MASTER OF ARTS IN PASTORAL COUNSELING (M.A.)

Purpose
The Department of Community Care and Counseling’s Master of Arts in Pastoral Counseling provides students with an academic program designed to equip students with a biblical worldview of human behavior and application of helping skills. Students will master coursework and review the literature in the field considered essential to the master’s level preparation of ministry-based workers who seek to offer services in areas such as addictions and recovery, pastoral counseling, marriage and family, leadership, life coaching, etc., that are consistent with a biblical worldview. Students are encouraged to evaluate their own specific needs and to take advantage of available resources for personal and professional development as they seek a degree relevant to the field of pastoral counseling which is a non-licensed profession in the majority of the United States.

Program Learning Outcomes
The student will be able to:
1. Compare and contrast theoretically informed pastoral counseling strategies.
2. Articulate an understanding of pastoral counseling that rests on solid theological/psychological/spiritual principles.
3. Integrate critical thinking skills in the practice of Christian scholarship.
4. Demonstrate an awareness of the role and importance of pastoral counseling within the discipline of Counseling.

Program Specific Admission Requirements
In addition to the general admission procedures, applicants to the Master of Arts in Pastoral Counseling must meet the following requirements:
1. Earned baccalaureate degree or its equivalent (in any field) from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S., Department of Education (e.g., SACSCOC, TRACS, ABHE, etc.). Applicants who hold a prior degree from an unaccredited institution may be considered for admission on Academic Caution.
2. First-time applicants are asked to submit a written recommendation from a pastor.
3. Minimum undergraduate GPA of 2.0 (on a 4.00 scale).

Transfer of Credit
Students may transfer up to 18 hours of coursework into the Pastoral Counseling program. For a transferred course to replace a Liberty University course, the following requirements must be met:
1. The school at which the course was taken must be appropriately accredited.
2. The course credit must be at least three semester hours or five quarter hours.

3. The student must have earned a grade of C- or better in the course.
4. The course must overlap one of Liberty's courses by at least 80%.

Courses related to counseling that meet all but the last criterion may be transferred in as elective courses. Course work must have been completed within the previous 10 years. Transfer credits will not be accepted for the following courses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PACO 500</td>
<td>Introduction to Pastoral Counseling</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PACO 501</td>
<td>Foundational Doctrines for Pastoral Counselors</td>
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<td>PACO 509</td>
<td>Spiritual Formation in Pastoral Counseling</td>
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<td>Theories and Techniques in Pastoral Counseling</td>
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<tr>
<td>PACO 699</td>
<td>Pastoral Counseling Internship</td>
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Credit will not be awarded for life experience or continuing education workshops.

Programs of Study
Students in online programs are encouraged to take residential format courses found in the core courses section of the program of study.

Delivery Format: Online Only
- Pastoral Counseling (M.A.) - Addictions & Recovery
- Pastoral Counseling (M.A.) - Community Chaplaincy
- Pastoral Counseling (M.A.) - Dobson Center Family Advocacy, Public Policy & the Future
- Pastoral Counseling (M.A.) - Dobson Center Marriage & Family Studies
- Pastoral Counseling (M.A.) - Dobson Center Parenting & Child/Adolescent Development
- Pastoral Counseling (M.A.) - Life Coaching
- Pastoral Counseling (M.A.) - Military Resilience

Delivery Format: Residential and Online
- Pastoral Counseling (M.A.) - Crisis Response & Trauma
- Pastoral Counseling (M.A.) - Discipleship & Church Ministry
- Pastoral Counseling (M.A.) - Leadership
- Pastoral Counseling (M.A.) - Marriage & Family
- Pastoral Counseling (M.A.) - Pastoral Counseling
- Pastoral Counseling (M.A.) - Theology

Career Opportunities
- Associate pastor
- Counselor
- Lay leader
- Missionary
- Youth pastor

PACO 500 Introduction to Pastoral Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)
This course introduces students to a solution-based model for short-term counseling that incorporates knowledge of and practice in facilitation skills, cognitive behavioral approaches, and biblical teaching.
Offered: Resident and Online
PACO 501 Foundational Doctrines for Pastoral Counselors 3 Credit Hour(s)
This course is a study of systematic theology that will give attention to the doctrines of the Bible, God, humanity, sin, Christ, Holy Spirit, salvation, the church and last things. The course will provide the student the theological foundations to serve and counsel more effectively in the local church and community contexts.
Offered: Resident and Online

PACO 504 Multicultural Issues in Pastoral Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)
Prerequisite: PACO 500 and PACO 501
This course introduces students to the constructs of Ethnicity, Families, and Counseling. It focuses on the contribution of ethnic background to family makeup and functioning. Major ethnic minorities are studied along with the counseling approaches appropriate to each.
Offered: Resident and Online

PACO 506 Integration of Psychology and Theology 3 Credit Hour(s)
This course introduces students to the process of pastoral counseling with a variety of religious clients who would define themselves as evangelical Christians. The course provides a systematic overview of Christian doctrines, a discussion of various theological viewpoints regarding those doctrines, and an examination of how psychological and theological concepts relate to each other.
Offered: Resident and Online

