



Counseling & Art Therapy Program Admissions Guide

September 2025

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INTRODUCTION

These Admission Policies and Procedures serve as the definitive guide for applicants to the Counseling & Art Therapy program in the EVMS School of Health Professions at the Macon and Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences at Old Dominion University. Included are generic information about our program and specific admissions criteria and application data that relate to the current application cycle. These policies and procedures should be considered an adjunct to the Counseling & Art Therapy program Student Handbook, which contains in-depth information regarding the program and related policies. Applicants are also encouraged to fully explore the EVMS School of Health Professions website, including the Counseling & Art Therapy program page.

https://www.evms.edu/education/masters_programs/counseling_art_therapy/

The information herein is subject to periodic review and revision as deemed necessary by the program. Changes will be indicated by the revision date. *It is ultimately the applicant's responsibility to be aware of all application requirements and work with admissions staff to ensure a successful application.*

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Counseling & Art Therapy Program is in the EVMS School of Health Professions at the Macon and Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences at Old Dominion University. The Counseling & Art Therapy program (CAT) is a founding program of Eastern Virginia Medical School (EVMS) and the School of Health Professions (SHP). The program was founded in 1973 at the opening of EVMS with our first graduating class in 1975. The program evolved from a certificate program to one that offers a Master of Science in Art Therapy, then Art Therapy and Counseling, and today Counseling & Art Therapy, with the first master's degree students graduating in 1982. The program was accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) on September 20, 2020, for art therapy education. July 1, 2024, EVMS merged with Old Dominion University.

Located on the satellite campus of Old Dominion University's campus of Virginia Health Sciences, the Counseling & Art Therapy program utilizes innovative instructional methods in conjunction with our community's diverse resources to provide students with outstanding educational opportunities. The curriculum provides graduates with the knowledge and skills needed to participate in the delivery of mental health care as counselors and art therapists who are leaders in a changing healthcare industry. The program primarily identifies as a counseling program which prepares graduates to seek counseling licensure. The program

continues to teach integrated content in art therapy to prepare graduates to seek art therapy credentials.

The ODU Counseling & Art Therapy program is an academic program based in growth oriented and reflective classroom, studio, community, and clinical experiences. ODU's program is unique in its balance in clinical practice, research, reflective practices and art making. Our nationally and internationally renowned faculty have been preparing world class counselors and art therapists who are culturally responsive, community-involved, and ethical professionals with successful careers for over 52 years.

- Students are encouraged to develop their own theoretical approach informed by counseling theories to the practice of counseling and art therapy applied to diverse individuals, groups, families, communities, and settings.
- Builds students' identities as clinical mental health counselors by a focus on Clinical Mental Health Counseling (specialty area)
- Pre-practicum & internship clinical practice in assessment and basic skills with simulated patients.
- Practicum experience first semester of clinical mental health counseling practice.
- Internships provide students with three semesters (child, adolescent and adult) of hands-on experience in over 50 choices of settings throughout Hampton Roads for counseling practice and art therapy practice.
- The completion of a master's Capstone Project allows students to apply knowledge in the continuum of practice in counseling and art therapy, specialty areas of focus and research.
- Depth experiences with applied neuroscience to the use of art media in therapy to build art therapy skills and ethical practice.
- Areas of mental health counseling and art therapy sub-specializations include art therapy in the schools, medical art therapy, trauma informed care, research, and cultural humility.
- Personal art making is required and supported by our fully stocked, 2,000 square foot art-making studio which is conveniently located on campus and open to students around the clock.

Counseling Profession

A mental health profession in which a trained counselor facilitates verbal and experiential techniques in a professional relationship with diverse individuals, families, and/or groups to support mental health, wellness, career, and education goals.

Benefits of Counseling

Counseling assists individuals to develop a trusting relationship with others. It is the relationship between the counselor and client that establishes the foundation for change. The benefits of counseling vary depending on the needs of the client and the setting. Counseling can provide an opportunity for a client to become more self-aware, regulate emotions, reduce or manage symptoms, change or develop skills, and improve quality of life. Using verbal and non-verbal skills, techniques/experiments, and practice, the counselor assists the client to achieve optimal health.

A group of 31 counseling organizations including the American Counseling Association (ACA) developed a unified definition of counseling as part of [20/20: A Vision for the Future of Counseling](#). Counseling is defined as “a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals” ([American Counseling Association](#)).

The American Counseling Association (ACA) defines professional counselors as:

Professional counselors help people gain personal insights, develop strategies and come up with real solutions to the problems and challenges we all face in every area of life. As trained and credentialed professionals, they accomplish this by getting to know clients, by building safe, positive relationships and suggesting tools and techniques they believe will benefit clients. ([American Counseling Association](#))

Professional counselors are master's level mental health professions. Professional counselors may be nationally credentialed through the National Board for Certified Counselors as a National Certified Counselor (NCC). Professional counselors may pursue licensure to practice counseling based on individual state requirements.

Art Therapy Profession

Art therapy is a mental health profession facilitated by a trained credentialed art therapist, who prescribes creative processes and materials based in neuroscience in a therapeutic relationship to support diverse individuals, groups, families, and communities to meet goals of fostering psychological, social, behavioral, and cognitive growth for optimal health.

An art therapist is a mental health professional who is a graduate of an art therapy education program. An art therapist may be nationally credentialed through the Art Therapy Credentials Board as a Registered Art Therapist (ATR) with Board Certification (ATR-BC). Art therapists are master's level mental health professionals working in a variety of settings to help people address their health and well-being.

Benefits of Art Therapy

Art Therapy benefits a variety of populations not limited to any classification or diagnosis. Art therapy may be beneficial across the continuum of mental health care and wellness services including community arts engagement, psychoeducation, art as therapy, and art psychotherapy.

