



Master of Arts with a major in  
Clinical Mental Health Counseling

[www.myunion.edu/CMHC](http://www.myunion.edu/CMHC)





# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Union Institute & University's Master of Arts with a major in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (MA-CMHC) program. We are dedicated to providing you with a strong, competency-based education in a blended delivery model that reflects best practice, is evidence-based, supportive, and recognized by national accrediting bodies. Union Institute & University has a long history of training counseling professionals who are prepared to work in a variety of settings.

Union's MA-CMHC program provides students with a combination of online courses, live sessions, and face-to-face residencies which prepare students for entry into professional practice. The Master of Arts faculty are accomplished professionals in both scholarship and clinical practice, and are devoted to teaching evidence-based, client-centered care. Through active advisement, students also receive individualized training and mentoring, all leading to successful outcomes in meeting personal goals and objectives. The field of mental health counseling is highly rewarding and challenging. Helping people to overcome adversity, increase their well-being, and realize their full potential is gratifying and much needed in an increasingly complex world. This is a growing field that attracts those who want to serve. In fact, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of professional counselors is expected to grow at a rate of 12 percent through the year 2018.

Thank you for taking the time to look at Union's unique program. All of us involved in the program are committed to your success. Together, we strive to offer an excellent training experience, and hope that you will consider us as the most rewarding and efficient way to advance your interest and affinity to help others.

Union Institute & University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission.





## **Union Institute & University**

### **Master of Arts with a Major in Clinical Mental Health Counseling**

Within the pages of this brochure you will find information about an academic program of Union Institute & University with the capacity to change your life and to help you meet personal and professional goals.

We encourage you to learn about our programs and our people. We are proud of what we do for students. More importantly, we are proud of what students do for themselves. The gift of education is the most remarkable gift you can give yourself. It has the power to transform lives, to open doors into new ways of knowing and seeing the world, to change individual economic circumstances; it plays a vital role in the creation of a more civil, socially responsible society.

As you read this material, we ask that you imagine the true potential of your future and seriously consider how we can help you get there. We have a long and rich history of helping students pursue the education they need for professional success and advancement of scholarly and personal goals.

Thank you for your interest in Union Institute & University.



# Unique Features of the Program

## Program Outset

The program was designed specifically to offer traditional courses, cutting edge evidence-based training, and supervised internship experiences that are increasingly required by state and national agencies and credentialing bodies.

## Individual Attention

Students work with a team of faculty who hold doctoral degrees and possess relevant practitioner experience.

## Hybrid Delivery Model

The blended/hybrid delivery model of education and training provides a structured sequence of courses which address foundation theory, skills, and professional ethical practice guidelines in Year I, followed by advanced coursework and field experience in Year II, which builds upon core competencies in assessment, counseling, consultation, and specialized elective clinical areas.

## Residencies

There are 2 residencies per year. Each last 5 days (Wednesday through Sunday).



*I had to find a university that understood my priorities and goals, and I have...The university is committed to helping veterans complete their education and career goals through the Veterans in Union program.*



—Kylie H., CMHC Student



## Practicum and Internship

The practicum and internships are the capstone component of professional training and provides students the opportunity to demonstrate and refine skill proficiencies learned as part of the university training program.

## Program Accreditation

Unlike many nontraditional programs, Union's program offers a structured academic track designed specifically to serve the educational and professional needs of students wishing to pursue state and national licenses or certifications needed to practice in many states and organizations.

*A Certificate in Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counseling may be earned concurrently with the Master's degree. Upon completion of six (6) chemical dependency specific courses integrated within the curriculum, students will be eligible to sit for the National Certification Commission Examination for Addiction Counselors (NCAC).*

The MA-CMHC has completed their self study and site visit to apply for accreditation through the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related

Programs (CACREP). The board is expected to vote and make their decision in January 2018.

## Mission Statement

Union Institute & University's MA-CMHC program holds its mission close:

*To educate future counselor practitioners to identify and treat psychological problems and issues in a variety of clinical, educational, and workplace settings using evidence-based and best practices.*

Throughout their education, students will be required to engage in critical inquiry; to thoroughly examine and interact with the literature, theory, and research in the field of clinical mental health counseling; and to pursue and share the results of applied research. Emphasis will be placed on developing exemplary clinical and related therapeutic skills and gaining an understanding





of research procedures and applications in accordance with the scholar-practitioner model of education. Furthermore, students will be educated broadly to work with diverse cultural backgrounds and populations and to adhere to all professional and ethical guidelines.