PACO 507 Theology and Spirituality in Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)
An examination of the content, comprehensiveness, and validity of several counseling theories that have been developed by prominent Christian counselors.
Offered: Resident and Online

PACO 509 Spiritual Formation in Pastoral Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)
Prerequisite: PACO 500 and PACO 501
This course introduces students to the essential elements of a biblically responsible, research informed, holistic approach to his/her spiritual formation. The goals, means, and challenges faced in the process of transformation, especially within pastoral counseling, will comprise the major issues covered in class.
Offered: Resident and Online

PACO 597 Seminar 1-3 Credit Hour(s)
PACO 597/COUN 597 - Seminar (1 to 3 hours)

PACO 603 Premarital and Marital Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)
This course introduces students to the factors contributing to successful marital relationships. The course also teaches students a conceptual model for assessing relationship functionality and introduces them to short-term methods that can be used when those kinds of problems develop. Students will be challenged to articulate a clinically informed biblical counseling approach to pre-marital counseling. (Formerly PACO 610)
Offered: Resident and Online

PACO 604 Crisis Intervention in Pastoral Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)
Prerequisite: PACO 500 and PACO 501
This course introduces students to the theories and skills required to provide pastoral crisis intervention and counseling that will cultivate resiliency and promote spiritual growth.
Offered: Resident and Online

PACO 611 Counseling the Child and Their Families 3 Credit Hour(s)
The developmental and psychological needs and problems of children are examined through the analysis of personality types and family structure. Counseling techniques (e.g. play therapy) for children are also examined.
Offered: Online

PACO 615 Marriage and Family Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)
Online Prerequisite: PACO 500 and PACO 501
This course introduces students to the dynamics of marriage and family relationships. Emphasis is on understanding the structure and function of marriage, the various aspects of the marital relationship, family systems, and ways the counselor may approach marriage and family counseling as a creative, preventative, and healing ministry.
Offered: Online

PACO 617 Theories and Techniques in Pastoral Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)
Prerequisite: PACO 500 and PACO 501
This course introduces students to selected theories of counseling and psychotherapy. It involves an intensive pastoral counseling experience designed to enhance self-awareness, promote personality exploration, and provide case discussion and analysis. Fundamentals of the therapeutic relationship and essential skills are examined.
Offered: Resident and Online

PACO 618 Advanced Marriage and Family Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)
Online Prerequisite: PACO 500 and PACO 501 and PACO 615
This course is an exploration of selected major treatment approaches utilized in marital and family counseling. Development of practical skills, interventions, and techniques constitute the primary focus. (Formerly PACO 602).
Offered: Online

PACO 620 Counseling the Adolescent and Their Families 3 Credit Hour(s)
Online Prerequisite: PACO 500 and PACO 501
This course examines the transitions of adolescence emphasizing family, social, spiritual/moral, and physical issues. Counseling theories and practices for working with adolescents are explored. Opportunities for application of theory are provided.
Offered: Online

PACO 622 Counseling the Child and Adolescent 3 Credit Hour(s)
This course introduces students to the developmental transitions of childhood and adolescence emphasizing family, social, spiritual/moral, and physical issues. Counseling theories and practices for working with children and adolescents are explored. Opportunities for application of theory are provided.

PACO 625 Healthy Sexuality 3 Credit Hour(s)
Online Prerequisite: PACO 500 and PACO 501
This course introduces students to a research informed biblical paradigm for healthy sexuality. It will increase their awareness, knowledge, and skills regarding the broad range of issues in the field of counseling when addressing healthy sexuality.
Offered: Online

PACO 630 Gerontology and Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)
This course introduces students to the issues and problems unique to the elderly in American society. Topics such as grief and loss, suffering, societal attitude, and family structure are examined.
Offered: Online

PACO 687 Counseling Women 3 Credit Hour(s)
Online Prerequisite: PACO 500 and PACO 501
This course examines the most common problems women bring to counseling, including both developmental and situational crises. It explores biblical perspectives and the most effective treatments for these situations.
Offered: Online
PACO 695 Directed Research in Pastoral Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)
Designed for the advanced student in good standing who has
demonstrated an ability to work independently. The student will work with
the instructor in developing a proposal for guided research in a specified
area of counseling.
Offered: Resident

PACO 697 Seminar in Pastoral Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)
An intensive study in a specific subject of counseling. This course allows
variation in the approach and content of the regular curriculum and often
will be used by visiting professors.

PACO 698 Practicum 3 Credit Hour(s)
Students will complete supervised counseling and counseling-
related experiences in a professional setting. The primary focus is the
development of counseling skills.

PACO 699 Pastoral Counseling Internship 3 Credit Hour(s)
Online Prerequisite: THEO 510 and PACO 500 and PACO 504 and
PACO 509 and PACO 603 and PACO 604 and PACO 617
This course offers student participation in a pastoral counseling
experience under supervision in an approved setting along with
supervision by a university faculty member.
Offered: Online