Metropolitan State University, College of Health, Community and Professional Studies, Human Services Department

Bachelor of Science Degree in Alcohol and Drug Counseling

Student Handbook
# Bachelor of Science Degree in Alcohol and Drug Counseling

## Student Handbook

### Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief History</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web Site</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Philosophy</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Sequence</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Baccalaureate “Track”</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Descriptions</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved Program Electives</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Seminar Portfolio</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hints for Student Success</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Policies</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently Asked Questions</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Every day countless lives are enriched or saved because of the work carried out by alcohol and drug counselors. Competent, well-trained counselors form professional relationships and carry out practices that help individuals and their families move from life-threatening addiction to life-affirming recovery. Metropolitan State University’s Bachelor of Science (BS) degree in Alcohol and Drug Counseling is one of the three undergraduate degree programs in the Human Services Department.

Careers
Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselors (LADCs) save and enrich the lives of people struggling with addiction. Due to the ever-increasing awareness of the needs of individuals experiencing substance use disorders, many employment opportunities exist for alcohol and drug counseling professionals. As a competent, licensed professional, you will be qualified for many career opportunities in this field. Work settings can include inpatient or outpatient treatment programs, detox facilities, halfway houses, correctional facilities, schools, hospitals, behavioral health clinics, and public and private facilities.

The Alcohol and Drug Counseling Major
The Alcohol and Drug Counseling major is for students who have a variety of needs and interests related to substance use disorders. It is designed for new students, community college transfer students, professionals who want to complete an undergraduate degree, and other professionals (social workers, psychologists, school counselors, nurses, law enforcement personnel and others) who want to learn more about effective responses to substance use disorders.

As a student, you will:
- learn to form professional therapeutic relationships with people struggling with addiction.
- learn how to carry out evidence-based interventions that help individuals and their families move from life-threatening addiction to life-affirming recovery.
- explore your many interests related to substance use disorders.
- gain the skills and experience necessary to qualify for LADC licensure in Minnesota.

Graduates find employment in inpatient and outpatient treatment centers, detox facilities, aftercare programs, extended care programs, halfway house programs, and assessment and referral centers. Typical workplaces for alcohol and drug counselors include public and private school systems, hospitals, mental health clinics, social services agencies, probation and corrections, religious institutions, private business, and city, state or county government.

The College of Health, Community and Professional Studies (CHCPS) was established in 1990. It encompasses departments of Human Services, Psychology and Social Work and the School of Nursing. The mission of CHCPS is to serve as the university’s vanguard in the areas of professional development and community involvement, and to contribute to the liberal arts foundations of these areas. CHCPS is known for its culturally diverse faculty and its quality and innovation in teaching, advising, research and community service. Its focus areas include cultural diversity, student-centered learning, application of knowledge through experiential learning, and faculty and staff development.

The Human Services Department (HSER) was established as part of the university’s ongoing effort to provide high-quality educational opportunities to students seeking entry into human services careers. The mission of the Human Services Department is to prepare professionally and culturally competent students who integrate theory and practice in order to effectively deliver human services. The department stresses a flexible, student-centered approach, which includes multiple learning strategies, in meeting the needs of students from diverse backgrounds. Learning opportunities provide students with theoretical knowledge, practical skills, professional attitudes and application of knowledge through experiential learning. Our curricula emphasize advocacy, social justice, empowerment, and a strengths-based approach.
Metropolitan State University works in cooperation with the Addiction Counselor Program at Minneapolis Community and Technical College, the Chemical Dependency Counseling Program at Century College, the Human Services Program at Inver Hills Community College and the Human Services Program at Riverland Community College. These relationships enable students to easily transfer credits earned at these institutions into the B.S. degree in Alcohol and Drug Counseling.

The B.S. degree is also accredited by the state of Wisconsin to provide pre-certification education toward the credentialing of Substance Abuse Counselors in Wisconsin.

**Brief History of the Major**

Metropolitan State University has offered chemical dependency course work and practicums since it was founded in 1971. However, it was not until the late 1990s that the University began work to develop a major in alcohol and drug counseling. In August 2000, this major was approved by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System (MnSCU). At that time there were only 10 to 15 students enrolled in this degree. The first graduate with a B.S. degree in Alcohol and Drug Counseling matriculated in December 2000.

Since August of 2000, there has been tremendous growth and a keen interest in this major. Currently, there are over 450 majors and a number of other students who already have undergraduate or graduate degrees also working toward licensure requirements. This major is one of the largest in the College of Health, Community and Professional Studies. It is also the largest educational program to offer a professional degree in chemical dependency counseling in the Upper Midwest.

A new M.S. degree in Alcohol and Drug Counseling was added to our curriculum in the fall of 2014. It is the twelfth master’s degree at Metropolitan State University. Please see the website for more information on the graduate program.

