

First Name

Marla

Last Name

Pankratz

Person ID

0378179

Department

Education



## Justification For Program

Proposed Program Name

PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY COUNSELING (LPC TRAC)

Description of Proposed Program

The Community Counseling graduate program is a two-tiered entry-level professional training program comprised of the M.S. Community Counseling and Ed.S. Professional Community Counseling (LPC Track). Admission into the Ed.S. Professional Community Counseling (LPC Track) Program requires completion of the M.S. Community Counseling Program. In addition, candidates must be approved for admission by the Education Department. Department bases its decision in part on the candidate's overall performance in the M.S. Community Counseling program. For those students completing a community counseling degree from other universities, a departmental interview is required, in addition to the University and Graduate School admission requirements. (See p. 35 for information regarding admission to the M.S. Community Counseling Program).

Employment Demand for Proposed Program

The demand for Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) in the United States is experiencing significant growth, reflecting an increasing recognition of the importance of mental health services.

Employment Statistics:

Current Employment: As of 2023, there are approximately 449,800 professionals employed as substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors.

BLS.GOV

Projected Growth: Employment in this sector is projected to grow by 19% from 2023 to 2033, adding about 84,500 new positions.

Unmet Need for Proposed Program

The United States is currently facing a significant shortage of Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs), leading to substantial unmet mental health needs across the population.

**Prevalence of Unmet Mental Health Needs:**

As of December 2023, over half of the U.S. population—approximately 169 million people—reside in areas designated as Mental Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs).

BUREAU OF HEALTH WORKFORCE

In 2022, about 59 million U.S. adults (23% of the adult population) experienced a mental illness, with nearly half not receiving treatment.

BUREAU OF HEALTH WORKFORCE

**Projected Shortages:**

By 2036, substantial shortages are anticipated in the behavioral health workforce. Specifically, a projected shortage of 69,610 mental health counselors is expected, meeting only 62% of the demand under the status quo scenario.

BUREAU OF HEALTH WORKFORCE

**Factors Contributing to Unmet Needs:**

**Geographic Disparities:** Rural areas are particularly affected, with 55% of U.S. counties lacking practicing psychiatrists, psychologists, or social workers.

BUREAU OF HEALTH WORKFORCE

**Program Method of Delivery**

Online only 

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## New Program Proposal

**NPP Submission Date**

01/27/2025

**Withdraw LOI**

**NPP Requested Instructional Program Code**

**NPP CIP Code (6-digits)**

42.2802

**NPP Accreditation**

None

**NPP Proposed Implementation Date (i.e. Fall 2025)**

Fall 2025

**NPP Location(s) where program will be offered**


Southwestern Oklahoma State University

**NPP Governing Board Approval Date**

**NPP Program Options**

None

**NPP Distance Education Availability**

ALL of the courses in the program can be completed entirely online 

## NPP Total number of hours required for the program

60

### NPP Program Purpose

The Community Counseling graduate program is a two-tiered entry-level professional training program comprised of the M.S. Community Counseling and Ed.S. Professional Community Counseling (LPC Track).

### NPP Employment Opportunity and Demand

The demand for Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) in the United States is experiencing significant growth, reflecting an increasing recognition of the importance of mental health services.

#### Employment Statistics:

Current Employment: As of 2023, there are approximately 449,800 professionals employed as substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors.

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Projected Growth: Employment in this sector is projected to grow by 19% from 2023 to 2033, adding about 84,500 new positions.

### NPP Program Rationale and Background

The United States is currently facing a significant shortage of Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs), leading to substantial unmet mental health needs across the population.

#### Prevalence of Unmet Mental Health Needs:

As of December 2023, over half of the U.S. population—approximately 169 million people—reside in areas designated as Mental Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs).

BUREAU OF HEALTH WORKFORCE

In 2022, about 59 million U.S. adults (23% of the adult population) experienced a mental illness, with nearly half not receiving treatment.

BUREAU OF HEALTH WORKFORCE

#### Projected Shortages:

By 2036, substantial shortages are anticipated in the behavioral health workforce. Specifically, a projected shortage of 69,610 mental health counselors is expected, meeting only 62% of the demand under the status quo scenario.

BUREAU OF HEALTH WORKFORCE

#### Factors Contributing to Unmet Needs:

Geographic Disparities: Rural areas are particularly affected, with 55% of U.S. counties lacking practicing psychiatrists, psychologists, or social workers.

BUREAU OF HEALTH WORKFORCE

The Counseling and Educational Psychology team in the Department of Education is proposing a new degree program for students who have completed a Master's in Education in School Counseling or a Master's in Science in Community Counseling. The reason for this proposal is to address a financial aid issue faced by our students. Our proposal for an Ed.S. program is modeled after the approved Ed.S. program in School Psychology that SWOSU currently offers. In order to become a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in Oklahoma, a qualifying degree is required, and both the Master of Education in School Counseling and the Master of Science in Community Counseling at SWOSU meet the licensing board's degree requirements.

