Counselor Education (Certificate)

Program Information

The Graduate Certificate in Counselor Education (GCCE) Program is designed for educators, administrators, advisors, human service professionals, and anyone called to support others in a personal or professional capacity. Whether you work in a school, university, community organization, or any helping role, this program builds the knowledge and skills that make you more effective in the work you are already doing.

Delivered entirely online, the GCCE offers the flexibility working professionals need, with one live evening session per course every week from 8 to 9:30 p.m (*excluding major holidays and university closings*). There are no on-campus requirements, no entrance exam, and no interview, making the application process as accessible as the program itself.

A 3.0 GPA is recommended for admission; provisional admission may be available for applicants with relevant experience in education, human services, or training and development (see Admissions page for more information and the link to apply for the GCCE).

It is important to note that the GCCE alone does not qualify graduates for licensure as a professional counselor, nor does it serve as a school counselor licensure program or a teacher certification program. Those pursuing licensure will need to complete a master's degree program with additional coursework and supervised practice. However, all credits earned in the GCCE apply directly toward NC State's Counselor Education master's programs, making it a meaningful and strategic first step. If you are interested in learning about any of our online or on-campus master's programs in Counselor Education, click HERE (https://ced.ncsu.edu/elphd/counselor-education-program/).

GCCE Program At A Glance

- Fully online — No on-campus requirements
- 13 credit hours — Four graduate-level courses
- Evening classes — One live session per week, 8 to 9:30 p.m.
- Full or part-time enrollment — Complete in 2 semesters or just under 1 year
- No entrance exam or interview — No GRE required
- Financial aid available — For full-time students
- Credits transfer — Into NC State CED master's programs

Full vs. Part-Time Options

Full-Time GCCE:

- Duration: 2 semesters (August through May)
- Courses per semester: 2
- Semesters required: Fall and Spring
- Financial aid eligible: Yes
- Best for: Professionals who can dedicate more time for coursework per semester
- Total credit hours: 13
- ***Application deadline: July 15, 2026***

Part-Time GCCE:

- Duration: Just under 1 year (August through July)
- Courses per semester: 1
- Semesters required: Fall, Spring, Summer 1, and Summer 2
- Financial aid eligible: No
- Best for: Professionals balancing heavier work or personal commitments
- Total credit hours: 13
- ***Application deadline: July 15, 2026***

Admission Requirements

A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required for admission. Applicants who do not meet this threshold may be considered for provisional admission based on relevant graduate coursework in education, human services, or training and development. Eligible applicants will be invited to complete an interview as part of the provisional admission review process, along with a written explanation of contributing circumstances. Provisionally admitted students must earn a B or higher in their first GCCE course to continue in the program.

Applicant Information

- **Delivery Method:** Online
- **Entrance Exam:** None
- **Interview Required:** None

Application Deadlines

- **Fall:** July 15

How to Apply

To begin the GCCE Program in Fall 2026, all application materials must be submitted by **July 15, 2026**.
Click HERE (https://applygrad.ncsu.edu/apply/?_gl=1*hi4s95*_gcl_aw*R0NMLjE3NjgwNjc2MzguQ2p3S0NBaUFqb2pMQmhBbEVp
to complete and submit the following materials through the NC State Graduate School application portal:

Graduate School application and application fee
Unofficial transcripts
Resume outlining education and work experience
Personal statement

No entrance exam, prerequisite courses, or experience are required.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the GCCE Program? The Graduate Certificate in Counselor Education (GCCE) is a fully online, graduate-level certificate program offered through NC State's College of Education. It is designed for

working professionals seeking foundational and applied training in counseling skills, ethics, theories, and professional identity.

Who should apply? The GCCE is open to anyone who desires to better support others, including educators, advisors, administrators, human service professionals, and individuals interested in counseling work at any experience level. No prior counseling experience is required.

Will this certificate allow me to work as a licensed counselor? No. The GCCE alone does not qualify graduates for licensure as a professional counselor. Those seeking licensure will need to complete a master's degree program with additional coursework, supervised practice, and licensure requirements. The GCCE is an excellent foundation for those considering that path.

Can GCCE credits count toward a master's degree? Yes. As long as you earn a grade of "C" or better, credits earned in the GCCE apply directly toward any of NC State's Counselor Education master's programs for those who choose to continue their education. Transferability to programs at other universities cannot be guaranteed.

How is the program delivered? All GCCE courses are fully online, with one live evening session per course each week held from 8 to 9:30 p.m. There are no on-campus requirements.

How long does the program take to complete? Full-time students can complete the program in two semesters, August through May. Part-time students can complete the program in approximately one year, from August through July.

What is the difference between the full-time and part-time options? Full-time students enroll in two courses per semester in the Fall and Spring. Part-time students take one course per semester across fall, spring, and two summer sessions. ***Full-time students are eligible for financial aid; part-time students are not.***

Is financial aid available? Financial aid is available to full-time students only. Part-time students are not eligible for financial aid through this program.

What are the admission requirements? A 3.0 GPA is recommended. Provisional admission may be available for applicants with relevant experience in education, human services, or training and development. No entrance exam or interview is required.

What materials are required to apply? Applicants must submit a completed Graduate School application and application fee, unofficial transcripts, a resume, and a personal statement through the NC State Graduate School application portal.

When is the application deadline? All materials must be submitted by July 15, 2026, to begin the program in Fall 2026.

Plan Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
Required Courses		**13**
ECD 510	Orientation to Professional Counseling, Identity, and Ethics	
ECD 575	Multicultural Lifespan Development	
ECD 530	Theories and Tech of Counseling	
ECD 525	Multicultural Counseling	
Total Hours		**13**