**Website**

Please visit the Alcohol and Drug Counseling web site at [www.metrostate.edu](http://www.metrostate.edu). Click on “Academic Programs, Courses & Cont. Ed.” at the top of the page. Select “Alcohol & Drug Counseling” in the dropdown menu. This will bring you to our page of information about the B.S. degree in Alcohol and Drug Counseling. There are a number of links at the bottom of the page for you to explore.

**Philosophy of the Major**

The philosophy of the B.S. degree in alcohol and drug counseling is to provide students with a foundation in the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to become competent in the practice of alcohol and drug counseling.

The following five principles underpin this philosophy:

1. Competent practice in alcohol and drug counseling has evidence of effectiveness, is fundamentally research-based and encourages critical thinking (that is, objective versus subjective) on the part of the counselor. This reflects depth of scholarship.

   Evidence-based practices include:
• treatment approaches (see Nathan & Gorman, 2007; Miller & Hester, 2003)
• therapeutic relationship approaches (see Norcross, 2002)

2. Competent practice in alcohol and drug counseling recognizes addiction is a multivariate phenomenon and, as a result, it is not explained by one main model/theory. This reflects breadth of practice.

Competent practice recognizes there is not a typical chemically dependent person. Each client is a unique human being whose addiction is influenced by age, gender, culture/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, family, sexual orientation, mental health, and/or other unique personal characteristics, as well as the drugs being used (see Thombs, 2006).

3. Competent practice in alcohol and drug counseling encourages social change directed at improving the practice of alcohol and drug counseling by:
   • enhancing the continuum of care and array of services available
   • improving treatment services and the process of change
   • improving outcomes for clients
   • improving cultural competence of counselors

4. Competent practice in alcohol and drug counseling is exemplified by ethical and professional behavior.

5. Competent practice in alcohol and drug counseling includes becoming licensed (see MN Statutes, Chapter 148F).

Curriculum

The curriculum for this major is based upon the principles as listed above, and the transdisciplinary foundations and professional practice dimensions of alcohol and drug counseling. These are derived from national curriculum standards (see TAP #21, 2006) and the twelve core functions of alcohol and drug counseling (see Herdman, 2008). Specific courses examine evidence-based practices in alcohol and drug counseling and ways to improve the practice of alcohol and drug counseling.
Description of the Major

Suggested Course Sequence (with prerequisites)

This major is 60 credits, which includes 12 core courses (48 credits), an 880-hour practicum sequence (9 credits), and 3 elective credits. **Note:** Students must have at least 26 upper-division Alcohol and Drug Counseling credits in the major. Please see course prerequisites.

1. **Courses to take first:**
   - *HSCD 300* Chemical Dependency Concepts 4 credits
   - *HSCD 200* Pharmacology of Drug Abuse 4 credits
   - HSer 355 Introduction to Human Services 4 credits
   - *HSer 346* Counseling and Interviewing Skills 4 credits
   - HSer 395 Human Services and Diversity 4 credits
   - *HSCD 303* Cultural Aspects of Chemical Dependency 4 credits

2. **Courses to take next:**
   - *HSer 348* Group Counseling 4 credits
     (Prerequisites: HSCD 300 & HSer 346)
   - *HSCD 309* Co-occurring Disorders: Substance Abuse & and Mental Health 4 credits
     (Prerequisites: HSCD 300 & 200)
   - *HSCD 302* Chemical Dependency Assessment and Diagnosis 4 credits
     (Prerequisites: HSCD 200 and 300 and HSer 346)

3. **Courses to take after that:**
   - *HSCD 353* Case Management 4 credits
     (Prerequisites: HSCD 200, 300 & 302 and HSer 346)
   - *HSCD 320* Pre-Practicum 1 credit
     (Prerequisites: at least 24 credits in this major; students must complete all remaining courses [32 credits total] noted above with an * the same semester they complete this course to be eligible for Practicum I (HSCD 380)
   - HSCD 400 Best Practices in Alcohol and Drug Counseling 4 credits
     (Prerequisite: at least 24 credits in this major)
     **Note:** This course should be taken with Practicum 1 (HSCD 380)

4. **Required Elective:** at least 3 credits. See list on pages 9-10.

5. **Practicum:**
   - HSCD 380 Alcohol and Drug Counseling Practicum I 4 credits
     (Prerequisite: at least 32 credits in this major, including HSCD 320)
     **Note:** This course should be taken with Best Practices (HSCD 400)
   - HSCD 390 Alcohol and Drug Counseling Practicum II 4 credits
     (Prerequisite: successful completion of HSCD 380)
     **Note:** This course should be taken with Senior Seminar (HSCD 450)

6. **And finally:**
   - HSCD 450 Senior Seminar: Alcohol and Drug Counseling 4 credits
     (Prerequisite: at least 32 credits in this major, including HSCD 400 and must currently be in or have completed practicum.
     **Note:** This course should be taken with Practicum II (HSCD 390)
**Post-Baccalaureate “Track”**