During art therapy, the art therapist facilitates the process of art making and the processing of resulting products. The benefits of art making may be the process as a metaphor for client functioning, process to learn new skills, new insights, and/or creative problem solving, experiential non-verbal exploration and communication, self-reflection skills, and self-awareness. Sublimation of internal energies may occur in the process of art making and fosters symbolic processing. The state of flow may occur during the process of art making. Processes in art therapy can assist with recalibrating the brain for healing and resolve ambivalence about change. The benefits of the product may be a tangible representation of the client(s)'s experiences or object permanence which can provide safe distancing for awareness & insight of thoughts, feelings, and/or functioning. The product is a tangible view of self and provides focus for discussion, analysis, evaluation, change and progress in treatment and often externalizes isomorphic, internal, or unconscious content of the client's inner world. The product may be a safe container for difficult thoughts, feelings, and unconscious content. Art products may reveal functioning, coping mechanisms, and strengths. Art products offer the gestalt of the whole and its parts for analysis along with the benefits of projective art making.

The American Art Therapy Association defines the field this way:

Art therapy is a mental health profession in which clients, facilitated by the art therapist, use art media, the creative process, and the resulting artwork to explore their feelings, reconcile emotional conflicts, foster self-awareness, manage behavior and addictions, develop social skills, improve reality orientation, reduce anxiety, and increase self-esteem. A goal in art therapy is to improve or restore a client's functioning and his or her sense of personal well-being. Art therapy practice requires knowledge of visual art (drawing, painting, sculpture, and other art forms) and the creative process, as well as of human development, psychological, and counseling theories and techniques.

Today art therapy is widely practiced in a wide variety of settings including hospitals, psychiatric and rehabilitation facilities, wellness centers, forensic institutions, schools, crisis centers, senior communities, private practice, and other clinical and community settings. During individual and/or group sessions art therapists elicit their clients' inherent capacity for art making to enhance their physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Research supports the use of art therapy within a professional relationship for the therapeutic benefits gained through artistic self-expression and reflection for individuals who experience illness, trauma, and mental health problems and those seeking personal growth. ([American Art Therapy Association](#))

Employment after Graduation

The CAT program supports the employment search of graduates through specific training in professionalism, resume writing, interviewing, and support with managing job search resources. The CAT program advertises job openings through emails to alumni and postings on social media. Counselors and art therapists are employed throughout the Hampton Roads region. Because we have a long-standing reputation in the community many graduates over the past 50 years have been hired in a variety of mental health, school, and hospital settings. The region in Hampton Roads is receptive to hiring counselors and art therapists in many mental health settings, however, the area receives much support from counseling and art therapy interns which may pose some limitations in obtaining employment. The CAT program does not guarantee employment because multiple factors contribute to an individual's preparedness for employment. Faculty provide references for students in good standing.

Licensure

The ODU Counseling & Art Therapy program prepares graduates to apply for licensure as professional counselors in Virginia and other states. We provide curriculum aligned with the eight core curriculum areas of counselor education. The program has a long-standing commitment to preparation of graduates for licensure as professional counselors as a primary identity. We do not guarantee individuals will attain licensure because there are additional requirements beyond the scope of the program to attain licensure and the requirements vary by state. In many states, mental health providers are required to be licensed to practice counseling and therapy.

Licensure supersedes credentials when practicing therapy.

The field is evolving and there is currently a national initiative for stand-alone Professional Art Therapist licensure. Some states have achieved this license, but currently it does not exist in Virginia.

Graduates often secure employment in positions that do not require credentials or licensure throughout the U.S. Independent practice as a sole proprietor in counseling or art therapy require licensure. Many organizations require employees providing mental health services be under supervision for licensure.

Registered Art Therapist Credential

As a program that is accredited by CAAHEP and considered an accredited program by the Art Therapy Credentials Board (ATCB), our graduates have an advantage over non-accredited programs as they pursue professional credentials through the Art Therapy Credentials Board. The Counseling and Art Therapy program prepares graduates for seeking the Registered Art Therapist (ATR) credential and Board Certification (BC). We do not guarantee individuals will attain ATR or ATR-BC because pursuit of the professional credentials begins after graduation. Our graduates can pursue the ATR-P, which is a provisional credential on the path to seeking the ATR.

ACCREDITATION STATUS

The ODU Counseling & Art Therapy program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) since September 20, 2020.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

ODU does not discriminate in the recruitment and admission of students on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, citizenship,

religion, political affiliation, or handicap as required by Title VI, Title IX and Section 504.

EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Counseling & Art Therapy program runs continuously for 5 semesters.

In the FIRST Year, the first sixteen-week semester incorporates classroom interaction with clinical skill development through experiential and didactic coursework (16 credit hours). In the second semester students continue with foundational coursework and experiential learning accessing our simulation center (16 credit hours). In the third semester students complete a 100-hour practicum in clinical mental health counseling and a 200-hour internship in art therapy spanning 14 weeks (4 credit hours).

Students complete a capstone project demonstrating excellence as applied to counseling and art therapy during the second year of study.

During the SECOND Year, students complete coursework (30-36 credit hours), internship experiences, and scholarly inquiry or research which form the basis of their professional development as counselors and in specialized art therapy practice.

Several electives are offered beginning the second semester of study through the end of the program.

Part-time course sequences are also offered.

Practicum and Internship sites are located throughout the Hampton Roads area. Students should plan to commute for some of their supervised internship experiences during their clinical training. Public transportation is not extensively available or adequate in the area; it is recommended to have an automobile to travel and live in Hampton Roads. Clinical placements may be up to 50 miles from the VHS-ODU campus.

Following graduation, graduates are recommended to complete supervised experience in the practice of counseling and take the National Counseling Exam (NCE) or National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE). Our program continues excellent pass rates on national exams and develops alumni with strong counselor identities and preparation leading to licensure.

In addition, following graduation, graduates are recommended to complete supervised experience in the practice of art therapy and the ATCB Board Certification exam.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Counseling & Art Therapy program provides a competency-based education for students desiring a graduate level counseling education experience that will prepare them for ethical clinical practice primarily as a counselor. The faculty serves as a resource and guide, and to encourage students as they grow from mental health learners to mental health providers.