The program is designed for students who are interested in pursuing a career in clinical mental health counseling at a master's level; seeking graduate training in preparation for doctoral work in Counseling Education & Supervision or closely related field.

MA-CMHC students complete a broad based and comprehensive clinical training specialization that prepares them to pursue licensure as Clinical Mental Health Counselors. Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors practice independently in a variety of settings such as hospitals, community mental health agencies, and colleges and universities, treating clients who struggle with everything from adjusting to life to serious mental illnesses. The major in clinical mental health counseling uses an evidence-based clinical practice approach with an emphasis on addressing the mental health needs of a wide variety of populations.

Clinical Mental Health counselors prevent, diagnose, and treat mental, emotional or behavioral disorders and provide services when clients experience life



stresses that interfere with their mental health. Clinical Mental Health counselors serve at all levels of schools and universities, hospitals, mental health agencies, rehabilitation facilities, business and industry, correctional institutions, religious organizations, community centers and private practice.

This program should be of interest to those wishing to pursue careers as professional mental health counselors and who seek licensure as LCMHCs or LPCs. Entering students have experience in a variety of backgrounds, such as education, psychology, business, nursing, social work, military, and pastoral and religious settings. Some students, upon graduation, plan to pursue doctoral work in the field. Many have professional work experience and almost all have some experience related to the field of counseling, either paid or unpaid.

## Counseling

According to the American Counseling Association, counseling is defined as a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education and career goals.

Individuals interested in working as a licensed professional counselor often desire to private practice, community based counseling agencies, schools, hospitals, veterans affairs, or other social service areas. The common theme despite location, is that individuals in the field of counseling seek to help people work through their life's problems. This master's program should be of interest to those wishing to practice evidence based counseling focusing on areas of mental health wellness, including the diagnosis and treatment of those with mental health disorders.



*Residencies are the highlight of each trimester!*



—CMHC Student







## Program Information

### Enrollment

MA-CMHC is a 60 credit program of study. The program is offered with full-time and part-time options to meet the needs of working professionals.

Full-time master's students typically complete three (3) courses for the equivalent of nine (9) credits during the fall term; three (3) courses for the equivalent of nine (9) credits during the winter term; and the equivalent of twelve (12) credits during the summer term (may include internship), for a total of 60 credits over two years.

Trimesters are four months in duration to provide a sequential, organized, and supervised educational experience which better prepares students for entry into professional practice. Students may enroll beginning in January, April or August.

### Residency Requirements

Residencies are a critical component of the program. They fulfill the total academic experience at Union Institute & University by offering course-based and advanced topic presentations, seminars, cohort engagement, time with faculty and advisors, and an overall environment designed to support the student in engaging with theory and practice. All students are required to attend two residencies per year, during fall and spring. Residency dates are

posted in August for each academic year. Residency schedules are emailed to students approximately three weeks prior to each residency to allow students time to plan their on-campus attendance and activities.

The campus-based residency includes the following activities:

- Professional Seminars and Training Workshops
- Research Seminars
- Faculty Presentations
- Expert Guest Speakers
- Panel Discussions
- Student Presentations

### Practicum and Internship

The practicum and internship training are the capstone experience of mental health counselor training and builds on the knowledge and skills learned in the academic coursework and applied training experiences of the program. The minimum requirement for a Union Institute & University is a 100 hour practicum experience, followed by a 600 hour internship experience. However, state credentialing and licensure requirements should be reviewed to determine the actual number of hours to be completed in the internship, as individual states may require more than 600 hours (such as 900 hours).

Typically, students complete one year of internship to meet degree and state requirements. Candidates may earn nine (9) credits for field training,





*Every class has placed a great deal of emphasis on issues that are unique to marginalized populations. The [university] values have been a mainstay in each class I have taken.*



—Recent Graduate

depending on their individualized goals for future licensure and certification. Internship placements have included hospitals, community mental health clinics, schools, and private practice settings.

## Transfer Credits

Applicants may transfer up to 12 graduate credits from another regionally accredited institution. The admissions committee must provisionally approve all transfer credit requests at the time of application. Upon admission to the program, the assistant director will make the final decision on the appropriateness of transfer credit. To qualify for transfer, such credits must be:

- a. Listed on an official transcript as master's level credit
- b. Granted by an accredited college or university within the past five (5) years
- c. Identical in scope and content to the course(s) being replaced by transfer credits (as evidenced by course syllabi or similar documentation)
- d. Awarded with a grade of B or better
- e. Not used toward another degree

Only transfer credits directly relevant to the program's goals will be accepted.

