

Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology

كلية الدراسات الإسلامية
College of Islamic Studies
جامعة حمد بن خليفة
HAMAD BIN KHALIFA UNIVERSITY



Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology

The Master of Arts (MA) in Counseling Psychology is uniquely offered within an Islamically integrated framework. It aspires to fill an urgent need for more trained mental health practitioners who are cognizant and capable of effectively integrating the religious sensitivities of Muslim populations into mental health care treatment.

Students are trained within a curriculum structure that is consistent with international competency standards for mental health practitioners for potential licensure anywhere in the world. In addition, under the guidance of internationally recognized faculty in the field, students have unique training opportunities to build their clinical experience—both on-site at the psychology training clinic housed within CIS as well as off-site through the program’s external mental healthcare partners.

The holistic approach of the program aims to produce a generation of scholars and practitioners to enrich the nascent field of Islamic psychology both locally and globally.

Program Focus

The MA program in Counseling Psychology aims to utilize the rich Islamic academic atmosphere of CIS to advance clinical training and scholarship that is Islamically oriented and integrated. Students will have the opportunity to train under internationally distinguished faculty and develop a research focus that speaks to their interests and addresses the gaps in current practice.

Curriculum

A 55-credit degree program taught over 2.5 years* in English, that includes:

Fourteen core courses (42 credits)

- ▶ Advanced Techniques and Interventions
- ▶ Appraisal and Psychological Assessment Methods
- ▶ Career and School Counseling
- ▶ Cross-Cultural Psychotherapy
- ▶ Ethical, Professional, and Legal Issues in Psychology
- ▶ Foundations of Islamic Sciences
- ▶ Group Therapy
- ▶ Human Growth and Development
- ▶ Introduction to Psychotherapy and Counseling Theories
- ▶ Introduction to Psychology in the Islamic Tradition
- ▶ Marital and Family Therapy
- ▶ Psychopathology and Diagnosis
- ▶ Research and Program Evaluation
- ▶ Substance Abuse and Addictions

Practicum (1 credit)

Internship I and II (6 credits)

Thesis or Research Project (6 credits)

*Students have the opportunity to fast-track their studies by completing all requirements within two years, or extending their study to a maximum of three years.

Core Courses

Code	Credits	Course Title	Description
PSY 600	3 credits	Introduction to Psychology in the Islamic Tradition	This course provides a survey of the Islamic intellectual heritage as it pertains to the subject matter of psychology. The focus of the course is to provide familiarity with the classical Islamic scholarly literature, drawing directly from its primary sources allowing students to have direct exposure to the style of writings found across different Islamic scholarly disciplines. The primary sources discussed in this course are largely drawn from the following classical fields: Tibb, Falsafa, Tasawwuf, Kalam, and Fiqh. The style of the course combines both lectures and readings directly from the original text, with the instructor’s commentary engaging in discussions around the convergence and divergence between these texts and Islamic traditions.
PSY 601	3 credits	Foundations of Islamic Sciences	This course covers the foundations of the Islamic sciences. The focus of the course is to provide familiarity with the core Islamic sciences, discussing the aims, scope, and methods of each respective Islamic discipline. This allows students to have a foundational understanding of the core Islamic sciences. It includes knowledge of the Quran, Hadith, Islamic law, discursive theology (Kalam), and the science of Islamic spirituality (Tasawwuf). There are also discussions and references made to auxiliary sciences such as philosophy, logic, and medicine. The course examines connections between these various Islamic disciplines and the field of psychology.
PSY 602	3 credits	Psychopathology and Diagnosis	This course introduces participants to the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of mental disorders as defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5 th Edition (DSM-5, 2013) classification system. In addition to differential diagnoses using the DSM-5, the course addresses the current understanding of etiology, prevention, and treatment issues related to psychopathology.
PSY 603	3 credits	Appraisal and Psychological Assessment Methods	This course introduces students to the basic concepts of standardized and non-standardized testing and other psychological and cognitive assessment techniques, including norm-referenced and criterion-referenced assessment, character and virtue evaluation, environmental assessment, performance assessment, individual and group tests and inventory methods, psychological testing, behavioral observations, and clinical interviewing. Students are oriented to methods of integrating the data collected from these assessments in order to answer diagnostic questions and referral questions sent to them by courts, schools, or other healthcare providers. Students are also oriented to effective report writing.
PSY 604	3 credits	Introduction to Psychotherapy and Counseling Theories	This course begins with a survey of various counseling theories in order to provide a diverse range of tools for professional practice for mental health professionals. Counseling practices related to specific theoretical orientations are presented and critically evaluated. After a review of mainstream counseling theories and practices, the course explores Islamically integrative orientations to psychotherapy, including foundational tenets and principles of Islamically integrative models, with a discussion of Islamic epistemology and the presentation of an Islamic ontological framework of the human psyche. The course provides students with concrete skills for conceptualizing and treating psychological disorders using this Islamically integrative model.