The program provides competency-based education for student desiring a graduate level art therapy education experience that will prepare them for ethical and clinical practice in art therapy.

Our students develop strong counselor identities through growth-oriented and reflective classroom, studio, community, and clinical experience. Through specialized training, students develop specialized art therapy competencies. We prepare world class counselors and art therapists who are culturally responsive, community-involved, ethical professionals with successful careers.

TUITION AND FEES

The [tuition and fee](#) rates for the Counseling & Art Therapy program are set annually in June by the Board of Visitors and are subject to change without notice. Students must show proof of major medical insurance coverage. Students who are eligible for coverage under the policy of a parent or spouse are urged to do so. As an alternative, ODU offers a student health insurance plan.

FINANCIAL AID

The primary responsibility for the funding of students' education lies with them and their support systems. Financial aid is available to U.S. citizens and permanent residents. For more information, contact the [Office of Financial Aid](#).

PROGRAM SEQUENCE

The program is designed for students to complete the designated curriculum in the sequence specified. Each semester's course work is to be considered prerequisite to the next semester. Students may not enter the program with advanced standing, regardless of educational or work experience, and no accelerated curriculum or

course waivers are offered. Students participate as a cohort in which students matriculate and graduate as a class.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS AND EXTERNAL LINKS

Counseling & Art Therapy program Office – General	757.446.5895
Office of Admissions & Enrollment for the School of Health Professions	757.446.7096 757.446.7153
Office of Financial Aid	757.446.5813
Educational Outreach & Student Success	757.446.5869
Office of Student Disability Services	757.446.5638

The following links may be useful in learning more about the counseling profession:

- The American Counseling Association | <https://www.counseling.org/>
- The National Board for Certified Counselors | <https://www.nbcc.org/>

The following links may be useful in learning more about the art therapy profession:

- The American Art Therapy Association | www.arttherapy.org
- The Art Therapy Credentials Board | www.atcb.org

ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS & PROCESS

The following information represents the most comprehensive and up to date policies and standards for those interested in applying for the Counseling & Art Therapy program this admission cycle. Information herein replaces any former versions of this publication or prior admissions practices.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to be aware of the information in this document and meet all published deadlines and requirements to apply to our program. Applicants are encouraged to file applications by the February 15th deadline. Although we will consider later applications, submissions by February 15th are given priority. Please submit applications through the GradCAS. Please pay close attention to the instruction and deadlines in these admissions policies and procedures to assure a complete and competitive application.

Individuals with broad educational backgrounds, prior healthcare experience, and those who are underrepresented in the healthcare professions are encouraged to apply for admission.

Falsification or deliberate exclusion of information (personal or academic) during any portion of the application process will be cause for immediate withdrawal of your application for the current cycle and any future consideration for acceptance into the ODU Counseling & Art Therapy program.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The Counseling & Art Therapy program will extend offers of admission beginning January 1st until incoming class is full. An application file will be considered complete and reviewable by the Application Screening Committee after satisfactorily completing the following steps:

STEP 1: REVIEW ALL ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS OUTLINED BELOW

It is the applicant's responsibility to be familiar with the information contained in this publication (and any subsequent revisions applicable to this admission cycle) and to ensure they meet all the Admission Requirements outlined therein.

STEP 2: COMPLETE THE GradCAS APPLICATION

Go to the GradCAS website and follow the instructions for "submitting an application."

Applications are accepted beginning October 1st and are encouraged to be submitted by February 15th for entry into the class that will start the following August.

The Counseling & Art Therapy program reserves the right to verify credentials documented in the applicant's application.

Applicants should review and adhere to the GradCAS Applicant Responsibilities.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Autobiographical Statement

Applicants are asked to type *"a brief statement expressing your personal development and motivation leading to your desire to become a counselor and an art therapist,"* which should be written at a graduate level and demonstrate that you have an understanding of the counselors' role as a mental health professional and the art therapist's role as a mental health professional. (1 page no more than 1.5 pages, single spaced). **NOTE:** Applicants are also encouraged to explain any aspects of their application that may need further clarification (gaps in education or work history; academic inconsistency, difficulty or poor performance; etc.).

Letters of Reference

We require two (2) references. Both MUST be submitted before the application will be considered complete and reviewed by the Admission Screening Committee.

- References should be selected from individuals who are well acquainted with you academically over a period of time
- Reference letter or evaluation should comment on aptitudes for graduate study in counseling and art therapy (academics, counseling, psychology, art, writing, speaking).
- References from close friends and family members are unacceptable.

Contact the Counseling & Art Therapy program (VHS-CounselingandArtTherapy@odu.edu) if you have questions.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Prerequisites: Please note on the application the prerequisites you are currently taking and the expected date of completion.

Updating Completed Courses: If an applicant has already submitted the GradCAS application but has subsequently completed coursework that will fulfill the prerequisites, it is the applicant's responsibility to update the application by submitting current transcripts to the Office of Enrollment and notifying the Counseling & Art Therapy program by August 1st.

The applicant is REQUIRED to provide the following information:

- Explicit information detailing satisfactory completion for all pre-requisites (30 credits)
- Citizenship Status
- State Residency Declaration
- Determination of TOEFL requirement

APPLICATION TIMELINE & IMPORTANT DATES

It is the applicant's responsibility to follow up with GradCAS and ODU to make sure all requirements are met and documents received in a timely manner to comply with the published deadlines.

There are two options for admission: **Early Decision and Open Admissions.**

EARLY DECISION

Early Decision is for applicants who are prepared and are seeking the Counseling & Art Therapy program as their first choice for graduate study in counseling and art therapy. By applying for Early Decision, applicants may be accepted into the Counseling & Art Therapy program earlier than February 15th. An applicant accepting an Early Decision offer is firm in his/her decision to attend the Counseling & Art Therapy Program. Early Decision application does not guarantee an interview. Application for Early Decision gives the applicant an advantage of being reviewed by the Admissions Screening Committee before the February 15th recommended application submittal date.

