

Eastern Michigan University
Clinical Mental Health Counseling
College Counseling
School Counseling
Program Evaluation
Winter 2020

This report provides a summary of the Counseling faculty's most recent efforts to evaluate the program's effectiveness in preparing our students for their roles as professional counselors. Although the three counseling programs are accredited by CACREP (Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs), and thus we have developed a curriculum that meets those standards, we must periodically assess the extent to which our students are acquiring the requisite knowledge and skills. This report summarizes outcome data from follow-up studies with graduates and their employers, students' performance on national exams, and employment of graduates. All of these are indicators of the extent to which our students are gaining the requisite competencies for the profession. In addition, this report will describe recent curricular changes.

Graduates' and Employers' Follow-up Surveys

The most recent follow-up study of program graduates and employers was conducted during the Winter 2020 semester. 50 graduates who completed their programs in the past three years were asked to complete an online survey. After a second request, 27 (54%) had completed the survey. The graduates were also asked to identify a supervisor or employer who could provide feedback about the program's effectiveness in preparing them for their professional roles. Feedback from graduates was quite positive regarding the extent to which the program prepared them for their work as professional counselors. A summary of graduates' feedback about the program indicates that for the 16 questions asked of all graduates (see below), the overwhelming majority of responses were in the "strongly agree" category. The percentage of responses in each category follows the questions.

Items (all graduates)

1. I am able to explain the philosophy underlying the counseling profession, as well as the professional roles, functions, and relationships with other providers
2. I acquired the skills necessary to develop effective relationships with clients.
3. I learned to utilize assessment instruments as part of the counseling process.
4. I gained knowledge of developmental theories and their impact on lifespan development.
5. I learned to gather pertinent information about clients in order to clarify problems, diagnose as appropriate, and conceptualize client presentation
6. I gained knowledge about a variety of counseling theories and ways to appropriately develop strategies and utilize interventions...
7. I acquired the skills necessary to work effectively with clients in groups.
8. I gained the knowledge and skills necessary to work sensitively with diverse clients as well as advocate effectively on their behalf.

9. I gained knowledge and skills to work effectively with clients in crisis.
10. I gained knowledge about career development and skills to help clients with career decision-making.
11. I gained knowledge about ethical and legal issues in the counseling profession and how to apply and adhere to such professional and legal standards.
12. I gained an understanding of research methods and how to use research findings to be more effective with my clients.
13. I gained knowledge about professional associations and professional issues such as credentialing, licensure, and certification, etc.
14. My practicum experience helped my understanding of counseling process and enhanced my ability to apply the knowledge, skills, and dispositions taught in program coursework.
15. My internship experience provided opportunities for me to further hone my counseling skills and to perform the full range of activities related to counseling in my setting (school, college, clinical mental health).
16. I learned to maintain awareness of and reflect on my own personal and professional strengths and limitations.

Item #	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1 (Philosophy)	72%	28%			
2 (Relationships)	92%	4%		4%	
3 (Assessment)	28%	52%	12%	8%	
4 (Lifespan)	72%	24%	4%		
5 (Diagnose)	72%	28%			
6 (Theory)	72%	24%	4%		
7 (Groups)	60%	36%	4%		
8 (Diversity)	72%	28%			
9 (Crisis)	64%	28%	8%		
10 (Career)	33%	54%	13%		
11 (Ethical/legal)	68%	32%			
12 (Research)	36%	60%	4%		
13 (Professional Assoc., etc.)	64%	32%	4%		
14 (Practicum)	88%	12%			
15 (Internship)	64%	28%	8%		
16 (Self-aware)	92%	8%			

In addition to questions about the “core” program requirements, graduates were asked five questions about their specialization areas: clinical mental health (10 graduates), college (6 graduates), school (11 graduates). Responses to these items were very positive, although graduates do not seem as confident in having the knowledge base in their specialization areas as they do in the core counseling knowledge and skills base. This makes sense given that the majority of the program coursework focuses on the core knowledge and skills needed by all counselors.

Clinical Mental Health Counseling

1. I gained awareness of professional issues that affect Clinical Mental Health Counselors such as professional credentialing (licensure, certification), recognition, reimbursement, right to practice, etc.
2. I gained knowledge about the characteristics of clients served by community agencies, including the effects of factors such as socioeconomic status, unemployment, aging, gender, culture, developmental transitions, violence, etc.
3. I acquired knowledge and skills to make appropriate referrals, to advocate for clients, to influence public policy, and to promote client access to community resources
4. I learned how to conduct an intake/biopsychosocial history and to use the current DSM to formulate a diagnosis in order to conceptualize a case and develop a treatment plan.
5. I gained an understanding of the roles and functions of Clinical Mental Health Counselors, as well as their relationships to other professionals in a variety of practice settings

Item #	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1 (Issues)	60%	30%	10%		
2 (Client Characteristics)	50%	50%			
3 (Referrals, advocacy)	60%	30%	10%		
4 (Diagnosis, conceptualization)	80%	20%			
5 (Roles, functions)	70%	30%			

College Counseling

1. I gained knowledge of historical, philosophical, and contemporary theories and trends in college counseling and student development
2. I have learned ethical and legal considerations as well as how to apply and adhere to such standards and practices in college counseling and student development.
3. I became familiar with the concepts of organizational culture, finance, cultural context, and personnel practices in post-secondary education.
4. I acquired research knowledge and skills to apply methods of needs assessment and program evaluation applicable to college student populations.
5. I gained knowledge and skills on specialized issues applicable to college populations such as cultural differences, sexual assault, eating disorders, disability accommodations, and substance abuse.