Students who already have a Baccalaureate or Master’s degree and want to meet the requirements for Alcohol and Drug Counseling licensure must meet the following course requirement:

a. Academic Courses:
   1. HSCD 200 Pharmacology of Drug Abuse 4 credits
   2. HSCD 300 Chemical Dependency Concepts 4 credits
   3. HSer 346 Counseling & Interviewing Skills 4 credits
   4. HSCD 302 Chemical Dependency Assessment 4 credits
   5. HSer 348 Group Counseling 4 credits
   6. HSCD 303 Cultural Aspects of Chemical Dependency 4 credits
   7. HSCD 309 Dual Disorders (Required by Rule 31) 4 credits
   8. HSCD 353 Case Management 4 credits
   9. HSCD 320 Pre-Practicum Seminar 1 credit

b. Practicum: HSCD 380 & 390 (8 credits) practicum requirements are for at least 880 hours. (This taken over two semesters of 440 hours each).
   Note: Prerequisites for practicum are completion of 32 credits of alcohol and drug counseling course work, including the Pre-Practicum Seminar (HSCD 320). At least 16 of these credits must be earned at Metropolitan State University.

To qualify for this program, a student must already have at least a baccalaureate degree. This must be verified by the University Admissions office via the evaluation of an official transcript that is added to the student’s advising file before he or she registers for classes.

Students who are in the process of completing a baccalaureate degree in another major at Metropolitan State University may qualify for the licensure program. This is permitted only if there is written verification, such as a degree plan in the student’s ADC advising file.

**Course Descriptions**

**HSCD 200** Pharmacology of Drug Abuse 4 credits
This course is designed to acquaint the student with the physiological, psychological, and sociological aspects of commonly abused psychoactive drugs and their effects. Topics covered for each category of psychoactive drugs includes: general information, incidence and prevalence, mechanism of action, specific psychological/behavioral and physical effects and treatment approaches.

**HSCD 300** Chemical Dependency Concepts 4 credits
This course is designed to provide the student with an overview of the history, theories, concepts and supporting research relevant to assessment and treatment of chemical dependency. Students will become familiar with models/theories of addiction, the pharmacological effects of major drugs of abuse, laws and ethics related to the practice of alcohol and drug counseling and other important concepts.

**HSer 355** Introduction to Human Services: History and Trends 4 credits
This course covers the historical and progressive development of the human services field, as well as the present trends and professional issues, including theoretical approaches to human services work, practical skills, human services delivery systems, human services work in a pluralistic society and using research in human services work.
HSer 346  Counseling and Interviewing Skills  4 credits
This course covers self-disclosure, diffusing anger, behavior contracting, problem solving and decision making, how to deal with various difficult client behaviors, burnout, and use of tests in counseling and professional organizations. Learning strategies include role-playing and videotaping. Evaluation is based in part on simulated interviews.
Note: This course cannot be taken on an independent study basis.

HSer 395  Human Services and Diversity  4 credits
This course emphasizes understanding of the diversity experience, including exploring discrimination toward persons with disabilities, racism (including institutional racism), sexism, and ageism as they affect life changes, lifestyles and psychosocial development. It examines assumptions, myths, beliefs, and biases that block effective relationships between professionals and consumers. Human services principles, values and practice skills that promote successful working relationships are identified. Self-assessment is encouraged and opportunities for application of learning are provided.

HSCD 303  Cultural Aspects of Chemical Dependency  4 credits
This course is designed to help students understand the interrelationship between a person’s culture and substance abuse. It explores the impact of alcohol and drug use on culture and the significance of culture in the chemical dependency treatment and recovery process. It also provides students with information about underserved populations or groups which may need chemical dependency services.

HSer 348  Group Counseling  4 credits
This course teaches the dynamics of group counseling. Students learn the skills of group counseling in a classroom laboratory experience and the writing and charting skills necessary to document client progress. Topics include: stages of group, group rules and goals, group leadership skills and types of groups.
Prerequisites: HSCD 300, HSer 346

HSCD 309  Co-occurring Disorders: Substance Abuse and Mental Health  4 credits
Significant numbers of chemically dependent individuals have one or more mental disorders. This course is designed to help the alcohol and drug counselor become more familiar with the most common mental disorders, the interrelationship between mental disorders and substance abuse, and various counseling methods and treatment approaches for the dual-disordered client. This course covers the main features of the most common mental disorders, how they interact with substance abuse, assessment and counseling approaches, medications used for treatment, and community resources used to help these clients.
Prerequisites: HSCD 300, HSCD 200

HSCD 353  Case Management  4 credits
This course provides students with a beginning understanding of the essential components of successful case management for alcohol and drug counseling. That is, the activities which a counselor engages in to bring services, agencies, resources, and people together within a planned and coordinated framework of action toward achievement of established clinical goals. Specifically the course will focus on the theory of case management for alcohol and drug counseling, related state and federal laws, the Twelve Core Functions, the Rules of Professional Conduct, and the practice of clinical writing.
Prerequisites: HSCD 300, HSCD 200, HSCD 302, HSer 346