Early Decision applications may be deferred to the Open Admissions application deadline at the discretion of the Admissions Screening Committee.

Early Decision requires applicants to have completed and/or be enrolled in prerequisite courses with expected completion by August 1st of the application year.

Early Decision Online Application Deadline: December 15th

Early Decision applicants must be in excellent academic standing evidence by the review of the Admissions Committee.

Early Decision applicants will be notified of their status of acceptance or deferral to the Open Admissions deadline. If notified of deferral status, applications will be reviewed with the Open Admissions applicants and follow Open Admissions deadlines.

OPEN ADMISSIONS

Open Admissions is for applicants applying to be considered during the regular admission cycle. Open Admissions applicants are strongly encouraged to submit all application materials before February 15th. Applicants submitting applications after February 15th may still be considered, however applicants with completed applications on or before February 15th are given priority for scheduling interviews.

IT IS BEST TO APPLY TO OUR PROGRAM AFTER YOU HAVE COMPLETED ALL PREREQUISITE COURSES OR ARE CURRENTLY ENROLLED IN PREREQUISITE COURSES WITH GOOD ACADEMIC STANDING.

EARLY ASSURANCE PROGRAM

To be eligible for the Early Assurance Program (EAP) with Regent and Virginia Wesleyan University, a student must:

- Be at least in their junior year with only one academic year left to complete in their undergraduate education when applying. Interested students should meet with the EAP Advisor during their freshman year or within the first semester of coursework to express interest in the EAP
 - Regent University EAP Advisor (advising@regent.edu | [757.352.4385](tel:757.352.4385));
 - Virginia Wesleyan University EAP Advisors:
 - Ms. Sharon Swift, Associate Professor of Art sswift@vwu.edu;
 - Dr. Taryn Myers, Associate Professor of Psychology tmyers@vwu.edu
- Meet citizenship requirements of the program;
- Meet all institutional and degree requirements to continue as a student in good standing;
- Have an overall (cumulative) GPA of 3.0 or better;
- Have no academic or other code of conduct violations;
- Follow the [Admission](#) guidelines;
- Have a pre-matriculation meeting with the program director during the spring semester before the fall matriculation date.

The guarantee of admission through the EAP is contingent upon the student's continued eligibility in the EAP.

ADMISSIONS PROCESS TIMELINE

Typically, the open places in each year's cohort fill quickly. The Counseling & Art Therapy program Admissions Screening Committee recommends meeting the earliest deadlines.

Application Cycle Opens	October 1st
<u>APPLICATION DEADLINES</u>	
Early Decision	December 15th
Open Admissions Application (recommended)	February 15th
Final Transcripts for Prerequisites	August 1st
Bachelor's Degree Completed	August 1 st
International applicants that require a student VISA	April 15th

Applications reviewed by Admissions Screening Committee*	December – May
Interview offers made to selected applicants: Early Decision and Open Admissions	January – May
Interviews: Early Decision and Open Admissions	January – May
Offers of Admission extended: Early Decision Open Admissions	February 15th – May March 30th – May
Acceptance of Admission Offer	10 calendar days
Matriculation & Orientation	3 rd week of August

*At the discretion of the Admissions Screening Committee, applications may be accepted after the deadlines

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Below is a brief checklist of the major components of the Admissions criteria that will be necessary to complete your application and be considered for a potential interview. Please select any of the hyperlinks for quick navigation to further information outlined in the Admission Requirements.

SELF-CHECK	REQUIREMENT
	<u>QUALIFYING GPA</u> (3.00 or better)
	<u>BACHELOR'S DEGREE</u> completed (no later than July 1st of the current year)
	All <u>PREREQUISITE COURSEWORK</u> satisfactorily completed (no later than August 1st)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Application (electronically submitted preferred by February 15th) • Application Fee • Official Transcript(s) from all academic institutions attended • Official GRE score report (optional) • Official TOEFL Scores • Two (2) References • Autobiographical Statement
	Official TRANSCRIPT(S) for any outstanding prerequisites, and/or proof of enrollment in prerequisite courses (submitted directly to GradCAS by August 1st)
	Review the <u>TECHNICAL STANDARDS</u> for the Counseling & Art Therapy Program at ODU.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

QUALIFYING GPA

All applicants must have a qualifying GPA described below at 3.00 or better (on a 4.0 scale) for consideration.

- Overall GPA = 3.00
- GPA in prerequisites = 3.00

NOTE: Although 3.00 is the minimum GPA required, the average qualifying GPA is generally 3.5 and higher GPAs are more competitive.

In limited instances, consideration for overall GPA below 3.0 is applied to applicants who have a variety of life experiences, strengths, and demonstrate aptitudes for graduate study in mental health through a holistic admissions lens.

BACHELOR'S DEGREE

Applicants must have completed all undergraduate degree requirements and have been issued a bachelor's degree prior to matriculating as an ODU student. If the bachelor's degree was issued by a U.S. college or university, as a general rule it should be from a regionally accredited institution. However, the Counseling & Art Therapy program may grant exceptions on a case-by-case basis. Official transcripts from the awarding institution must specify the date upon which the degree was issued.

FOREIGN DEGREES

Applicants with foreign degrees may be considered on a case-by-case basis. An official academic credential evaluation of the foreign transcript must be submitted. The evaluation must include the following components:

1. An OFFICIAL ACADEMIC CREDENTIAL EVALUATION of the foreign transcript. The evaluation must include the following components:

- Analysis of credentials to determine equivalence to an accredited U.S. Bachelor's degree
- Course by course translation, including information on course name, grade, & U.S. credit equivalency
- Overall performance in comparison to the standard U.S. grading system (i.e., GPA)

Although multiple companies provide translation services, an English translation without the appropriate information above will not be accepted in place of an academic credential evaluation.

Our preference is that you submit an evaluation completed by World Education Services, to provide us with the most complete picture of your previous educational background. Please see WES' website for additional requirements and costs, which are the responsibility of the applicant.

2. OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS of ALL coursework done in the U.S. educational system to date.

