



**TO:** The Honorable Members of the Board of Regents

**FROM:** David H. Hamilton *David H. Hamilton*

**SUBJECT:** Maria College of Albany: Master Plan Amendment to offer a Master of Science (M.S.) Program in Clinical Mental Health Counseling

**DATE:** July 3, 2025

**AUTHORIZATION(S):** *Bellamy*

### SUMMARY

#### Issue for Decision (Consent)

Should the Board of Regents approve the master plan amendment (MPA) for Maria College of Albany to offer an M.S. program in Clinical Mental Health Counseling?

#### Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State Statute.

#### Proposed Handling

This question will come before the full Board at its July 2025 meeting, where it will be voted on and action taken.

#### Procedural History

A Master Plan Amendment is required as this is the institution's first program at the master's level in the social sciences disciplinary area.

## **Background Information**

The proposed M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program is designed to prepare graduates as licensed mental health counselors and eligible for the diagnostic privilege. Qualified applicants must possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with a minimum GPA of 3.0/4.0. The following prerequisite courses are required: 9 credits in psychology, including a course in statistics or research methods. Each applicant needs to submit a personal essay and two academic letters of recommendation and complete an interview with the Graduate Program Admissions Committee.

The 60-credit curriculum includes 51 credits of didactic coursework and 9 credits of practicum/internship (700 hours) and can be completed in two years. The curriculum is designed to be aligned with Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) accreditation standards. Courses include, but are not limited to, Human Growth and Development, Counseling Theory and Practice, Psychopathology and Diagnosis, Assessment in Counseling, Group Counseling, Substance Abuse Counseling, Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling, and Orientation to Professionalism in Counseling. The program will utilize new and existing community partnerships for clinical experience.

Academic review of faculty, curriculum, and other program aspects of the proposed program has been completed by the Department. The Department has determined that the program meets the standards for registration as set forth in the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. A canvass was conducted of degree-granting institutions in the Capital Region and all institutions in the State offering licensure qualifying mental health counseling programs. There were no objections to the proposed program.

## **Related Regents Items**

Not applicable.

## **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board of Regents take the following action:

VOTED: That the Board of Regents approve an MPA to authorize Maria College of Albany to offer the M.S. program in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. This amendment will be effective until July 15, 2026, unless the Department registers the program prior to that date, in which case the master plan amendment shall be without term.

## **Timetable for Implementation**

If the Board of Regents approves the master plan amendment, the Department will proceed to register the program.