Core Courses (continued)

PSY 605	3 credits	Cross-Cultural Psychotherapy	This course examines patient diversity with respect to ethnographic, demographic, and status variables, and challenges culturally biased stereotypes that may adversely influence the provision of mental health services. The course explores models and approaches of multicultural psychotherapy; cultural and religious identity development; the role of culture in the expressions of psychopathology, health, and well-being; and the delivery of mental health services to diverse populations within Muslim populations and other cultures. Additionally, the course teaches skills of cultural attunement and adaptation of interventions, and emphasizes the consideration of cultural factors during diagnosis and assessment.
PSY 606	3 credits	Group Therapy	This course examines the basic principles of group dynamics and the applications of those principles to group therapy from different theoretical perspectives. It considers how groups are formed and sustained, how change occurs in groups, and how the group leader facilitates that change. The course examines the phases of group development from inception to termination and the various factors involved at each stage of development. A substantial component of the course is experiential, where students participate in a group process experience, during which each student is a group member.
PSY 607	3 credits	Ethical, Professional, and Legal Issues in Psychology	This course provides a survey of the practice of psychology and counseling from an ethical and legal perspective. It reviews a range of domains, including the ethical guidelines for professional practice, mental health laws, ethical case studies, and professional best practices. Students are oriented to Islamic ethical and professional conduct guidelines for mental health practitioners. Ethical dilemmas at the interface between Islamic values and international professional codes of ethics are also explored, with a focus on reconciliatory strategies.
PSY 608	3 credits	Career and School Counseling	This course introduces students to career and school counseling theories, assessment tools and techniques, and the application of theories to working with individuals within the context of different educational and vocational settings. The knowledge and application of career development theories and vocational counseling are covered. A review of modern decision-making models, career planning, career education, and sources of educational and occupational information are covered in depth. Additionally, the course examines the mental health needs of students in early childhood, elementary, middle, and high school settings, including etiology, symptomatology, treatment approaches, and crisis intervention strategies.
PSY 609	3 credits	Substance Abuse and Addictions	This course is designed to provide a supportive, structured learning environment for acquiring substance use and addictive behavior counseling skills. The course provides students with an understanding of the physiological and psychological effects of drugs and the significance of treatment planning in diverse settings. It helps students use the knowledge of individual, group, and family counseling strategies as they are applied to behavior change and relapse prevention. Students learn about the diagnostic criteria of substance use and addictive behaviors, models of etiology, and approaches to treatment.
PSY 700	3 credits	Marital and Family Therapy	This course surveys the development and principal conceptualizations of marital and family therapy. Goals include an introductory examination and comparison of various theories currently employed in the field. Subject areas that are covered include the various schools of family therapy, along with current trends and issues in marriage and family therapy with a focus on the Muslim family. Islamic family and marital therapy models are also explored with a focus on reinforcing Islamic family values and the incorporation of Islamically integrated strategies and interventions for strengthening marriages and the family unit.

Core Courses (continued)

PSY 701	3 credits	Research and Program Evaluation	This course is designed to introduce students to quantitative and qualitative methods of research in the field. It acquaints students with the language and tools of various research methods, statistics, and program evaluation as they serve to inform the counseling psychology practitioner. Principles, models, and applications of various research and program evaluation methodologies are explored, including needs assessments, survey and interview data, and statistical analyses of data. Additionally, students are oriented to an Islamic epistemology to help them identify, appraise, grade, reconcile, and interpret rational, empirical, and subjective self-reports and scriptural data in answering research questions in counseling psychology.
PSY 702	3 credits	Advanced Techniques and Interventions	This course builds upon PSY 604 Introduction to Psychotherapy and Counseling Theories to provide an advanced orientation to psychotherapy. The core principles of Islamically integrated psychotherapy are revisited with greater layers of application across a variety of therapeutic contexts and pathologies. The course focuses on advancing integrative skills and techniques to develop capabilities for treating psychological disorders using this model. More advanced interventions are highlighted that are designed to specifically target the elements of the Islamic ontological framework of the human psyche. This course includes a hands-on component that integrates role plays, live demonstrations of technique, and videos to optimize the learning experience for students.
PSY 703	3 credits	Human Growth and Development	This course discusses the physical, cognitive, social, emotional, spiritual, and moral development of humans across the lifespan, as well as the effects of important contexts (e.g., the family, schools, cultures, and peer groups) on developmental outcomes. Students gain a deeper understanding of transitions between major life phases and a broad knowledge of development within each life stage. Major theoretical perspectives in developmental and Islamic psychology are included as well. The course provides specific developmentally and culturally appropriate intervention assessments, supported by research, that are designed to enhance the growth and development of patients who seek psychotherapy. Additionally, both readings and in-class course content incorporate applications of this knowledge in the helping professions.

Practicum

Code	Credits	Course Title	Description
PSY 704	1 credit	Practicum	This initial practicum is an introductory experience field placement designed to provide counseling psychology students with opportunities to begin using and applying the knowledge, concepts, and skills acquired in their graduate program. Interns take on the role of a psychotherapist at their placement site(s). They engage in an initial range of activities, including intake, assessment, and diagnosis, and begin some therapy sessions. One hundred (100) on-site clock hours are required, and weekly faculty supervision is provided on an individual and group basis, as well as on-site supervision by a licensed practitioner.