3. TOEFL SCORES: Due to the importance of communication in the English language for both learning and providing healthcare (see Technical Standards), the following applicants be required to provide acceptable TOEFL scores prior to matriculation:

1. All applicants with a foreign degree and English as a second language
2. Any applicant who entered the U.S. after the age of 12 from a non-English-speaking country of origin (as determined by high school graduation or personal statement).
 - Graduation with an undergraduate degree from a U.S. educational institution will not fulfill this requirement.

To ensure an ability to function at the graduate level in a clinical healthcare program, the following are expected minimal scores:

- Internet-based test (preferred): 85
- Computer-based test: 220
- Minimum of 25 in the speaking component
- Minimum of 25 in the writing component

There is no time frame requirement for when this exam is completed with the assumption that if an applicant has met the cutoff score at any point in the past, their English proficiency will continue to improve.

In certain rare circumstances, in-person interviews may be used to override the score requirements as determined by program faculty.

At the time of program interviews, if language issues are identified, further demonstration of English proficiency, to include TOEFL testing, may be requested as a condition of acceptance.

PREREQUISITE COURSEWORK

All 24 credits of prerequisite coursework must be completed at an accredited institution with a B/3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) or better for acceptance. Satisfactory completion of prerequisite coursework is documented via the official transcripts submitted to the online application. Applicants with grades lower than a B in any course are required to retake the course and submit official transcripts by the August 1st deadline.

The Counseling & Art Therapy program will review requests for transfer credits on a case-by-case basis.

- PREREQUISITE COURSEWORK MUST BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO THE AUGUST 1st TRANSCRIPT UPDATE DEADLINE.
- PROOF of enrollment in required prerequisite coursework during the summer term preceding matriculation will be accepted with official transcripts due immediately upon completion of coursework. (Satisfactory completion of coursework to a B average is required to complete admissions and matriculate at orientation with the assigned cohort).
- All prerequisite coursework must be listed on an official transcript submitted in GradCAS to complete your application. No offer of admission will be secure and complete until final transcripts have been submitted, reviewed,

and verified by the Counseling & Art Therapy program or the Office of Admissions & Enrollment.

- Applicants with grades below the minimum standard may apply. However, these applicants will be expected to retake prerequisite coursework falling below a B average. Applicants may be accepted on a conditional basis at the discretion of the Admissions Screening Committee.

NOTE: Secondary proof of completion (e.g., student copy of transcript or course final grades) may be accepted while awaiting official transcripts. Contact the Office of Admissions & Enrollment for further information (vhs-hpadmissions@odu.edu | 757.446.7437 | 757.446.7096)

Prerequisite Course	Minimum Credit Hours		MINIMUM Grade Accepted	Self-Check
	Semester	Quarter		
(12) semester credit hours in Psychology*	12	20	B	
Developmental Psychology*	3	5	B	
Abnormal Psychology*	3	5	B	
Additional Psychology Course	3	5	B	
Additional Psychology Course	3	5	B	
(12) semester credit hours in Studio Art	12	20	B	
Painting*	3	5	B or portfolio	
Drawing*	3	5	B or portfolio	
Sculpture/ 3-D*	3	5	B or portfolio	

Clay or Ceramics*	3	5	B or portfolio	
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*required

** Quarter system credit hours are converted to semester system by dividing by 1.5 (e.g., 6 quarter credits/1.5 = 4 semester credits)

MINIMAL EXPECTED CONTENT for PREREQUISITES:

Although the prerequisite courses are fairly universal, there are a wide variety of names for courses among undergraduate programs. In general, if the name of the course is titled like the prerequisite requirements listed, it will be acceptable.

Psychology Coursework

- 6 semester credit hours in Psychology (must include developmental, abnormal) and
- 6 optional psychology semester credit hours in psychology and/or human services related field.

Studio Art Coursework or equivalency

- 12 semester credit hours in Studio Art (must include painting, drawing, sculpture/3-D and clay/ceramics) [recommended] or
- Portfolio equivalency in Painting, Drawing, Sculpture/3D, and/or Clay/ceramics [considered for review by the Admissions Committee]
 - Satisfaction of prerequisite competencies in studio art may be demonstrated by competencies through portfolio review
 - Applicants must submit a portfolio of at least 6 artworks in the category for prerequisite review (i.e., 6 artworks in Painting for painting coursework equivalency).
 - Artworks must display adequate to proficient skills in the use of the media and formal elements and principles of design.
- A combination of coursework and portfolio equivalency may be considered for review by the Admissions Committee.

NOTE: Courses that cover multiple disciplines and content areas (e.g., “survey” courses) are generally discouraged as the depth of content is not adequate.

If you have specific questions regarding the acceptability of a course, please submit a course description from the institution catalog to the Program Director for review. Additional information (e.g. course syllabus, lecture/topic list, etc.) may be requested in cases of continued uncertainty.

Below are further general descriptions to help identify acceptable courses.

PREREQUISITE COURSE	EXPECTED CONTENT
Drawing	A foundation course with the emphasis on the formal and conceptual nature of drawing.
Painting	An introduction to the use of paints with an emphasis on the organization of the artistic image, using plastic form and color, coupled with analysis of historical and contemporary work.
Sculpture/ 3-D	Effective expression of ideas in 3-D form. The student is introduced to the basic tools, 3-D materials and techniques with attention given to problem-solving. A study of contemporary technology, philosophy, criticism and their relation to material resources and technical practices.
Clay/Ceramics	Introduction to beginning processes of wheel throwing and hand-built construction techniques, design, aesthetics, and the creative development of clay objects examining cultural, historical and personal modes of expression. Students will be introduced to various ceramic aesthetics in contemporary, social and historical context.
Abnormal Psychology	Development of personality is discussed, with emphasis on factors leading to maladjustment. Lectures and reading cover the symptom groups of emotional disorders of both psychological and organic origin. Methods of assessing and treating these disorders are surveyed.
Developmental Psychology Human Growth and Development Lifespan Development	Reviews the basic concepts and principles of physical, cognitive, and social development at each major stage of life-prenatal, infancy, toddlerhood, preschool, middle childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age. Consideration is given to the study of development at each stage of life and to different theoretical explanations for development.