HSCD 302  Chemical Dependency Assessment & Diagnosis  4 credits
This course is designed to teach students the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully perform assessment interviews and diagnosis of substance use problems. Students will learn about: the qualities of good assessment, motivational interviewing skills, the interview process, screening tools, “Rule 25,” “DSM IV,” placement and treatment planning. This course meets the required 30 hours of classroom training to be a “Rule 25” assessor.
Prerequisite: HSCD 300, HSCD 200 and HSer 346.
HSCD 400  Best Practices in Alcohol and Drug Counseling  4 credits
This is an advanced counseling skills course. The goal of this course is to improve outcomes in the practice of alcohol and drug counseling by linking scientific research to treatment practice. As such, the course will explore current best practices in alcohol and drug counseling, that is, transtheoretical stages of change and motivational enhancement techniques. The student will select, research, and complete a study project which explores an evidenced-based approach to alcohol and drug counseling.
Prerequisite: at least 24 semester credits in alcohol and drug counseling course work, including HSCD 300, HSer 346 and HSer 348.

HSCD 450  Senior Seminar: Alcohol and Drug Counseling  4 credits
This course is the culminating experience for seniors who are majoring in alcohol and drug counseling. In this course students will reflect upon their academic course of study and demonstrate the relationship between what they have learned and how they will apply this to the professional practice of alcohol and drug counseling. In addition, students will analyze and explore agency management systems which complement their practice of alcohol and drug counseling.
Prerequisite: Successful completion of at least 32 credits, or seven of the core academic alcohol and drug counseling courses, including HSCD 400. Must also currently be enrolled in or have completed practicum.

Practicum Sequence:
HSCD 320  Pre-practicum Seminar  1 credit
This course helps students prepare for the practicum experience. A “Rule 11” background check is conducted on students in this course.
Prerequisite: Completion of at least 24 credits of alcohol and drug counseling courses prior to registering for this course. See specific required courses on page 6 of this Handbook.

HSCD 380  Alcohol and Drug Counseling Group Practicum I  4 credits
The alcohol and drug counseling group practicum is intended to provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge and skills acquired during their academic coursework and transfer it into clinical settings. This practicum requires students to demonstrate competence in the Transdisciplinary Foundations and 8 Practice Dimensions (12 core functions) of alcohol and drug counseling, including culturally competent and professionally ethical practice.

In the classroom portion of this course, students will review and critically analyze counseling style, diversity, ethics and the agency in which they are conducting their practicum. In addition, they will continue to practice and enhance clinical skills and techniques.
Prerequisite: Successful completion of at least 32 credits of alcohol and drug counseling courses, including HSCD 320. See specific required courses on page 6 of this Handbook.
Co-require: Students must have an alcohol and drug counseling practicum which has been approved by the faculty, while taking this course.

HSCD 390  Alcohol and Drug Counseling Group Practicum II  4 credits
The alcohol and drug counseling group practicum is intended to provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge and skills acquired during their academic coursework and transfer it into clinical settings. This practicum requires students to demonstrate competence in the Transdisciplinary Foundations and 8 Practice Dimensions (12 core functions) of alcohol and drug counseling, including culturally competent and professionally ethical practice.

In the classroom portion of this course, students will review and critically analyze counseling style, diversity, ethics and the agency in which they are conducting their practicum. In addition, they will continue to practice and enhance clinical skills and techniques.
Prerequisite: successful completion of HSCD 380
**Co-requisite**: Students must have an alcohol and drug counseling practicum which has been approved by the faculty, while taking this course.

**Approved Elective Courses**: (one course is required for the major)
Students are required to take at least one course for the major. They may also need to take additional elective courses due to transfer courses which were only 3 credits, see your degree plan. Approved electives for this major are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HSCD 301</td>
<td>Chemical Dependency and the Family</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSCD 304</td>
<td>Chemical Dependency and Native Americans</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSCD 306</td>
<td>Prevention of Substance Abuse</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSCD 308</td>
<td>Adolescent Chemical Dependency</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSer 344</td>
<td>Counseling Theories and Techniques</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSer 350</td>
<td>Issues in Adolescent Counseling</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSer 352</td>
<td>Family Counseling</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSer 353</td>
<td>Social Casework Methods</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSer 354</td>
<td>Ethical Issues in Human Services</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSer 358</td>
<td>Cross-cultural Counseling</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSer 415</td>
<td>Spirituality and Helping</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 343</td>
<td>Drugs and Behavior: An Introduction to Behavioral Pharmacology</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Senior Seminar Portfolio**

The Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard said, “Though we obviously must live our life forward, we can understand it only by looking backward.” In the Senior Seminar (HSCD 450), students will create portfolios in which they reflect upon and describe their academic course of study. The portfolio provides evidence of competence and is a way to demonstrate readiness for the alcohol and drug counseling profession.

