

## Master of Arts Student Selection Factors

The Master of Arts Program (MAC) is mission-driven and is committed to educating competent and compassionate counselors from diverse backgrounds. Each application is reviewed holistically including assessment of the following factors:

- Ability to communicate, professionalism, problem-solving ability, and maturity
- Community service
- Has reflected on, and has a commitment to, social justice
- Motivation to become a mental health counselor
- Review of overall scholastic record, including GPA from undergraduate programs
- Review of direct, volunteer experience in diverse community settings
- Review of professional letters of recommendation
- Review of personal statements, and, if needed, supplemental statements

MAC strongly encourages applications from persons from all socioeconomic, racial, ethnic, gender, sexual identification, abilities, ages, and religious backgrounds.

## What MAC Looks for in an Applicant

This information is meant as an overview of the strengths of common competitive applicants, not to capture all acceptable or required elements in an application. Not all listed items are required to be a successful applicant to the MAC program, but all recommendations are designed to help applicants best prepare a competitive application.

**Academic History:** A competitive MAC applicant will have a comprehensive social science background. GPAs will be at or above a 2.75, although MAC

will provide conditional admissions for lower GPAs if other strengths support conditional acceptance.

**Volunteerism:** Competitive MAC applicants will have a history of volunteerism and connection to diverse communities including social/economic, disability, LGBTQ+, BIPOC and other marginalized groups.

**References:** A competitive MAC applicant will have 2-3 recent references from professionals who can comment on qualifications and aptitude for the counseling profession. The best references will be comprehensive from a source that knows the applicant well.

**Personal Statements:** Competitive MAC applicants use the personal statement to clearly explain their goals in becoming a counselor, including their understanding of the profession. The best personal statement will demonstrate:

- Strong writing abilities (good grammar, spelling, and organized)
- Personal insight
- Why they chose counseling over other helping professions and why MAC at City University of Seattle
- Address issues with the appropriate professional demeanor
- Boundaries when revealing personal information
- Something about the applicant that is not apparent in other sections of the application

## Interviews

Candidates chosen for interviews will be considered based on the following:

- Demonstrates that they have thought about and are committed to social justice
- Can show that they are interested in making a difference in the lives of families and communities
- Understands the intersection of race, class, gender, ability, and sexual orientation and the impact it has had on their lived experience
- Can clearly identify how being a mental health counselor aligns with their professional goals

- Identifies how their current support system will support them through the program
- Has had some experience working with diverse populations
- Demonstrates good insight and is aware of their strengths and where they need to develop (e.g., has good empathy but needs to better understand how to differentiate their experiences from others)
- Understands the financial impact & obligations of attending grad school

Remember, MAC is looking for applicants who demonstrate that they are thoroughly prepared emotionally, psychologically, academically, and clinically to succeed in an intense, scientific, professional curriculum, where they will ultimately become qualified mental healthcare providers.