TECHNICAL STANDARDS

1.0 Observation Skills Technical Standard

1.01 Demonstrate sufficient attention and accuracy in observation skills (visual, auditory, and tactile) in the classroom, lecture hall, studio, and internship settings.

1.02 Indicators include, but are not limited to, these examples:

- a. Accurate observations of a patient near and at a distance; recognizing non-verbal and verbal signs.
- b. Accurate identification of differences in color, texture, shape, and other formal elements of artwork.
- c. Accurate visualization and discrimination of text, numbers, patterns, graphic illustrations, and key characteristics of other images.

2.0 Communication Skills Technical Standard

2.01 Demonstrate effective communication skills with all ages and genders of patients who have a variety of diagnoses, disabilities, cultures, ethnicities, and personalities.

2.02 Indicators include, but are not limited to, these examples:

- a. Clear, efficient, and intelligible articulation of verbal language.
- b. Legible, efficient, and intelligible written English language.
- c. Accurate and efficient reading skills (English language).
- d. Ability to prepare and communicate concise oral and written summaries of patient encounters.
- e. Ability to accurately follow oral and written directions.

3.0 Critical Reasoning Skills Technical Standard

3.01 Demonstrate critical reasoning skills, including, but not limited to, intellectual, conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities.

3.02 Indicators include, but are not limited to, these examples:

- a. Demonstrate ability to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate, and synthesize information.
- b. Demonstrate ability to acquire, retain, and apply new and learned information.
- c. Demonstrate appropriate judgment in patient assessment, diagnosis, monitoring, and evaluation, including planning, time management, and choice of counseling techniques and art materials.

4.0 Motor and Sensory Function Technical Standard

4.01 Demonstrate sufficient motor and sensory function to perform typical functions of counselors and art therapists, including, but not limited to, assessments, evaluations, and work with communities, individual, group, and family treatment, psychoeducation, and wellness activities.

4.02 Indicators include, but are not limited to, these examples:

- a. Functional and sufficient sensory capacity (visual, auditory, and tactile) to adequately perform intake interviews, risk assessment, common assessments & measures, and projective assessments.
- b. Execute motor movements to assess patients, provide assistance with techniques, and implement basic counseling techniques & art therapy processes.
- c. Execute motor movements that demonstrate safety and efficiency in the various learning settings (i.e., classroom, lecture hall, and clinical settings).
- d. Properly use materials, art materials, and tools for facilitating counseling and art making, including but not limited to, writing, drawing implements, brushes, clay tools, glue guns, etc.
- e. Physical stamina sufficient to complete the rigorous course of didactic and clinical study, which may include prolonged periods of sitting, standing, and/or rapid ambulation.

5.0 Behavioral and Social Attributes Technical Standard

5.01 Demonstrate the behavioral and social attributes vital to participation in a professional program and service as a practicing professional counselor and art therapist.

5.02 Indicators include, but are not limited to, these examples:

- a. Possess the emotional health required for full utilization of mental faculties (judgment, orientation, affect, and cognition).
- b. Ability to develop mature and effective professional relationships with faculty, patients, the public, and other members of the health care team.
- c. Possess personal qualities that facilitate effective therapeutic interactions (compassion, empathy, integrity, honesty, benevolence, confidentiality).
- d. Demonstrate objectivity and impartial motives, attitudes, and values in roles, functions, and relationships.
- e. Ability to monitor and react appropriately to one's own emotional needs and responses, including and not limited to seeking support, accessing resources, and/or seeking counseling or therapy.
- f. Display appropriate flexibility and adaptability in the face of stress or uncertainty associated with clinical encounters and clinical environments.
- g. Compliance with standards, policies, and practices set forth in the Counseling & Art Therapy Student Handbook

ADMISSIONS CONSULTATIONS

Please contact the Counseling & Art Therapy program for specific questions or consultation needs.

NOTE: This opportunity is NOT AVAILABLE to applicants who have already applied in the current cycle and still awaiting a final decision on their application file.

NOTIFICATION & COMMUNICATION

Upon submission of any of the application requirements, applicants will receive electronic notification of their application status from the Office of Admissions and Enrollment. Due to the high volume of applications, e-mail is the best mode of communication. You are required to regularly check your account and update the Counseling & Art Therapy program in a reasonable period of time with regard to any e-mail address changes. Failure to respond to program requests in a timely manner may result in loss of eligibility for program admission.

NOTE: The months of January to March and July to September are the busiest in the Office of Admissions and Enrollment, which may limit the ability of staff to respond to individual questions about the admissions process or an individual application. Updates to your online application status may also be slower during this period due to the influx of applications.

GENERAL REVIEW PROCESS

Completed and verified online applications are forwarded to the program by the online application system. Although we begin accepting applications October 1st, the Admissions Screening Committee may not begin processing applications for the current cycle until December 1st.

Following the receipt of all required documents, an application is first evaluated for completeness and consistency by the Office of Admissions and Enrollment and designated staff. A second review for compliance with program requirements and selection for personal interview is performed by the Admissions Screening Committee.

NOTE: Meeting the minimum requirements does not guarantee an invitation for an interview

NOTICE OF INTERVIEWS

Competitive applicants will be invited to participate in full-day interviews that are scheduled from January to May to assess interpersonal and communication skills, maturity, and understanding and commitment to an art therapy career and the Counseling & Art Therapy program's mission and values.

Interviews will be held virtually, and candidates will be given no less than two weeks' notice to facilitate the necessary arrangements to participate. Absence or withdrawal from the interview automatically places the applicant at risk for forfeiture of consideration for a place in the class.