**As a new student, it is not too soon to begin to record or jot down some notes about what you are learning about alcohol and drug counseling.**

In the portfolio, you will write about some of the following issues:

1. The four Transdisciplinary Foundations of alcohol and drug counseling, which include: understanding addiction, treatment knowledge, application to practice, and professional readiness (see TAP #21).

2. The eight Practice Dimensions of alcohol and drug counseling, which include: clinical evaluation, treatment planning, referral, service coordination, counseling, client, family and community education, documentation, and professional and ethical responsibilities (see TAP #21).

3. Other items include: philosophy of counseling practice, personal statement about why you want to become a counselor, your practicum experience, and current readiness to enter the profession.
Hints for Success

1. **Student Advising:** Upon admission to the University, students are assigned to an academic advisor who will assist them in making decisions about academic and career goals. Advising is provided by either an academic advisor or a faculty member who also has teaching responsibilities.

   Advising is designed to provide you with the information and the support you need to make informed plans and decisions about your program of study and achieve your academic goals. You are always in charge of your education; you make the decisions. Advisors can help you to learn more about what you need to know; sort out your questions; think through your options; identify opportunities and shortcuts; avoid problems; and make your program of study right for you. Just like you might look to a lawyer for legal advice, or a financial advisor for help with investment goals, think about an advisor as your consultant for educational planning.

   Make the most of your advisor. Steps in the advising process include course selection, completing a degree plan, declaring a major and completing graduation forms. A student must meet with an advisor at least twice (to write a degree plan/declare a major and graduation planning), but may meet or call every semester if needed.

2. **Advising Appointments:**
   College of Health, Community and Professional Studies 651-793-1330
   CHCPS Advising Center 651-793-1341
   To Schedule Advising Appointments: 651-793-1342
   Advising website: [http://www.metrostate.edu/msweb/explore/chcps/advising/index.html](http://www.metrostate.edu/msweb/explore/chcps/advising/index.html)

   **William J. Payne**
   Associate Professor & Student Advising
   St. Johns Hall, Room 226
   651-793-1352
   bill.payne@metrostate.edu

   **Deborah L. Mosby**
   Associate Professor & Student Advising
   St. John’s Hall, Room 218
   651-793-1359
   deborah.mosby@metrostate.edu

   **Therissa A. Libby**
   Assistant Professor & Student Advising
   St. John’s Hall, Room 208B
   651-793-1501
   therissa.libby@metrostate.edu

   **Kevin C. Spading**
   Assistant Professor & Student Advising
   St John’s Hall, Room 223
   651-793-1378
   kevin.spading@metrostate.edu

   **Karin S. Jax**
   Student Advising
   St. John’s Hall, Room 205
   651-793-1363
   karin.jax@metrostate.edu

3. **Communications:**
   Your university student e-mail account is the official method of communication for all university-related business. Be sure to check your e-mail regularly and send e-mails from only your university account.

   Offices are located at the Saint Paul Campus, St. Johns Hall, second floor, suite 200.
4. **ADC Student Association:** The Alcohol and Drug Counseling Student Association meets monthly during the fall and spring semesters. The purposes of the meetings include networking with other students, support, discussion of classroom assignments, learning about licensure and resources, community services opportunities and discussion of other issues which are important to students. ADCSA is on Facebook at [https://www.facebook.com/groups/57390971014/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/57390971014/) (Metro State ADC Student Association) and OrgSync at [https://orgsync.com/47714/chapter](https://orgsync.com/47714/chapter).

5. **TIPS for Academic Success:**

   - **Plan ahead: meet with your advisor early.** Unfortunately, if you wait to register you’ll find some classes full/closed. Advisors often schedule appointments with students one to two weeks (or even longer) in advance, so do **not** expect that you can come in without an appointment and hope to meet with your advisor.

   - Contact Financial Aid early, so that money is granted to you soon enough for you to register for the current semester.

   - **Attend Class:** Since the alcohol and drug counseling major helps students to learn the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for future success in this field, class attendance is very important. The quality of student participation in courses not only enhances the educational experience for the student, but for other students as well. Most courses will have specific attendance policies. Even if they do not, it is understood that serious students do not miss classes. **Note:** the **first day of class is counted in attendance requirements.** Please see the individual course syllabus for further information regarding attendance requirements.

   - **Know Your Syllabus:** Remember the syllabus is the “road map” for a course. It will tell you what you need to do and when to do it. Refer to it often so you know you are staying on track.

   - **Know Your Instructor:** Remember, no two instructors are exactly alike. All instructors have the authority and autonomy to teach their courses in the way they think is best, so be aware of the instructor’s expectations of you. If you do not know, then ask. Talk to your instructor about how you are doing in the class. Ask about any difficulties you are having, about course materials or assignments you don’t understand, or anything else which is affecting your performance in a class.