However, after completing the qualifying degree, students must complete an additional 27 credit hours to be eligible for candidacy with the licensing board. Currently, this 27-hour coursework is coded as "LPC Curriculum," which is not recognized as a degree-seeking program for (Title IV) financial aid purposes. While this coursework is necessary for licensure, it is not eligible for financial aid under its current designation. Graduates who have completed a qualifying degree along with these additional 27 credit hours have successfully pursued licensure as mental health professionals, providing services to a diverse range of clients. Given the increasing demand for mental health professionals in Oklahoma, we propose a new degree program to cover these 27 additional hours, allowing students to access the financial aid they need to complete the required coursework and ultimately obtain licensure while pursuing an advanced specialist degree.

Currently, we have 43 students enrolled in LPC-required coursework, with 22 students having completed the Master's in Community Counseling and 21 having completed the Master's in School Counseling. These students are pursuing the final steps toward licensure but are unable to continue without access to financial aid. We urge your support for the proposed program to help ensure that these students can fulfill the requirements to become licensed mental health professionals and meet the growing mental health needs in Oklahoma.

**NPP Unnecessary Duplication**

Currently not another Ed.S in Professional Community Counseling in Western Oklahoma.

**NPP Final Approval Year (e.g. Fall 2027)**

Fall 2025

**NPP Productivity Enrl**

25 active candidates

**NPP Productivity Fall**

2026

**NPP Productivity Grads**

15 graduates

**NPP Productivity Grad AY**

2025-2026

**NPP Method of Delivery**

Online only

**NPP Delivery Method Details**

Courses are offered in a distance friendly format of both online and ZOOM Webinar courses.

**This program has a mandatory onsite component**

No

**This program has a non-mandatory onsite component**

No

Created By: Ryan Henson per Academic Affairs

**PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY COUNSELING (LPC TRACK) – EDUCATION SPECIALIST**  
**(CCNSM.MS)**

Admission Requirements for Graduate Degree Program in Community Counseling

The Community Counseling graduate program is a two-tiered entry-level professional training program comprised of the M.S. Community Counseling and Ed.S. Professional Community Counseling (LPC Track). Admission into the Ed.S. Professional Community Counseling (LPC Track) Program requires completion of the M.S. Community Counseling Program. In addition, candidates must be approved for admission by the Education Department. Department bases its decision in part on the candidate's overall performance in the M.S. Community Counseling program. For those students completing a community counseling degree from other universities, a departmental interview is required, in addition to the University and Graduate School admission requirements. (See p. 35 for information regarding admission to the M.S. Community Counseling Program).

Placement into the LPC internship courses requires approval from the Departmental Internship/Practicum Approval Committee (IPAC).

NOTE: SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THIS COURSE SEQUENCE QUALIFIES THE CANDIDATE FOR LICENSURE APPLICATION ELIGIBILITY under the current Oklahoma rules and regulations state law requires state application, including further supervision hours and successful completion of exams to be licensed.

NOTE: Meeting the minimum standards does not guarantee acceptance into the program.

I. Required Professional Education and Psychology Core (15 hours)

COUN	5513	Introduction to Counseling & Guidance
COUN	5593	Advanced Tests & Measurements
COUN	5893	Ethical/Legal/Professional Standards
EDPSY	5743	Life Span Development
EDUC	5113	Intro to Research

II. Required Community Counseling Specialization Core (18 hours)

EDPSY	5633	Advanced Abnormal Psychology
COUN	5213	Community Counseling
COUN	5373	Theories/Techniques Family Counseling
COUN	5543	Theories/Techniques of Counseling
COUN	5553	Theories/Techniques Group Counseling
COUN	5563	Practicum in Counseling (150 clock hours included)

III. Capstone Experience

EDUC	5950	Graduate Capstone Experience (must be successfully completed during final semester; may only be repeated once.)
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IV. Total required for the Master of Science degree in Community Counseling – 33 hours  
(continued on next page)

V. Required Professional Community Counseling Specialization Core Courses (15 hours)

COUN	5423	Multicultural Concepts
COUN	5523	Career Counseling
EDPSY	5223	Techniques of Psychotherapy
COUN	5613	Internship in Counseling

\*Plus, one of the following courses:

EDPSY	5713	Wechsler Intelligence Scale
EDPSY	5783	Advanced Psych Testing

VI. Required Elective Courses (12 hours)

EDPSY	5703	Behavioral Intervention Strategies
EDPSY	5723	Advanced Psychology of Learning
EDPSY	5133	Crisis Intervention Techniques
EDPSY	5233	Advanced Psychology of Sports
EDPSY	5613	Clinical Supervision
EDPSY	5723	Media and Mental Illness

VII. Total Required for Specialist in Education Professional School Counseling (LPC Track) – 60 hours

NOTE: Completion of the Ed.S. Degree in Professional Community Counseling (LPC Track) is applicable towards academic eligibility requirements for the Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) act.

# Package History

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Date	User	Action
1/27/2025 10:04:18 AM	Pankratz, Marla	Added attachment 'Proposed%20Ed.S.%20Professional%20Community%20Counseling%20Program%20(LPC%20TRACK).docx'
1/27/2025 10:04:18 AM	Pankratz, Marla	Submitted 'New Program Letter of Intent'
1/27/2025 10:04:19 AM	Klein, Edward	Received
1/27/2025 10:44:27 AM	Klein, Edward	Decision Approved on step 'FLOW-Deans'
1/27/2025 10:44:43 AM	FLOW- Provost's Executive Assistant	Received