The full-day interview may include but is not limited to the following:

- Brief description of the Counseling & Art Therapy program
- Meeting with the Program Director
- Completing a writing sample
- Individual interview with a faculty member
- Meet with Current student(s)
- Group Portfolio Review- Submit a digital portfolio in the format of a Word PowerPoint (.ppt). Create a PowerPoint that includes 8-10 images of your artwork that display your development in art making. These images should demonstrate competency in a variety of media and an understanding of personal expression. Each artwork should include a title, size, and media. It is recommended that you compress images in JPEG format to no larger than 1200 x1200.

ACCEPTANCE INTO THE PROGRAM

Notification of acceptance into the ODU Counseling & Art Therapy program will be provided within two (2) weeks of interview. Applicants offered a place in the August class must accept the admissions offer within ten (10) calendar days of their notification by providing the following:

1. An electronic response to the Admissions Offer and Conditions of Acceptance letter.
2. A non-refundable acceptance deposit (\$300) to hold a place in the class and which will be applied toward tuition.

WAIVER

The Admission Committee considers multiple factors that contribute to a comprehensive view of each applicant. At times, the Admission Committee may recommend an applicant for admission that is below the above stated minimum

requirements resulting in a Waiver of an admissions requirement. Below are examples of possible and not guaranteed conditions for waiver:

1. A waiver may be granted for an applicant whose GPA is below 3.0 when the applicant's transcript documents consistent 3.0 average GPA during the last 2 years of 4 years of study, the prerequisite coursework combined GPA is 3.0 or above, the applicant explains the discrepancy in the personal statement, interview, or upon being asked, and the applicant excels in other areas of the application or interview process.
2. A waiver may be granted for prerequisite coursework for an applicant who has earned and documented an advanced degree (Master's, Education Specialist, and Doctor of Philosophy) and the applicant can demonstrate competency in the content area as requested by the Admission Committee.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Students accepting the Admissions Offer and enrolling in the Counseling & Art Therapy program at ODU must submit all required health documentation. Completion of all health requirements is required prior to matriculation.

MATRICULATION REQUIREMENTS

As a new student to ODU, there are a few additional steps that will be required to complete your matriculation status.

1. Health Requirements

Accepted applicants must complete all health requirements **as soon as possible**. Failure to meet this requirement by the start of class may impact your enrollment status. Accepted applicants are encouraged to begin working specifically to complete the Hepatitis B requirement immediately upon acceptance as it has the most potential for delaying the completion of the healthcare requirement. The healthcare requirements are [listed here](#). Use your EVMS credentials to access the [Student Health Immunization Portal](#). Questions related to these requirements should be directed to the VHS Student Health via [e-mail](#) or telephone at 757-446-5700.

2. Criminal Background Check

All students residing in the United States and Canada must submit a criminal background check as part of your Conditions of Acceptance within 10 days of accepting your offer. Please access the [Criminal Background Check site](#) to complete this process. Do not submit your background check more than once.

3. Acknowledge and Submit Compliance Documents

All incoming students are required to acknowledge and adhere to the Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences at Old Dominion University Compliance Requirements within 10 days of accepting their offer. Click [here](#) and select the Acknowledge and Submit Compliance Documents tab to complete this task. If you have already completed this task, you will not see the tab.

4. Register for Parking

Students who plan to park on campus must register for parking. If you have questions about parking please contact Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences at Old Dominion University Parking at parking@evms.edu. Click [here](#) and select the Register for Parking tab to complete this task. If you have already completed this task, you will not see the tab.

5. Submit your Social Security Number

Please submit within 10 days of accepting your offer. This will be held confidentially and is required from all incoming students. Additionally, this information is necessary for students who are applying for institutional and federal aid or scholarships. If you have additional questions, contact Financial Aid at VHS-finaid@odu.edu. Click [here](#) and select the bolded Submit your Social Security Number link to complete this task. If you have already completed this task, the link will disappear from the left-hand menu in your PURL. If you have questions as to whether your social security number has been received, please email VHS-HPAdmissions@odu.edu.

6. Financial Aid

Complete the Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at <https://studentaid.gov/>. Include ODU's Title IV School **Code 003728**. Approximately 30 days before your program/cohort's academic year begins, an eligibility notice will be posted to your [Student Information System \(mySIS\)](#).

7. Online Orientation

The online orientation will introduce you to the Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences community and things you should know about the institution. You can access the online orientation [here](#) using your credentials.

8. Register for Classes

You are required to register for classes before matriculation. Failure to register will impact your enrollment in the program. You can access registration [here](#) using your EVMS credentials.

9. Annual Student Compliance Training

All incoming students must complete the MJB Virginia Health Sciences Annual Student Compliance Training course in [Canvas](#) using your MIDAS/ODU Credentials. You must get a score of 80% in each compliance module (except Title IX module) to pass the course. The modules are as follows:

- Bloodborne Pathogen
- Compliance
- HIPAA
- Title IX (no quiz)

10. Final transcripts

If you have pending coursework or degree requirements, you must send your final transcripts to [GRADCAS](#). Follow the instruction below on how to send your transcripts.

Sending Transcripts Electronically

GradCAS only accepts electronic transcripts from [Parchment](#), and [National Student Clearinghouse](#). If your school does not offer any of these services, your transcript must be sent by mail.

Sending Transcripts by Mail

1. Contact the registrar at each institution you attended, and request one transcript be sent to GradCAS.
2. Provide the registrar with the following items:
 - GradCAS Transcript ID Form. Ask the registrar to attach it to your official transcripts. This form is not required but strongly recommended as it helps ensure your official transcripts are properly matched to your application. If you cannot use this form, make sure the registrar prints "GradCAS" and your full GradCAS ID number on the transcript before mailing it.
 - Any school-specific forms required by the registrar.
 - Any transcript fees required by the registrar.
 - All information needed by the registrar to properly identify you in the school's database.
 - Any name changes.
 - Your GradCAS ID number.

Your registrar should mail your paper transcripts to the following address:

GradCAS Transcript Processing Center

PO Box 9217

Watertown, MA 02471

ORIENTATION

Applicants who have accepted a place in the program are required to attend orientation in mid-August. This 2-to-4-day event includes critical information about the institution and our program and provides students with the necessary means of accessing campus parking lots, buildings, computer network, and other functions critical to a smooth transition into the academic schedule.

