

# USU's M.Ed. in School Counseling Program Newsletter

The Official Newsletter of USU's M.Ed. in School Counseling Program



## Welcome 2023 Cohort!

We are thrilled to welcome the newest cohort to our School Counseling Program. Our incoming cohort consists of 28 students, joining us from 19 different cities across the state of Utah! We enjoyed an in-person orientation event in Logan this August, including a trip to the USU Challenge Course.

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STUDENT  
ADVISORY  
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MEMBERS

## Connect with your Student Advisory Board!

### 2021 Cohort (3rd Year)

[Sydney Bowman](#) [Madison Rasmuson](#) [Lindsey Harris](#)

### 2022 Cohort (2nd Year)

[Emily Mellor](#) [Monique Scoville](#) [Mari Crawford](#)

### 2023 Cohort (1st Year)

[Sasha Beorchia](#) [Andrew Orton](#) [Laura Baird](#)

DR. JESSICA KOLTZ, DIRECTOR  
MEG CAMPBELL, M.ED., PROGRAM COORDINATOR



## Meet Dr. Tae Kim

Dr. Tae Kim has a Ph.D. in Counselor Education from the University of Central Florida. Prior to his academic journey, Dr. Kim served in the Air Force as a military counseling officer and company commander. His dedication has been recognized with prestigious awards such as the UCF Trustees Doctoral Fellowship, and he has been identified as an emerging leader by the AARC. Additionally, Dr. Kim is a committed member of the counseling community, contributing to various respected associations including the ACA, ASCA, ACES, KCA, and KCPA. Apart from his professional duties, Dr. Kim harbors a lifelong love for sports and travel. These interests not only enrich his personal life, but also inspire his work, as he values international collaboration and leads projects that extend across borders.

## Praxis Update

Reminder: We encourage students to wait until they've completed program coursework to take the School Counselor Praxis Exam. We will share Praxis Exam updates for your information and planning purposes!

The Praxis 5422 version is now required. (After 9/1/23 the 5421 version is no longer accepted by USBE.)

For graduation from our program and licensure through USBE, students need a score of 153 or higher:

<https://www.schools.utah.gov/prevention/schoolcounselingprograms/licensing?mid=5294&tid=1>

Any students interested in pursuing the ASCA Certified School Counselor Recognition, please note this requires a minimum score of 159:

<https://www.schoolcounselor.org/Recognition/Certification>

## Program News

- Kelli Palma has moved into a different position at the University and is no longer working in our School Counseling Program. We thank her for her time and valuable contributions to the program!
- The Psychology Department is conducting another job search for an Assistant Professor in the School Counseling Program. There will be opportunities for student participation and input throughout the hiring process. Please watch for additional details later this fall.



## Building Bridges: My First Year in the School Counseling Program

Melissa McKinlay (She/Her)  
Graduate Research Assistant  
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Three semesters down! My first year at Utah State in the school counseling program has been both challenging and filled with opportunity. As I navigate into a future career, I have found the perfect place to express creativity and work towards dynamic goals. I wanted to take this time to detail my experiences participating in two offered program electives with hopes to build connections and inspire others to explore their passions within the field of school counseling and beyond.

The Animal-Assisted Intervention (AAI) electives that our program offers are a perfect fit to further explore my lifelong love and affinity for animals. Dr. Fine offers multiple AAI courses here at Utah State and is the editor of the Handbook on Animal-Assisted Therapy. Last spring, I added ADVS 5910 to my schedule and was encouraged to think outside the box. A major highlight of working with Dr. Fine is to discover ways the fields of AAI and school counseling align and can be applied through evidence-based practices.

This past summer I collaborated with Dr. Fine, Dr. Sabrina Schuck of the University of California at Irvine, and Dr. Gretchen Carlisle from the University of Missouri to co-author the chapter on AAI and executive functioning in the upcoming Handbook on Animal-Assisted Therapy. This was a wonderful professional opportunity to grow as a researcher and writer.

A main feature of my past year has been working as the graduate research assistant here at USU. I first became interested in research in my psychology undergraduate program because I love statistics! This flexible research group that meets regularly is the perfect place to challenge myself academically and learn more about research techniques under the leadership of our program director Dr. Jessie Koltz.

Currently, I am working to assist Dr. Koltz and USU PhD student, Evin Daines with research that explores the attitudes and perceptions of the role of elementary school counselors in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic (In preparation). Throughout this process, I transcribed qualitative interviews, assisted in data collection and analysis, and overall gained experience conducting research. I am hopeful to support Koltz and Daines and assist in the presentation of results at the ASCA Annual Conference in Kansas City, MS (Summer, 2024).

As a second-year graduate student, I hope to continue my research ventures with the goal to collaboratively create a working program evaluation that will support the USU M.Ed. School Counseling Program in its entirety, as your voice is integral to our overall success.

There are opportunities available for everyone in the school counseling program and the future looks bright. No dream is ever too big, and in the words of Kobe Bryant "You can't stop people from trying to limit your dreams, but you can stop it from becoming a reality. Your dreams are up to you. I encourage you to always be curious, always seek out things you love and always work hard once you find it." Cheers to a wonderful Fall Semester!

**Thank you Melissa!**

If you have something you'd like to see featured in our program newsletter, and/or are willing to contribute content to be featured in a future newsletter, please reach out to Meg Campbell at [meg.campbell@usu.edu](mailto:meg.campbell@usu.edu).