



**MARICOPA**  
COMMUNITY COLLEGES



## Meeting the Rising Demand for Behavioral Health Professionals

The demand for skilled behavioral health professionals in Maricopa County is growing due to evolving societal dynamics, the acknowledgment of mental health's importance, and the destigmatization of seeking support. Understanding and addressing the escalating demand for behavioral health professionals is essential to fostering a healthier and more resilient global community and it is a critical issue that Maricopa Community Colleges is actively addressing. We are committed to meeting this demand and supporting our students' success through partnerships, scholarship opportunities, short-term credential programs, and new baccalaureate degrees.

**Community Commitment:** Maricopa Community Colleges is committed to addressing this demand and fostering a healthier, more resilient community. Visit Maricopa Community Colleges' Behavioral Health Sciences page for more information on programs, degrees, and certificates.

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Over **1,700** employers in Maricopa County are competing for an inadequate pool of behavioral health professionals, creating a significant skill gap across industries.

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## Job Growth

Experts project behavioral health jobs in Maricopa County to grow by **35%** from 2022 to 2033, outpacing the **national average of 23%**.

### Expanding Scholarship and Student Support

Program affordability is of prime importance to Maricopa Community Colleges, which has partnered with the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) to offer funding to behavioral health students.

- **AHCCCS Scholarships:** Glendale, Mesa, Phoenix College, Rio Salado, and South Mountain Community Colleges offer millions in scholarships to behavioral health students.
- **Closing Equity Gaps:** These scholarships provide affordable education and support for the home and community-based services workforce.

### Prioritizing Short-term Stackable Credentials

Short-term certificate programs are increasingly popular among students seeking quick upskilling options to re-enter the workforce (Schwartz, 2023).

- **New Credentials:** Maricopa Community Colleges now offers short-term credentials in Advanced Behavioral Sciences, Foundations in Behavioral Sciences, and more.
- **Intended Scope:** These short-term certificates cover the Behavioral Health Technician and Behavioral Health Paraprofessional scopes of practice.
- **Seamless Transition:** These credentials are embedded within associate and bachelor's degree programs for continuous education.



## New Baccalaureate Degree Program

Maricopa Community Colleges continues to launch new programs to meet growing needs, including a **Bachelor of Science (BS) in Behavioral Sciences** at South Mountain Community College, one of the District's first baccalaureate degree offerings.

#### References:

Lightcast. (2024). *Occupational overview: 11 community and social service occupations in Maricopa County, AZ.*

Schwartz, N. (2023, November 8). *Fall 2023 enrollment trends in 5 charts.* HigherEdDive. <https://www.highereddive.com/news/fall-2023-enrollment-trends-5-charts/697999>

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