NOTE: Noncompliance with criminal background check, health requirements, or attendance at orientation may be cause for revocation of admission offer.

WAIT LIST STATUS

Students who are not offered a place in the program following the interviews may be placed on a wait list at the recommendation of the Admissions Screening Committee and/or the Program Director. The wait list is activated as necessary by the Program Director. Rank or position on the wait list will not be disclosed to candidates.

A wait list is valid from the close of the interview process until Orientation for the year for which the student applied. Wait listed applicants not advanced to a place in the upcoming class may be considered for admission in the following year based on an acceptable ranking. Wait listed applicants may be offered a deferment in acceptance or may be asked to submit a letter of request to be considered with the next year's applicants. Consultation with the Office of Admissions and Enrollment or Program Director is recommended in those cases.

DEFERMENT POLICY

Questions about deferment of admission are only entertained before matriculation and in such cases where unpredicted life circumstance may interfere with expected matriculation or success in the program. The Counseling & Art Therapy program reserves the right to determine if the request warrants deferment or if the candidate will need to reapply in a future admission cycle. Deferment of acceptance may be granted for up to one (1) year; after one (1) accepted applicants must reapply.

REAPPLICATION

Applicants who are not accepted to the Counseling & Art Therapy program are encouraged to self-evaluate their application (and interview if granted) to identify areas that can be improved. The Counseling & Art Therapy program at ODU encourages reapplication once a serious effort has been made to remedy any deficiencies. Such an effort by an applicant is viewed by the Admissions Committee as an indication of motivation and perseverance.

Consultations with admissions staff to discuss ways to strengthen your application to our program are available.

MACON & JOAN BROCK VIRGINIA HEALTH SCIENCES at OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

EVMS SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Situated in the bustling port city of Norfolk, Virginia, near the outlet of the Chesapeake Bay, EVMS School of Health Professions is part of the Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences campus, which contains two hospitals and a number of EVMS-related institutes and centers.

Students are immersed in their studies while attending a school with a wide range of programs in the School of Health Professions or the Medical School. Currently, the growing School of Health Professions has 700 plus students, and the medical school has approximately 450 students.

MISSION

Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences at Old Dominion University is an academic health center dedicated to achieving excellence in medical and health professions education, research and patient care. We value creating and fostering a diverse and cohesive faculty, professional staff and student body as the surest way to achieve our mission. Adhering to the highest ethical standards, we will strive to improve the health of our community and to be recognized as a national center of intellectual and clinical strength in medicine and Health Professions. Our commitment to ensuring institutional effectiveness is demonstrated by the continuous assessment processes we use to improve program performance and student learning outcomes.

VISION

Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences at Old Dominion University will be recognized as the most community-oriented school of medicine and health professions in the United States.

VALUES

Three core values drive our daily efforts:

- Excellence: We determine with our stakeholders what is valuable and hold ourselves to high performance standards that fulfill our promises.
- Collegiality: We serve our community and one another, building strong and mutually supportive relationships. We work as a cooperative, united team to further our purposes of education, research, and patient care.
- Integrity: We strive to maintain the highest ethical standards and accept accountability for all we do and say.

Counseling & Art Therapy program

Counseling Goals and Objectives

- Prepare competent entry-level Counselors in the knowledge, skills, awareness, actions, and professional dispositions learning domains.
- Prepare counselors with clinical competence in assessment, diagnosis, and treatment planning, which includes fostering skills in therapeutic use of a broad range of art processes and materials, integrative theoretical approaches, and requisite education needed for counseling licensure.
- Prepare counselors to speak and write professionally about mental health services.
- Encourage students to develop an innovative, professional, ethical, research minded, and culturally responsive approach to counseling through academic inquiry and self-reflection for self-awareness.

Art Therapy Goals and Objectives

- Prepare competent entry-level Art Therapists in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (attitudes & behavior) learning domains.
- Prepare art therapists with clinical competence in assessment, diagnosis, and treatment planning, which includes fostering skills in therapeutic use of a broad range of art processes and materials, integrative theoretical approaches, and requisite education needed for counseling licensure.
- Prepare art therapists to speak and write professionally about mental health services.
- Encourage students to develop an innovative, professional, ethical, research minded, and culturally responsive approach to art therapy through academic inquiry and personal art making and self-reflection for self-awareness.

Accomplishment of our goals will serve the:

- **Student**, by fostering personal and professional discovery and development with the skills to become life-long learners.

- **Client/patient**, through student preparation to provide competent client/patient-centered primary and specialty care.
- **Institution**, by contributing to a seamless learning environment which fosters the development of competent and compassionate mental healthcare professionals.
- **Community**, by graduating professionals who understand the importance of community service, forging community alliances, and understanding culturally appropriate care.
- **World**, by graduating culturally humble professionals who practice across the globe and contribute to research and social action.

STATEMENT FOR DIVERSITY

The education, research and patient care mission of Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences at Old Dominion University is shaped by many considerations: the demographics of the surrounding communities, the significant presence of military personnel, retirees and their families, the rural and underserved communities of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the broader national and global need to address gaps in the health workforce and the accessibility of health care.

Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences at Old Dominion University has a unique history as one of the few institutions in the United States established by the local community to serve the local community. Indeed, its vision is to be the most community-oriented school of medicine and health professions in the nation. In fulfilling that vision, our institution strives to attract talented students, trainees, faculty, staff and leaders who bring diverse attributes and experience to drive our collective commitment to excellence.

Our institution embraces diversity broadly defined but places a special emphasis on recruitment of women and traditionally underrepresented minorities in medicine and the health professions. This includes individuals from various racial and ethnic backgrounds, with differing gender identities and expressions, veterans and individuals who come from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds. Acknowledging that diversity is a fluid and evolving concept, we will continually strive to be inclusive of individuals and groups in the broadest possible manner.

Adopted: June 11, 2013

Updated: Dec. 13, 2022