Post-Master’s Degree Credential-Only in School Counseling (PPS)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT KIND OF A DEGREE DO I NEED TO QUALIFY FOR THE CREDENTIAL-ONLY PROGRAM?
You must have a master’s degree from a WASC accredited school in counseling, social work, clinical psychology or a closely related field.

WHAT DO I NEED TO BRING TO MY INTERVIEW WITH MY ADMISSIONS COUNSELOR?
If you have not already sent copies of the following to KSOE, please bring them with you: all of your graduate transcripts, course descriptions and/or course catalogs, syllabi (if you still have them), and a current resume. Should you choose to apply to the program, additional items are needed. Please see your application packet for details.

HOW MANY CLASSES DO I NEED TO TAKE AT ST. MARY’S?
You will need to complete at least 15 units in residence with Saint Mary’s College. You will meet with an admissions advisor to review your transcripts and experience to determine your exact course of study. Every student must take Counseling Field Experience (COUN 530). COUN 530 is a two-semester course sequence. Challenges are considered on an individual basis.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT TUITION RATE?
Current tuition per semester unit is found on our web site under Admissions.

CAN I GET FINANCIAL AID? DO YOU HAVE ANY SCHOLARSHIPS?
Yes, Post-master’s degree credential-only degree students may qualify for financial aid, and Saint Mary’s College does offer some needs-based scholarships. For both loans and scholarships, you must fill out the FAFSA online at: http://www.fafsa.ed.gov. You also must be enrolled at least part-time. For more information, contact Carol Kenney, Program Assistant, at (925) 631-4723 or by email at ckenney@stmarys-ca.edu.

CAN I GET AN INTERIM CREDENTIAL AS SOON AS I ENROLL AT ST. MARY’S?
No. The State of California does not issue interim or emergency credentials for school counselors. We can write a letter explaining that you are enrolled in our programs and your expected completion date. Certain districts and principals have granted a temporary waiver to students in the process of completing their coursework and credential requirements; doing so is the decision of the specific principal/district.

WHY IS A CERTIFICATE OF CLEARANCE REQUIRED FOR ADMISSION for those applying for the specializations in school counseling and school psychology?
It is required by law that every participant in a basic credential preparation program undergoes a moral fitness or clearance check by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC). In order to complete this fitness process you must apply for an appropriate document issued by CTC and have that document issued in your name by the Commission. Before being officially admitted to the KSOE you must have applied and PAID for a document issued by the CTC. The document must be ISSUED prior to the start of your practicum placement (COUN 231 for School Counseling and COUN 527 for School Psychology).
DO I NEED TO TAKE THE CBEST?
If you are applying for the specialization in School Counseling or School Psychology, you must take the CBEST (or another CTC-approved Basic Skills Requirement) as part of the admissions process. You need to have passed all sections of the CBEST prior to being in your practicum placement (COUN 231 for School Counseling and COUN 527 for School Psychology).

DOES SAINT MARY’S HAVE A PAID INTERNSHIP PROGRAM IN PLACE WITH SCHOOLS?
No. Saint Mary’s does not offer an “internship” program in school counseling. While some students are able to find paid employment in a school that meets the requirements for field placement, other students work at unpaid placements.

WHAT IS A CHALLENGE TO A CLASS?
Students with significant relevant experience may be able to challenge relevant courses. If your advisor or course instructor determines that your experience qualifies you to challenge a course, you will need to pay a challenge fee of $100-$200. Challenge courses do not count towards residency. All challenges are considered on an individual basis.

WHAT IS AN INDEPENDENT STUDY?
Sometimes previous coursework will meet some, but not all, of the requirements for a course. In that case your advisor or course instructor may require an independent study to cover the remaining material. You will need to pay the regular tuition per unit of independent study. Independent studies count towards your 15 unit residency requirement. For example, if you took a 3-unit child development course as part of your master’s degree, you may be able to count 2 units towards the 3-unit Human Development (COUN 248) requirement and complete a 1-unit independent study on adult development. The instructor will contact you with your exact assignment once you register for your independent study.

WHAT IF MY MASTER’S DEGREE IS FROM SAINT MARY’S?
Students who graduated with a counseling degree from Saint Mary’s do not need 15 units in residency. You will still be required to take at least 1 semester of COUN 530 PPS School Counseling Field Experience and present a minimum of 6 tapes of counseling sessions. You may request to challenge the second semester of COUN 530 part way through the first semester. Each challenge is considered on an individual basis. Your remaining course of study will depend on your previous coursework and professional experience.

WHAT IF I HAVE MORE QUESTIONS OR WOULD LIKE TO MEET WITH AN ADMISSIONS COUNSELOR?
If you have more questions, please email Joel Gagnon, PPS School Counseling Post-Master’s Credential-Only Advisor, at jmg6@stmarys-ca.edu. If you are ready to make an appointment, call the KSOE receptionist at 925-631-4700.