   - **Utilize services:** The Writing Center, Tutoring Services, Library Services, Counseling Center, and Student Affairs Office are there to assist you in being successful, so please use them. See Metropolitan State website for contact information.

   - **Take skill-building courses early:** Completing courses like writing, math and other general education requirements will help you get ready for upper division courses in your major. Employers in the chemical dependency counseling field expect their employees to have writing skills. Therefore, students are expected to demonstrate good writing skills. Writing skills include correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.

   - **Work with other students in class:** Identify a student or students who seem to understand the material well and ask to study with them, or to look at their notes. Form a study group and meet each week to prepare for class and review material from past class
sessions. You will be surprised how much you can learn from other students and how much they can learn from you. This is also a great way to create a support network for your academic success.

- **Time commitment:** The faculty realize students are adults with other life responsibilities, which often include a family and a job. For many, school complicates life. Planning can help you to better manage your time and reduce stress. Understand that a single college credit requires about 15 classroom hours and up to an additional 30 study hours per semester. Thus, a four-credit course could require up to 12 hours of work per week.

### Program Policies

**A. Course-related:**

1. Students must have at least a C- grade for courses to count toward the major. Further, if a student is unable to attain a C- after having taken the same course twice, they must “stop-out” of alcohol and drug counseling major for at least one year. Rationale: This provides the student with time to address academic deficiencies.

2. Credit limit: A student may not register for more than 16 credits per semester. Rationale: Taking more than 16 credits is overwhelming and hinders a student’s ability to be successful in their course work. Becoming a practicing counselor includes the process of personal growth and development; this cannot be hurried by taking courses as fast as possible.

3. Course equivalents: If a student believes he/she has already taken an equivalent course in the major from another accredited college or university, he/she must submit a course description (or syllabus) for consideration and review by the faculty. Exception: We have articulation or transfer agreements with other institutions, such as Minneapolis Community and Technical College and Century College; an advisor can help to guide you on this. A maximum of 38 credits can be transferred into the major.

4. No course taken more than ten years ago will be counted towards any requirements in the major. Rationale: Due to the dynamic nature of the field, knowledge about addiction must be up to date. In addition, skills that are not used tend to atrophy. If a student “stops-out” for a significant period of time, knowledge and skills become outdated without practice. Exception: If a student has been working in the counseling field during the ten-year time period, then old courses will count.

5. SDIS/Prior Experience: The possibility of gaining credit for prior experience is one of the alternative learning strategies permitted by the University. However, there are some additional requirements to do a Prior/SDIS instead of taking an alcohol and drug counseling course. Generally, to be eligible/qualify for a “prior,” a student will need at least three years of work experience in the curriculum content area. Work would need to be the main focus of the job and relate directly to one or more of the twelve core functions of alcohol and drug counseling.

6. Continuing Education: Attending continuing education training sessions (i.e. “Rule 25”) does not qualify for being equivalent to courses in the alcohol and drug counseling major. Any credit for Prior Learning must qualify as college-level learning, i.e., must be provided by a professional who has at least a master’s degree. We prefer the professional to be a college/university faculty member.
According to University Undergraduate Academic Affairs Procedure #215 on “Prior Learning Assessment” (Section 8, part E), some of the criteria for “College-level Learning include:

a. Learning must have a subject area in which the theoretical and practical elements must be identified and verified (#2). Oftentimes continuing education training does not adequately address theoretical elements of the practice.

b. Learning encompasses learning and not experience alone (#3). Credit cannot be given just for doing the practice or just attending continuing education training.

c. Learning must have general applicability outside the specific situation in which it was acquired (#5). Learning needs to be applied outside of or in addition to the continuing education training session.

d. Learning must be publically verifiable (#6). The learning must have an evaluation component.

7. Impaired Objectivity & Effectiveness: The Alcohol and Drug Counseling (ADC) major is committed to training students for challenging work in diverse counseling environments. Thus, students are provided with quality academic preparation and experiential learning through practicum experiences. The ADC faculty has many opportunities to work with and observe students, throughout their academic training. The faculty also has extensive training in the ADC field and is therefore aware of specific essential counseling skills and attitudes beyond academics, which students need to become professionals.

We realize not everyone who begins to take courses in this major is suitable to practice counseling. Various factors play into this, including poor academic performance and lack of interpersonal skills. Other examples may include, but are not limited to:

- issues of transference/counter-transference,
- over-identification with client issues,
- behaviors which would be considered unprofessional,
- violation of ethical standards of practice,
- unresolved past personal issues, or
- lack of personal boundaries.

