

## **Intro Page 3: Programmatic Review and Changes**

### **Fall 2020**

The Counseling Faculty reviewed the counseling program, changes within the profession, the CACREP 2016 Standards, and the data points as outlined below in a series of departmental meetings.

### **Professional and Programmatic Considerations**

The systematic approach to assessment of department objectives that was developed over the past five years continues to be implemented, reviewed, and revised. At each of our department meetings, we systematically reviewed areas related to the ways in which we serve program stakeholders and discussed ways in which we could continue to improve our program.

In addition to actions described below (Program Data Points), the following areas were addressed:

#### **1. Department Faculty Transitions:**

- a. Keith Bjorge transitioned out of his role as department faculty at the conclusion of the spring 2020 semester and into a full-time focus on his thriving clinical practice. Dr. Bjorge notified us in November of his plan to end his time of teaching in May. This allowed for us to begin our faculty search.
- b. Elijah Lee was hired as a full-time faculty member in our department beginning in July 2020 to fill the vacancy created by Dr. Bjorge's departure. Professor Lee was writing his dissertation at the time of hire and since that time has successfully defended it. He has earned a PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision from Regent University.
- c. Permission was granted by the dean to offer a teaching fellowship position in our department. This position was offered to, and accepted by, Elizabeth Munis. Elizabeth began her duties in the fall 2020 semester.

#### **2. Involvement of stakeholders:**

- a. Faculty discussion is ongoing on ways in which we can serve our site supervisors and clinicians in the area. Counseling conferences have been regularly held in past years. Due to recent staff cutbacks, we made the decision not to hold a conference in the fall of 2019 but did engage in discussions regarding future conference topics and speakers. The challenges arising from COVID-19 restrictions have shifted discussions to the potential development of webinars. Efforts are being made to develop resources in that format.
- b. Students' evaluations of courses were discussed with the goal of making better use of the feedback provided. Faculty members reviewed recent evaluations of courses and identified an area targeted for improvement based on student comments. Suggestions were also offered by other faculty. Changes will be implemented during the next offering of the evaluated course.

- c. Involvement of adjunct instructors has been increased over the past three years. Adjuncts are now listed on our department faculty webpage and identified as Clinical Specialists. They receive via email copies of the minutes of department meetings. Response to this change has been positive and feedback from these instructors has been valuable.

### **3. COVID-19 Response**

- a. Spring of 2020 was significantly disrupted due to COVID-19 and the decision in March to shift to virtual, synchronous learning. The abrupt nature of this transition proved stressful for students and for faculty. Despite the short time allowed for adjustments, we were able to finish the semester and meet our primary course objectives.
- b. Student feedback at the end of spring semester was primarily positive. We also received constructive suggestions on how we might improve delivery of course content in synchronous delivery. This feedback, and faculty training over the summer months, has allowed for us to continue to accommodate students attending off campus in new and improved ways.

#### **Program Data Point 1. Counseling Program Vital Statistics**

Vital Statistics are informative. No action taken.

#### **Program Data Point 2. Counseling Program Admission and Enrollment**

Enrollment has steadily increased over the past 5 academic years. While our theological distinctive remains our primary asset to applicants, we believe that our recent CACREP accreditation will be a contributing factor in continued interest in our program.

In the fall of 2019, we were happy to welcome 26 new MA in MHC students. This is the largest group of new students to our program in several years. We are continuing to discuss ways in which we can attract and retain a high number of well-suited students, with a focus on continuing to increase diversity in our program.

To increase retention of students, counseling faculty discussed the importance of ongoing formative evaluation. Efforts are being made to provide frequent feedback, with resources provided to those who are struggling to achieve successful outcomes.

#### **Program Data Point 3. Annual Student Professional Development Plans**

Faculty propose and track as Student Progress and Remediation Plan (SPRP) for any student for whom a concern is expressed. There is currently one SPRP in effect. We anticipate successful completion of this plan in December 2020.

#### **Program Data Point 4. Key Objectives Assessments**

Review of the data collected reflects consistency with other forms of course assessment (i.e., course grades; CPCE scores). An item of ongoing faculty discussion has been the need to standardize rubrics across courses to the extent possible. Collaboration in this area is producing more meaningful results.

### **Program Data Point 5. Evaluation of Practicum and Internship**

The forms used for the evaluation of practicum students and interns underwent revision during recent years. The forms are now consistent with one another, allowing for easier review of data. The decision was also made, and instituted, to centrally locate all documents on our department webpage to facilitate consistency in forms that might result from future updating and modifications. Evaluation of our students by their site supervisors continues to be strong, especially in the area of personal and professional dispositions.

### **Program Data Point 6. Counseling Program Comprehensive Exam (CPCE)**

CPCE Numbers for the 2019-20 academic year were good.

### **Program Data Point 7. National Exams**

Pass rates on National Exams for student who took the exam during the spring/summer of 2020 was 100%.

### **Program Data Point 8. Alumni Survey**

During the fall 2018 semester, a survey was sent to alumni who graduated within the past 3 years. The response rate was good. Data supplied by these stakeholders reflected an overall high level of satisfaction with the education/training that they received. Lower levels of satisfaction were reflected in the areas of (1) academic advising, and (2) career and employment related services. These areas have been noted by faculty and will be the focus of ongoing efforts for improvement. The next survey will be fall of 2021.

### **Program Data Point 9. Student Clinical Site Evaluation**

Students' evaluation of their clinical sites remains good. Stability of sites over the years has created several good training sites in which our students can receive valuable experience and supervision. Supervisors worked diligently with students during the shift to virtual sessions during the spring semester and continued to provide consistent training, guidance, and support.

### **Program Data Point 10. Evaluation of Supervisor**

Results of this evaluation continue to reveal low scores in supervisor direct observation of supervisee during counseling interactions. Discussions with supervisors in this area remain a priority as we collaborate with them to provide comprehensive training for our students. A rating form was developed and implemented in the fall 2017 to be used by supervisors in direct observation of student- client interaction.

### **Program Data Point 11. Employer and Site Supervisor Survey**

During the fall 2018 semester, a survey was sent to employers of program graduates and regular site supervisors of students. Data supplied by these stakeholders was encouraging, with several comments affirming preparedness, work ethic, and dispositional strengths of our students. Recommendations were made to increase training in diagnosis, treatment planning, and case management. The next survey will be fall of 2021.

### **Program Data Point 12. Counselor Disposition Rating**

Counselor dispositional traits were assessed beginning in spring 2016 using the Personal Qualities Assessment tool. This instrument was devised by St. John Fisher College and used with their permission. Using this tool, personal qualities and characteristics widely believed to contribute to success in the field of counseling are assessed. The PQA is administered at admissions and at the end of each formation group in which the student participates. The dispositions covered in the PQA are also assessed by field site supervisors during the practicum and internship experiences.

After 4 years of using this method of assessment, the department has determined that it continues to be a useful mechanism for providing meaningful feedback for students. We will continue to make use of it for that purpose. At the same time, we have concluded that it does not offer useful data for reporting purposes. We are exploring other measures with the goal of achieving consistency of measurement over time.

### **Program Data Point 13. Faculty to Student Ratios**

Faculty to Student Ratios have remained within guidelines for most semesters but have also periodically moved outside of them by a small amount. Occasional fluctuations do not create significant concern. However, when viewed in light of our steadily increasing enrollment numbers, these ratios do highlight the importance of adding to our faculty in the years to come. To accommodate the increase of students in our department, we began offering a second section of some core courses. This strategy has allowed for us to bring our faculty to student ratios back into compliance with CACREP standards.