## Tuition

Tuition fees are subject to change each academic year. Please visit the Union website for up-to-date information:

[www.myunion.edu/tuition](http://www.myunion.edu/tuition)

*Note: Not included in tuition are travel expenses to weekend residencies, as well as all necessary lodging and meals. Residency charges (in addition to travel expenses) are additional.*



# Certificate in Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counseling

MA-CMHC also offers a graduate Certificate in Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counseling, designed to help students acquire discipline-related specialized knowledge and skills in substance abuse counseling.

The certificate program can begin at any time by enrolling for courses in the prescribed sequence. The courses are taken entirely online, with the option to attend three weekends of residency during the year.

Upon completion of the education hours/courses in the certificate program, students will have met all education requirements to be eligible to sit for the National Certification Commission Examination for Addiction Counselors (NCAC).

## Certificate Options

### **Embedded: For enrolled degree-seeking students**

- 18 credit hours (six courses)
- Tuition assessed at standard graduate credit-hour rate

### **Stand-Alone: For those with undergraduate degrees not seeking MA-CMHC degree**

The stand-alone graduate certificate allows individuals to earn required education hours for certification without enrolling in the master's degree program. Stand-alone certificate applicants may enroll in courses individually or in courses leading to the certificate.

- Six courses (270 education hour equivalent)
- Three non-degree graduate credits earned per course (45 education hour equivalent)
- Offered in a one-year sequence
- Begin in fall, winter, or spring/summer term
- Start in fall, complete coursework in August, sit for National licensing exam in October



*Beyond their knowledge and skills, I feel as though [faculty] are invested in my learning and career.*



—CMHC Student





## Admissions requirements

Admission to the MA-CMHC program is open to applicants who hold a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution or a recognized international institution of higher education.

The admissions decision is based on the following:

- A grade point average of 3.0 or better (on a 4.0 scale) in the major field of study and in all subsequent graduate work. Under special circumstances, a candidate with an extensive work history or other overriding qualifications may be admitted with a slightly lower GPA.
- An interview with the assistant director of the program or a member of the faculty, if deemed necessary.
- A completed online application detailing personal and professional goals and reasons for pursuing graduate study.
- Three professional recommendations, one of which should be from a person qualified to evaluate clinical potential.
- A minimum TOEFL score of 500 for applicants whose native language is not English.
- Applicants must hold an undergraduate degree. It can be in any field. In certain circumstances, exceptional applicants may be granted provisional acceptance, full acceptance being contingent upon the successful completion of nine (9) credits of graduate coursework taken during the first term of enrollment.

Applicants to the stand-alone Certificate in Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counseling program must have a Bachelor's degree and GPA of 2.5 or greater to be considered for entry. Students who are accepted with a GPA of less than 3.0 must successfully complete all Certificate courses before they can apply for admission to the MA-CMHC program.



## For More Information

Union Institute & University's admissions counselors are available to discuss how your interests and goals may be translated into appropriate studies.

**Admissions: 800.861.6400 | [admissions@myunion.edu](mailto:admissions@myunion.edu)**

## Application Process

The admissions committee reviews and acts upon completed the MA-CMHC application folders on a monthly basis. Completed application folders must contain the following:

- Non-refundable application fee
- Application Essay
- Official transcripts from all post-secondary schools attended
- Three (3) letters of reference, including one from someone qualified to assess the applicant's clinical potential

The application and further instructions are available at:

**[www.myunion.edu/cmhc](http://www.myunion.edu/cmhc)**







*My undergrad experience was so different. To me it was a check list, take the class, get the grade, keep going until I get the degree then a pay check. This time it's so much better. I'm getting an education, I'm learning and it's transforming my life.*



—CMHC Student

## About Union Institute & University

Spanning from New England to Florida and California, with headquarters in Cincinnati, Ohio, Union Institute & University is a private, accredited, national university with a mission to serve adult students around the world in a vibrant learning environment that combines the very best of independent studies with expert faculty guidance and support services.

Union's academics emphasize excellence, interdisciplinary study, social and personal implications of study and scholarship, and the integration of theory and practice in learning. Nearly 2,000 undergraduate and graduate learners engage in independent distance studies online, in hybrid programs, or enroll through academic centers in Cincinnati, Ohio; Los Angeles, California; Hollywood, Florida; Sacramento, California; and Brattleboro, Vermont.

