



MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS ADVISING GUIDE: *Alcoholism/Substance Abuse Counseling Certificate*

The **Alcoholism/Substance Abuse Counseling Certificate (AACC) program** provides the required coursework and fieldwork experience to be eligible for Massachusetts certification as a substance abuse counselor. Program graduates are prepared to take the required certification and state licensing exams. Students are provided an in-depth knowledge of alcohol/addiction treatment programs and current treatment modalities. Students must take two field placement courses, totaling 300 hours, in an alcohol/addictions treatment facility. This experience allows students to work on the core functions of substance abuse counseling including, assessment, treatment planning, case management, crisis intervention, client education and group facilitation. Students completing three courses a semester may complete this 29-credit program within a one-year, three-semester curriculum.



All courses are offered Tuesday and Thursday evenings on the Bedford campus.



EXPLORE YOUR OPTIONS WITH ACADEMIC ADVISING

Throughout each semester, meet with your advisor so that he/she can guide you through a self-exploration process that will help you identify your academic and career interests.

Beginning of Semester:

___ Schedule an appointment to meet with your academic advisor during the first few weeks to discuss future plans and how a **Alcoholism/Substance Abuse Counseling Certificate** can help you achieve your goals.

___ Explore your personal interests by completing Focus2, an online career assessment tool:
<https://www.middlesex.mass.edu/careerservices/focus2.aspx>

Mid-Semester:

___ Schedule an appointment with academic advisor review your academic progress, Focus2 results and create an academic plan in DegreeWorks.

Before Semester Ends:

___ Schedule an appointment to discuss and register for the classes you will take the following semester. (Early November for spring, Early April for fall and summer)

___ Visit the Academic Career & Transfer Center or call 1-800-818-3434 to schedule an appointment.

► INSIDE THIS GUIDE

- Exploring Your Options
- Personality Inventory
- Career Path
- Transfer Path

ALCOHOLISM/SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNSELING CERTIFICATE PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Graduates of the program are prepared to:

- Describe the resources and required eligibility of the current treatment options of the substance-abuse treatment system;
- Demonstrate effective communication skills, including group and individual counseling skills, oral and written communications, and computer research proficiency;
- Identify and practice ethical standards as set forth by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and National Certification Boards;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the major factors of multicultural diversity and the importance of pluralism in our society;
- Acquire and demonstrate an understanding of relevant theory and research as it applies to clinical practice and service delivery.

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IS THE COMPUTER SCIENCE TRANSFER MAJOR A RIGHT FIT FOR ME?

People in this profession must:

- Have a strong desire to help individuals and families who are dealing with drug and alcohol addictions
- Have strong listening skills, oral and written communication skills, and emotional maturity to inspire the respect and confidence of others
- Have a high level of energy and resilience both physically and emotionally to deal with the problems and stresses they will encounter
- Have compassion for individuals struggling with drug and alcohol addictions (Some students are interested in this profession because of personal experience with addiction, others because of family histories with addiction)



THE CAREER PATH

The national median salary for Substance Abuse Counselors was \$38,560 in 2011 according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Job opportunities are predicted to grow much faster than many other occupations. States with the highest employment levels in this occupation are Pennsylvania, California, New York, Florida, and Massachusetts. The average annual salary for a Substance Abuse Counselors in MA in 2011 was \$30,000 with a license. Many Certified Substance Abuse Counselors work for the government, health care agencies, or therapeutic communities and others are employed in outpatient care centers, residential substance abuse facilities, and in settings providing individual and family services for those with addictions.

Career Planning Activities:

- ___ Work with career advisor to create resume, cover letter and help improve your interview skills
- ___ Identify internship and volunteer opportunities in your desired field
- ___ Attend career workshops and job fairs

MCC ADVISING RESOURCES

Career Services:

<https://www.middlesex.mass.edu/careerservices>

Transfer Services:

<https://www.middlesex.mass.edu/transfer>

MassTransfer:

<https://www.middlesex.mass.edu/transfer/masstransfer.aspx>

Financial Aid:

<https://www.middlesex.mass.edu/financialaid>

Foundation Scholarships:

<https://www.middlesex.mass.edu/foundation/scholarships>

College Board Match Maker:

<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search>

You can find more information about careers and salaries at: www.bls.gov

ADVISING NOTES

In order for a student to be eligible to participate in an academic, community or clinical program that involves potential unsupervised contact with children, the disabled, the elderly, or other vulnerable populations, the student will be required to undergo a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) check and/or a Sex Offender Registry Information (SORI) check. Students who are unable to pass the CORI and/or SORI would not be able to participate in the field placement required to complete the program. **The MCC Alcoholism/Substance Abuse Counseling Certificate** is a Section 30 approved program.