

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST TO MERGE MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM IN MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING  
AND MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATION PROGRAM IN SCHOOL COUNSELING AND  
NAME THE PROGRAM AS MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM IN COUNSELING WITH TWO  
EMPHASIS AREAS – CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING AND SCHOOL  
COUNSELING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA**

**Action Requested:** Consider approval of the request by the University of Northern Iowa to merge the Master of Arts Program in Mental Health Counseling and the Master of Arts in Education Program in School Counseling and name the merged program as the Master of Arts Program in Counseling with two emphasis areas – Clinical Mental Health Counseling and School Counseling in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

**Executive Summary:** The proposed name change will more accurately reflect the merger of the two programs and describe the full range of studies undertaken by graduate students. This request has been reviewed by the Board Office and the Council of Provosts and is recommended for approval. This request addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan priority to pursue “educational excellence and impact” and Goal #8 – “Iowa’s public universities and special schools shall be increasingly efficient and effective.”

**Background:**

◇ Description of programs.

The **Master of Arts Program in Mental Health Counseling** includes a practicum and a two-semester internship with a minimum of 100 client contact hours, a two-semester internship with a minimum of 900 hours of clinical practice, including a minimum of 360 hours of direct client contact under the supervision of a credentialed mental health professional, and coursework related to each of the core areas designated by the accrediting agency, CACREP (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs). Program graduates are prepared to practice in a variety of mental health and community agencies, including hospitals, clinics, substance abuse agencies, hospice organizations, and mental health centers.

The **Master of Arts in Education Program in School Counseling** requires a practicum and an internship with a minimum of 600 hours of clinical practice, including at least 240 hours of direct client contact under the supervision of a credentialed school counseling professional, and coursework related to each of the core areas designated by CACREP. Program graduates have the knowledge and skills to implement a comprehensive, sequential, developmental program described in the National Standards for School Counseling Programs.

◇ Reason for proposed name change. The Master of Arts in Education Program in School Counseling was moved from the College of Education to the School of Applied Human Sciences in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. The designation of Master of Arts in Education no longer applies to this program because the designation in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences is Master of Arts. In the 2009 CACREP standards, the name of Mental Health Counseling was changed to Clinical Mental Health Counseling. Therefore, the program name change will be consistent with accreditation standards.

The merger of the two programs into one degree program with two emphasis areas will provide a more cohesive approach for students to locate the two programs than the current practice of having students look for either the school counseling program or mental health counseling program which are not listed together on campus. The merger and naming will also provide a better marketing approach for the two emphasis areas.

- ◇ Comparable name at other institutions. The proposed name is commonly used in other CACREP-accredited programs at peer institutions. The University of North Carolina at Greensboro offers a Master of Science Program in School Counseling and Clinical Mental Health Counseling under the name Program Counseling in the Department of Counseling and Educational Development; the University of North Texas offers a Master of Education or Master of Science Program in School Counseling and Clinical Mental Health Counseling under the name Counseling Master's Degree Program, Graduate Studies.
- ◇ Consistency with accreditation requirements. The proposed merger and naming is consistent with CACREP standards.
- ◇ Effect on program configuration. The proposed name change is not expected to have an impact on the number of hours required for the merged programs into a single program with two emphasis areas.
- ◇ Effect on students. Current students will not be affected by the name change because there are no curriculum changes anticipated.
- ◇ Effect on resources. There are no associated costs anticipated for the merger and naming other than marginal costs to change the website and promotional materials.
- ◇ Date of implementation. The proposed merger and name change will become effective upon approval by the Board of Regents and will be included in the University's 2012-2014 Catalog.