As a cutting-edge leader in connecting education to values, Union Institute & University strives to help individuals recognize their leadership qualities and motivate them to use those capacities for both community and self-improvement. A continuing commitment to innovative and creative approaches to adult learning serves UI&U graduates well as they prepare to use their education to make a difference in their lives, their communities, and the world.

**Contact us to learn more about this exciting program!**

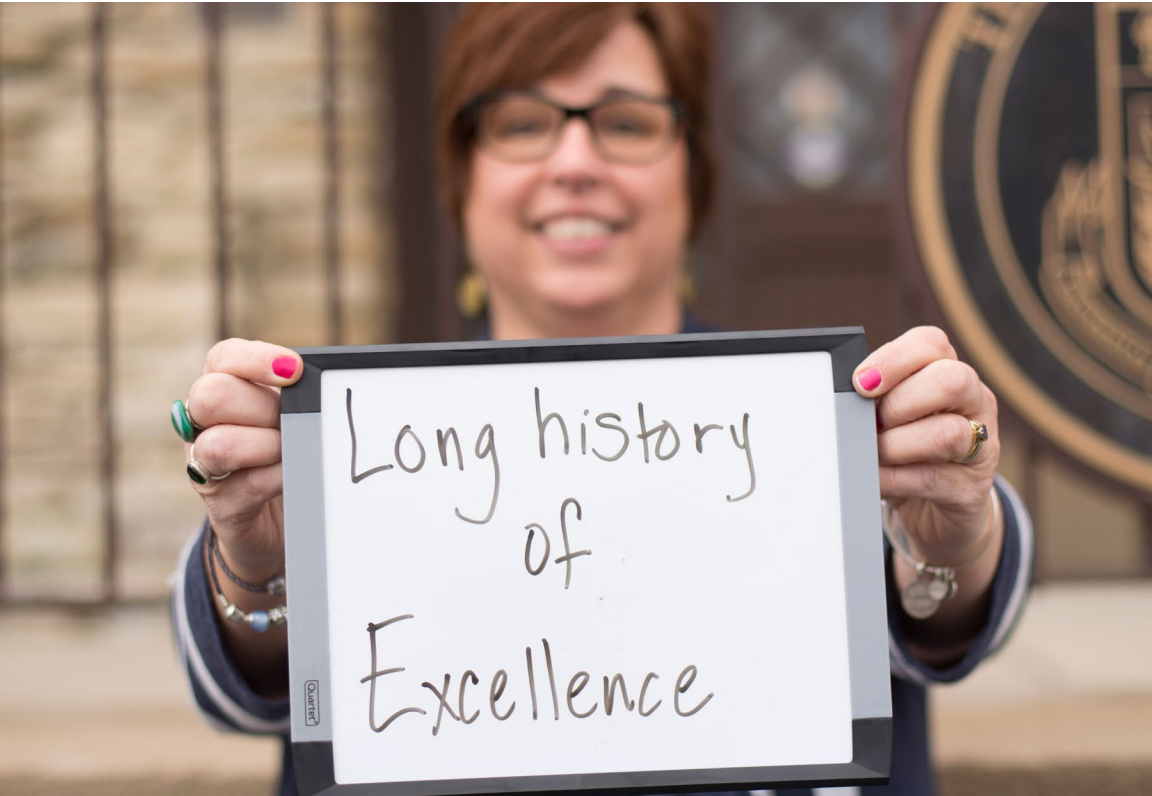
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*All statements in this publication refer to current policies and offerings only and are subject to change. The information contained is valid as of October 2017.*

Union Institute & University  
440 E McMillan Street | Cincinnati, OH 45206  
513.487.1219 | 800.861.6400  
[admissions@myunion.edu](mailto:admissions@myunion.edu) | [www.myunion.edu](http://www.myunion.edu)

Union Institute & University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission: [www.hlcommission.org](http://www.hlcommission.org).

Union Institute & University does not discriminate in its admissions, employment or policy procedures on the basis of age, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, political party affiliation, or physical impairment. UI&U's policies and practices conform with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1975, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1975, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended.

The 504 Coordinator for the Americans with Disabilities Act may be contacted at [adacoordinator@myunion.edu](mailto:adacoordinator@myunion.edu)  
440 East McMillan Street | Cincinnati, OH 45206.