Internship I and II

Code	Credits	Course Title	Description
PSY 705	6 credits	Internship I and II	This internship is a capstone experience designed to provide counseling psychology students with opportunities to use and apply the knowledge, concepts, and skills acquired in their graduate program. Interns take on the role of a psychotherapist at their placement site(s). They engage in a full range of activities, including intake, assessment, diagnosis, and individual and group counseling. Six hundred (600) on-site clock hours are required, and weekly faculty supervision is provided on an individual and group basis, as well as on-site supervision by a licensed practitioner.

Thesis or Research Project

Code	Credits	Course Title	Description
PSY 690	6 credits	Research Project	The research project includes the development and creation of a capstone project that aims to enhance the student's understanding and application of a particular issue within the field. These projects may include the implementation of a community program (e.g., stigma reduction, mental health awareness campaign), creation and delivery of community education (e.g., seminars/workshops), program development (e.g., character education in schools, youth programming), and/or evaluation of existing programs, a community-based participatory research study (CBPR) e.g., focus groups on a particular mental health issue), or conducting a needs assessment or survey of a particular domain within the field.
PSY 695	6 credits	Thesis	This course gives students an opportunity to produce and defend a thesis under direct supervision and assists students in completing high-quality, innovative, and cutting-edge research theses in Islamically integrated theoretical and applied perspectives of counseling psychology. The thesis supervisor is allocated according to the student's special interest and the expertise of the faculty member. The thesis proposal must be defended, followed by a defense of the thesis itself with an external examiner.

Faculty

Dr. Hooman Keshavarzi	Program Director, Assistant Professor of Islamic Psychology
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Dr. Vahdet Görmez	Professor of Cognitive and Developmental Psychology
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Admission requirements

Applicants seeking admission to the MA in Counseling Psychology should have a bachelor's degree in psychology, counseling, social work, or a related field with a minimum 3.0 GPA out of 4.0 from a recognized institution. Applicants with a background in Islamic Studies are preferred (e.g., diplomas, certificates, post-baccalaureate programs). Applicants who do not have a bachelor's degree in mental health-related fields must demonstrate that they have completed coursework in psychology.

Please refer to the following table for a summary of the admission criteria:

Program	Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology
Required Field of Study	Psychology, counseling, social work, or a related field.
Language Proficiency	IELTS: 6.5 or TOEFL: 79 Applicants may be exempt from this requirement if they provide an official letter confirming that they obtained their degree from a university where the medium of instruction is English.

Application requirements

A completed online application form: admissions.hbku.edu.qa

Academic transcripts

Official electronic copies of transcripts should be submitted as part of the online application. Final transcripts and graduation statements are required for all previous university studies. All transcripts submitted should include an explanation of the grading system.

For those who have not completed their current studies, transcripts must include results from the last completed semester of coursework. Transcripts in languages other than English or Arabic must be accompanied by an official translation. Applicants who are admitted to the program based on copies of or incomplete transcripts will be required to provide original transcripts upon enrollment in order to register for courses.

Standardized test results

Official copies (where required) must be sent directly to HBKU. Please refer to the institutional codes below:

- ▶ GRE: 7551
- ▶ GMAT: H6S
- ▶ TOEFL: 4981
- ▶ IELTS: No code required. Students should ask the IELTS center where they tested to send the IELTS TRF to HBKU

Applicants should also submit copies of their test scores with the online application.

Letters of recommendation

Applicants should submit two letters of recommendation, one of which must be from an academic referee.

Applicants should include their referees' names and email addresses in the online application. Referees will receive an email requesting them to complete their references.

Personal statement of interest

Applicants should submit a personal statement as part of the online application. The statement should explain why the candidate is applying to the program, and how their studies will contribute to the achievement of their personal objectives, including information about the applicant's research interests and achievements (minimum of 300, maximum of 500 words).

Resume/Curriculum vitae

Applicants should submit a copy of their current resume or curriculum vitae as part of the online application.

This should include the following information:

- ▶ Academic Qualifications
- ▶ Professional Experience
- ▶ Publications
- ▶ Research Projects
- ▶ Academic Awards or Honors
- ▶ Conference Presentations

Identification document

Applicants should submit an electronic copy of their passport as part of their online application. Nationals and residents of Qatar should also submit their valid Qatar ID.

Student funding

The College of Islamic Studies provides opportunities for scholarships and funding on a competitive basis. Further information will be provided to applicants who are admitted to the program.

Tuition fees


Program	MA in Counseling Psychology
Total Program Tuition Fees	QAR 72,000
Tuition Fees per Credit Hour	QAR 1,309
Total Program Credit Hours	55
Program Duration	2.5 years

Contact Information


Admission inquiries

admissions.cis@hbku.edu.qa

 [hbku_cis](#)

 [hbku_cis](#)

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 HBKU College of Islamic Studies

 College of Islamic Studies (CIS) at HBKU

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