The M.S. in Psychology is a 90-quarter unit professional degree program designed for persons who desire to practice in the field of clinical/counseling psychology. The program's mission is to provide the state of California with highly competent master-level clinicians who are academically prepared for the marriage and family therapist license (MFT) and counseling with individuals, couples, families, and groups in a multicultural society. Its mission is also to provide students who want to proceed on to doctoral programs in clinical or counseling psychology with sound research skills, thesis experience and clinical intervention training.

Cal Poly’s Master of Science in Psychology program fulfills the educational requirements for the state of California’s Marriage and Family Therapist License. Graduates find career opportunities in public social service agencies such as Departments of Mental Health and Social Services as well as in private non-profit and private practice counseling centers.

*Additional post-graduate work is required for licensure.

Program Strengths
Cal Poly’s M.S. degree program emphasizes personal, academic, and practical knowledge and skill development which will enable each graduate to become competent in assessment, diagnosis, and treatment for individuals, couples, families, groups, and children. Research competence and ethical practices are also emphasized.

The program is particularly well known for its clinical training. Closely supervised clinical training practicum experiences leading to challenging fieldwork in agencies is the cornerstone of Cal Poly’s preparation for the future clinician. Cal Poly’s practicum training clinic serves clients from the community and provides trainees with the opportunity to develop skills and confidence before undertaking fieldwork in community agencies.

The Central Coast of California offers numerous well-supervised clinical traineeships in public and private non-profit agencies with a variety of client populations.

Traineeship Settings have included:
- Santa Maria Valley Youth and Family Center
- Hospice – SLO
- RISE – SLO County
- Women’s Shelter Program – SLO
- SLO County Behavioral Health Services
- SLO County Drug and Alcohol Services
- Community Counseling Center
- Domestic Violence Solutions, Santa Maria
- Casa Pacific, SAFTY Program, Santa Maria/Lompoc
- CALM (Child Abuse Listening and Mediation), Santa Maria
- Atascadero High School-Wellness Center
- Transitions Mental Health Association
CURRICULUM FOR MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN PSYCHOLOGY
2017-2019 Catalog

Units

PSY 504 Psychopharmacology 4
PSY 520 Marriage & Family Therapy: Professional Identity, Theory and Practice 4
PSY 535 Child and Adolescent Psychopathology 4
PSY 555 Counseling and Communication 4
PSY 556 Multicultural Counseling and Psychology 4
PSY 560 Individual Therapy: Theory and Application 4
PSY 564 Ethics and the Law: MF Therapy 4
PSY 565 Diagnosis and Treatment: Psychopathology 4
PSY 566 Group Therapy: Theory and Application 4
PSY 569 Counseling Clinic Practicum (3) (3) 6
PSY 571 Advanced Family Therapy: Theory and Application 4
PSY 572 Child and Adolescent Therapy: Theory and Application 4
PSY 574 Psychological Assessment 4
PSY 575 Gender and Couple Therapy 4
PSY 576 Traineeship: Marital and Family Therapy (4) (4) (4) (4) 16
PSY 577 Community Mental Health: Issues and Practices 4
PSY 585 Research Methods for Counseling Psychology 4
PSY 588 Assessment and Treatment of Substance Use Disorders 4

Select from the following: 4
PSY 599 Thesis*

OR

Written comprehensive exam and one of the following:
PSY 568 Advanced Psychotherapies
or an approved 400-level PSY course 90

*Must register for thesis credit each quarter of advisement.

Program prerequisites: Abnormal Psychology, Lifespan Development, Personality, Introductory Statistics, Research Methods in Psychology (or related discipline)