best possible academic programs and exceptional student support.

<https://www.paloalto.edu/about/programs-and-offices/veteran-and-military-student-services>

Institutional Policies

The following university-wide policies are posted on the Palo Alto University website at www.paloaltou.edu/institutional-policies.

[Academic and Professional Integrity Policy](#)

[ADA \(Americas with Disabilities Act\)/Section 504 Grievance Procedure \(Student\)](#)

[Attendance Policy](#)

[Campus Safety and Criminal Statics \(Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Police and Campus Crime Statistics Act\)](#)

[Classroom and Online Etiquette](#)

[Computer and Network Usage Policy](#)

[Continuous Enrollment Policy](#)

[Credit Hour Policy](#)

[Date of Degree Completion](#)

[Diversity](#)

[Grade Appeals](#)

[Gronowski Center Research Policy](#)

[Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974](#)

[Institutional Grievance and Appeals Policies and Procedures](#)

[Nondiscrimination Policy](#)

[PAU Email Communication Policy](#)

[PAU Staff Email Signature Policy and Photo](#)

[Preferred Names Policy](#)

[Research Integrity Policy](#)

[Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)

[Social Media Policy](#)

[Syllabus Policy](#)

[Teach-Out Policy](#)

[Title 34 Education, Code of Federal Regulations](#)

[Tobacco Free Environment Policy](#)

Transfer Credit Policy (*coming soon*)

[Video Capture for Classroom Lecture](#)

[Voter Registration Information](#)