In some circumstances, a student may be observed by faculty as not being appropriate or lacking readiness, for work in the ADC field. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

a. Impaired objectivity or effectiveness (see MN Statutes, 148F),
b. Behavior which is in violation of the Code of Professional Conduct for Alcohol & Drug Counselors (see MN Statutes, 148F.12 to 148F. 205),
c. Lack of freedom from mental, physical, and/or alcohol or drug use problems (see MN Statutes, Chapter 9530.6450, “Rule 31” and 148F. 2051),

d. Behavior which could threaten the safety of clients,
e. Violation of the University Student Code of Conduct (see policy #1020 and procedure #112), or Academic Integrity (see Policy #2190 and Procedure #219), or
f. Disqualification as a result of the “Rule 11” background check (see MN Statutes, 245C).

Note: students must be free from alcohol or other drug use problems for at least two years prior to the date of practicum application (see Student Practicum Manual, 2014, page 6-7).
When faculty conclude a student is not appropriate for continuing in the ADC major, they will meet with the student to discuss these issues and concerns.

When appropriate, there may be a plan developed which would enable the student to remediate these issues and continue in the ADC major. This alternative would need to be viable, as determined by the faculty.

If it is determined the student will no longer be able to continue in the major, this decision will be made by the ADC resident faculty. This decision is non-negotiable and cannot be appealed by the student. The Student will be informed of other options in the University for completing an alternative degree.

Note: The decision to remove a student from the ADC major is made with serious consultation among the faculty. This decision in no way reflects a student’s capabilities for success in other majors or programs. ADC counseling is challenging and faculty desire that a student be successful in an appropriate field of endeavor. Therefore, this policy is in place to help students achieve academic success and prevent future serious difficulties in the ADC field.

8. The student must have at least 26 upper division alcohol and drug counseling credits in the major.

B. Practicum-related policies:

1. Practicum Manual: There is additional information about the Alcohol and Drug Counseling Practicum provided to students in the Pre-Practicum course (HSCD 320). The Practicum Manual contains detailed information about the practicum, including policies, standards, and requirements (see Practicum Manual, 2014).

2. In order to be eligible for a practicum, the student must currently be an admitted Metropolitan State University, an alcohol and drug counseling major, a student in good standing, have completed all the prerequisites for practicum (see specific required courses on page 6 of this Handbook), not be on academic probation, and have at least a 2.0 GPA. There is an application process for practicum that is completed in the Pre-Practicum Seminar (HSCD 320).

3. Background checks: Minnesota Statutes 245C (Human Services Background Studies Act) requires that background checks be conducted on employees, volunteers, and interns who provide direct services to clients in facilities licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services. This applies to most sites for alcohol and drug counseling practicum (245C subp. 4). The purpose of background check is to disqualify people who have committed specific crimes from providing direct services. Disqualification can be for 7, 10, or 15 years, and depending on the crime committed, could even be permanent.

In the Pre-practicum course (HSCD 320) students are required to submit to and successfully complete a background check prior to beginning practicum. If a student is concerned about the possibility of being disqualified from practicum, as a result of the background check, s/he could request to have one completed at any time. Please see the lead faculty member if you wish to pursue completing a background check prior to taking HSCD 320.

4. If a student fails or is discharged from a practicum, they must “stop-out” for at least one year. Rationale: This provides time for student to address problem related to failure or discharge.
Frequently-asked Questions

How will I meet the requirements for Alcohol and Drug Counselor licensure?
Although the field of addictions can be very broad in scope, the focus of the B.S. degree in Alcohol and Drug Counseling is to help students meet the academic and practicum requirements to become licensed alcohol and drug counselors in Minnesota (as per Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 148F and Minnesota Rules 4747), and, prepare them for employment. Completing the major and graduating with the B.S. degree is excellent preparation for licensure.

Additionally, in order to become a licensed alcohol and drug counselor, graduates need to pass a comprehensive written exam, which demonstrates their competence in the twelve core functions of alcohol and drug counseling. They will then make application to the Minnesota Board of Behavioral Health and Therapy.  [www.bbht.state.mn.us](http://www.bbht.state.mn.us)

How can I prepare for the licensure exams?
There are a number of resources available, including:

a. **Basics of Addiction Manuals** from NAADAC: The Association for Addiction Professionals:  
   [http://tinyurl.com/guides-naadac](http://tinyurl.com/guides-naadac)

b. **Alcohol and Drug Counselor Study Guides** from Minnesota Certification Board (affiliated with ICRC):  
   [http://tinyurl.com/guides-mcb](http://tinyurl.com/guides-mcb)

Your academic advisor can provide you with additional information on testing and resources for test preparation.

How can I qualify for a temporary permit? A person who has met the academic and practicum requirements for licensure can apply for a temporary permit to practice while they are waiting to take the written exam required for a full license. The temporary permit is good for one year, is annually renewable for up to five years and is valid only at a specific work site under the direct supervision of a specific supervisor. For more information, see [www.bbht.state.mn.us](http://www.bbht.state.mn.us).

