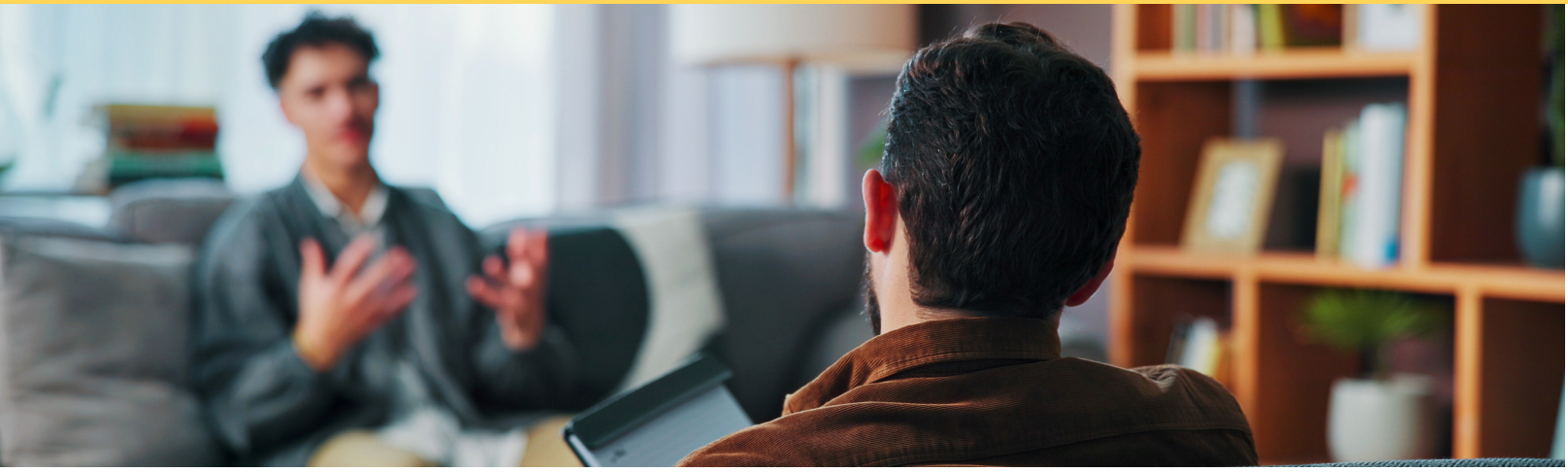
Graduate Master of Science in Addiction Counseling



"My favorite thing is seeing someone who comes into recovery for the first time... watching the light come on and seeing some hope come back into their life. With these courses, I'm really able to have a good work, school and life balance."

– Jessica DeVore
Ottawa University Alumni

At Ottawa University

The Master of Science in Addiction Counseling degree program prepares learners to pursue careers as addiction counseling professionals, treating individuals with substance abuse/dependency disorders. The curriculum integrates theory, research, and practice. The Master of Science in Addiction Counseling provides students with a foundation for doctoral studies and/or professional practice in addiction counseling, as well as for future study and work in mental health counseling, clinical psychology, social work, counselor education, law enforcement, law and human services.

Careers

According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics (2026), the employment outlook for substance abuse/addiction counselors is considered as "very bright". The need for substance abuse/addiction counselors is expected to grow by 17% through 2034. There are numerous areas that counselors choose to work in, including schools, clinics, community mental health centers, family counseling centers, law enforcement, churches, hospitals, and private practice.

Education and Qualifications

A master's degree is required by most states for individuals seeking the highest level of licensing and/or certification. This degree program meets the educational requirements for licensure in Arizona for the Licensed Associate Addiction Counselor (LAAC). The Addictions Counseling program meets the educational requirements, in most states, for licensure or certification. Licensure or certification requirements vary from state-to-state, therefore, it is the responsibility of the student to contact their state licensure or certification authority to assure that the degree requirements meet their state's requirements.

The Master of Science in Addiction Counseling program is accredited by the National Addiction Studies Accreditation Commission (NASAC). Ottawa University is an Approved Academic Education Provider through the Association for Addiction Professionals (NAADAC)

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Required Courses

ACG 7000 - Graduate Seminar: Clinical and Addiction Foundations (3)
Provides an overview of necessary foundations in the content areas of abnormal psychology, developmental psychology, and theories of personality. Introduces the core functions of addiction counseling from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration's Technical Assistance Publication (TAP) 21 series. Other topics include introduction to APA style and format.

ACG 7100 - Introduction to Addiction (3)
Introduction to the patterns, causes, prevention, assessment, and treatment of addiction. Introduces core functions of addiction counseling from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration's Technical Assistance Publication (TAP) 21 series.

ACG 7200 - Patient Identities and Experiences in Addiction Counseling (3)
Study of patient identities and experiences related to counseling clients with various backgrounds, beliefs, and concerns. Includes a focus on addiction counseling theories and techniques and how they are applied to counseling clients.

ACG 7300 - Law and Ethics in Addiction Counseling (3)
Study of the ethical, legal, and professional concerns in the practice of addiction counseling.

ACG 7400 - Theories and Practices of Groups in Addiction Counseling (3)
Examines group theories and techniques of observation, assessment, and facilitation in therapeutic groups.

ACG 7500 - Methods and Models of Research in Addiction Counseling (3)
Examination of the research and application of scientific methods to investigate, analyze, and develop solutions relative to addiction counseling.

ACG 8100 - Appraisal, Assessment and Treatment Planning in Addiction Counseling (3)
Preparation for the clinical practicum. Students expand their knowledge of the current edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), diagnostic categories, differential diagnosis, and treatment planning. Emphasis on the clinical interview and other initial assessment techniques and skills critical to selecting and evaluating treatment options for clients, including relapse and recovery planning.

ACG 8200 - Psychopharmacology and Addiction Counseling (3)
Study of the pharmacology of drug abuse/addiction concerns with additional examination of the use of medication in treatment interventions.

ACG 8300 - Co-Occuring Disorders (3)
Examines the current research on psychopathology and co-occuring disorders to include relapse and recovery, and how they impact addiction counseling.

ACG 8400/PYC 8082 - Fundamentals of Treatment of Trauma, Abuse and Deprivation (3)
Introductory course presenting an integrated view of effects on personality development of childhood trauma, abuse and deprivation. Therapeutic interventions examined.

ACG 8500 - Addiction Counseling in Family Systems (3)
Examines addiction in the context of the family system, including relapse and recovery. Emphasis on family systems theories and techniques of addiction counseling.

ACG 8600 - Practicum in Addiction Counseling (3)
Students participate in a seminar led by a faculty member. Provides the opportunity for the student to perform the activities of a regularly schedule employee in an addiction counseling setting and complete 150 contact hours, of which half will be direct contact.

ACG 8610 - Practicum in Addiction Counseling Continued (No Credit)
Continuation of ACG 8600. Students participate in a seminar led by a faculty member. Provides the opportunity for the student to perform the activities of a regularly scheduled employee in an addictions counseling setting and complete 150 contact hours, of which half will be direct contact.

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Program requirements reflected herein are current at time of printing but are subject to change at the discretion of the university. Consult the catalog for any curriculum changes and additional requirements. Some required courses may be met through transfer credit as determined by the advisor in consultation with the registrar. www.ottawa.edu/coursecatalog

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