

Intro Page 3: Programmatic Review and Changes

May 2021

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. Elijah Lee was hired as a full-time faculty member in our department beginning in July 2020. Dr. Lee was writing his dissertation at the time of hire and successfully defended it in December 2020, completing his PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision from Regent University.
- b. 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. She began her duties in the fall 2020 semester. Professor Munis completed her fellowship and continues to contribute to our department as an adjunct instructor of counseling.

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. The challenges arising from staff cutbacks and COVID-19 restrictions have shifted discussions to the potential development of webinars. In October of 2020, Dr. Steve Greggo hosted a webinar titled *Telemental Health: Alliance Activation for Quality Care*. Students, alumni, and site supervisors were invited to attend this event featuring a presentation by Dr. Greggo, with contributions made by clinicians Lydia Schlueter, LCPC and Elizabeth Munis, LCPC.
- 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. Faculty were encouraged to invite student feedback formally through brief survey instruments prior to the end of the semester. This type of mid-semester evaluation allows for student feedback to be incorporated in a way that may improve learning and the overall student experience.
- 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. The 2020-21 academic year included ongoing attention paid to the needs and safety of students, staff, and faculty. Pandemic mitigations created the need to reduce the number of students attending class in person as well as to be flexible as individual needs emerged. The Counseling department attempted to adhere to CDC guidelines, and meet individual needs, by offering courses in a variety of formats, including small in-person groups, blended classrooms with a combination of in-class and synchronous students, and fully synchronous sections.
- b. Student and faculty feedback on these formats was obtained throughout the year. As we enter the next academic year, assessment will be ongoing of the ways in which we can continue to maintain high standards for training while also accommodating the needs and life circumstances of a diverse group of students.

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 2020, we were happy to welcome 17 new MA in MHC students. 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 are currently no SPRPs in effect.

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. Evaluation of our students by their site supervisors continues to be strong, especially in personal and professional dispositions.

During the next academic year, evaluations will be converted to Formstack documents. This will facilitate the electronic storage of records. This method of gathering data will also allow for a richer analysis of results.

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

CPCE Numbers for the 2020-21 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 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.