What is the job market like for alcohol and drug counselors? Will I be able to get a job? How much is the pay?
The labor market for alcohol and drug counselors continues to be robust. According to the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED, 2012) there will be 25% growth in the need for Substance Abuse Counselors between 2010 and 2020. Anecdotal reports from graduates and other students indicate that “nearly everyone who wants a job is able to get one.” It is common for students to be offered a job at the end of their practicum.

For new counselors with little experience, employers commonly offer a starting salary in the range of $35,000 to $40,000 per year. Salaries are usually higher away from the Twin Cities metro area. According to [www.iseek.org/job/](http://www.iseek.org/job/), the median wage for Substance Abuse Counselors in Minnesota is $22.07/hour ($44,140/full time year).

Does Metropolitan State have a minor in alcohol and drug counseling?
No, we have never had a minor in this area of study. This does not mean we will not have one in the future.

Does Metropolitan State have a Master’s degree in alcohol and drug counseling?
Yes, in 2014 the program developed and began a Master’s degree (MS) to help existing counselors develop the leadership and clinical skills for advanced practice and to become eligible for licensure as LPC.

- 16 -
What are the twelve core functions?

1) “Screening” means the process by which a client is determined appropriate and eligible for admission to a particular program.

2) “Intake” means the administrative and initial assessment procedures for admission to a program.

3) “Orientation” means describing to the client the general nature and goals of the program; rules governing client conduct and infractions that can lead to disciplinary action or discharge from the program; in a nonresidential program, the hours during which services are available; treatment costs to be borne by the client, if any; and client’s rights.

4) “Assessment” means those procedures by which a counselor identifies and evaluates an individual’s strengths, weaknesses, problems, and needs to develop a treatment plan or make recommendations for the level of care placement.

5) “Treatment planning” means the process by which the counselor and the client identify and rank problems needing resolution; establish agreed-upon immediate and long-term goals; and decide on a treatment process and the sources to be utilized.

6) “Counseling” means the utilization of special skills to assist individuals, families or groups in achieving objectives through exploration of a problem and its ramifications; examination of attitudes and feelings; consideration of alternative solutions; and decision making.

7) “Case management” means activities that bring services, agencies, resources, or people together within a planned framework of action toward the achievement of established goals.

8) “Crisis intervention” means those services that respond to an alcohol or other drug user’s needs during acute emotional or physical distress.

9) “Client education” means the provision of information to clients who are receiving or seeking counseling concerning alcohol and other drug concerns and the available services and resources.

10) “Referral” means identifying the needs of the client that cannot be met by the counselor or agency and assisting the client in utilizing support systems and available community resources.

11) “Reports and recordkeeping” means charting the results of the assessment and treatment plan, writing reports, progress notes and discharge summaries, and keeping records of other client-related data.

12) “Consultation with other professionals regarding client treatment and services” means communicating with other professionals with regard to client treatment and services to assure comprehensive, quality care for the client.

Why are the twelve core functions so important?
The twelve core functions are based upon a well-researched description (a job analysis) of the tasks and activities that alcohol and drug counselors actually perform when working. These twelve core functions are the basis for the legal definition of alcohol and drug counseling in Minnesota.
Are there any online courses I can take to meet the requirements of the major?
Also referred to as “online learning” or “web-based courses.” There are a limited number of alcohol and drug counseling courses currently available in this format.

I’m confused about all the terms that I hear people using, like alcohol and drug counselor, chemical dependency, alcoholism, substance abuse, substance use disorders and so forth.
For the purposes of this handbook, we may use these terms interchangeably, as they have similar meanings. However, you are likely to hear these words or terms used in more specific ways. For example, the name of this major is “alcohol and drug counseling;” we took this from the licensure terminology. Treatment programs in Minnesota are more likely to be referred to as “chemical dependency” programs, while the federal government prefers to use the term “substance abuse,” and the current edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders uses the term “substance use disorders.”

Are there any opportunities for students to become involved in activities at the University?
There is an Alcohol and Drug Counseling Student Association that meets monthly at the St. Paul campus. This group was designed by ADC students to offer each other support and networking with future co-workers. Topics addressed at these meetings include: learning the steps to earning your license, discussion about specific course assignments, challenges to professionalism, and community service opportunities. More information on Association can be found on OrgSync at https://orgsync.com/47714/chapter
Bibliography

What every alcohol and drug counseling major should read or have read ☺

Books: Most of these books can be found in the Metro State Library, see section RC 564.


Rogers, Carl (1951). *Client-Centered Therapy*. Houghton Mifflin Co. Boston, Mass. (one of the classics regarding counseling and empathy)

SAMHSA (2006). *Addiction Counseling Competencies, the Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes of Professional Practice*. (TAP #21). US department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. DHHS Publication No. SMA 06-4171.


**Websites:**
There are many useful websites related to alcohol and drug counseling. Please see “Resources” on the Alcohol and Drug major web page for further information.

http://www.metrostate.edu/msweb/explore/chcps/departments/hs/programs/alcoholdrug/