College Counseling

Item #	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1 (History, philosophy)	50%	33%		17%	
2 (Ethical, legal)	80%	20%			
3 (Organizational culture)	60%	20%	20%		
4 (Needs assess, prog. eval.)	40%	40%	20%		
5 (Specialized issues)	33%	50%	17%		

School Counseling

1. I acquired the knowledge and skills necessary to provide responsive services to students, to assist students with educational and career planning, and to design and deliver a school guidance curriculum consistent with the ASCA National Model.
2. I acquired the knowledge and skills to organize and manage a comprehensive guidance and counseling program, to evaluate counseling programs, to collect and analyze data for data-based decision making, and to demonstrate accountability
3. I gained knowledge of professional, ethical and legal issues specific to the practice of school counseling.
4. acquired multicultural competencies to advocate for school policies, programs and services that are equitable and necessary for promoting the academic, career and personal/social development of all K-12 students.
5. I learned strategies and methods for consulting with school and community agency personnel as well as with parents, guardians, families to enhance student success in school.

Item #	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1 (Responsive services)	55%	45%			
2 (Manage program)	55%	36%	9%		
3 (Ethical, legal)	73%	27%			
4 (Multicultural)	73%	18%	9%		
5 (Consulting)	64%	18%	18%		

Supervisors/Employers

Despite several requests asking graduates to have supervisors or employers complete an online survey, only 2 supervisors responded. In our last follow-up study in 2017, 10 supervisors provided feedback. A summary of supervisors' feedback about the program in 2017 indicates that for the sixteen questions asked of all employers/supervisors (see below), the overwhelming majority of responses were in the "strongly agree" category. 89% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that their supervisees were well-prepared to work in this field (question #15).

The two supervisors who responded this year either agreed or strongly agreed with all items except the question about diagnosis (#2), where one supervisor strongly agreed and the other strongly disagreed.

Survey Items

1. Demonstrates the ability to develop effective relationships with clients.
2. Is able to gather pertinent information about clients in order to clarify problems, diagnose as appropriate, and conceptualize client presentation
3. Is able to appropriately utilize assessment instruments as part of the counseling process.
4. Demonstrates knowledge about a variety of counseling theories and ways to appropriately develop strategies and utilize interventions...
5. Demonstrates the knowledge and skills necessary to work sensitively with diverse clients as well as advocate effectively on their behalf...
6. Works effectively with clients in groups.
7. Is able to effectively assist clients with career/lifestyle concerns
8. Has knowledge about developmental theories and their impact on lifespan development.
9. Can work effectively with clients in crisis.
10. Demonstrates a motivation and willingness to perform professional responsibilities.
11. Applies knowledge about program development and evaluation.
12. Is knowledgeable about ethical and legal issues in the counseling profession and knows how to apply and adhere to professional and legal standards.
13. Demonstrates the ability to work cooperatively with colleagues and develop positive interpersonal relationships.
14. Demonstrates awareness and ongoing reflection on personal and professional strengths and limitations.
15. Demonstrates openness to feedback and supervision\
16. Is well-prepared to work in this field.

Performance on National Exams

In order to graduate from the counseling program, students must pass the Counseling Preparation Comprehensive Exam (CPCE). This is a national exam developed to measure a student's level of mastery of the requisite knowledge and skills identified by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and other Educational Professions (CACREP) for the preparation of professional counselors. Between 2016 and 2020, students have consistently scored above national means on all eight sections of the test, an indication that they are gaining the requisite knowledge and skills as identified by the profession.

To obtain full licensure in Michigan, graduates must pass the National Counselor Examination (NCE). Over the last eight administrations of the test, between 95% and 100% of those who took the exam passed. This is another indicator that the program is preparing students to master the requisite knowledge to be successful in the field.

Employment

15 students who graduated between June 2018 and April 2019 from the Clinical Mental Health and School Counseling Programs were asked whether they were employed in positions for which they were trained *within 6 months of graduation*. 13 responded (87% response rate), and 11 of them reported that they were employed in counseling jobs within six months of graduation.

Program Changes

- **College Counseling Program:** It has become clear that students in the college counseling program have career goals that fall into two different areas. One group is more interested in working in a clinical setting in a college (College Counseling Centers). Others are more interested in student affairs and career counseling with college students. Thus, in moving the program to 60 credits to meet CACREP standards, we developed two different options within the program – a clinical college specialization and a college counseling and advising specialization. Students may also choose a general option in which they select electives of interest to them.
- **CPCE Policy:** For several years, passing the Counseling Preparation Comprehensive Exam (CPCE) has been a requirement for graduation. Some students waited until they were in their last semester to take the exam, and if they didn't pass, they delayed their graduation. To avoid this potential problem, we now require students to pass the CPCE before they are approved to enroll in practicum.
- **Courses increased from 2 to 3 credit hours:** While nearly all courses in the program are 3 credit hours, there were a few that remained at 2 credit hours. It became clear that the required material could not be covered adequately in a 2-credit course. Thus, several courses were increased to 3 credit hours:
 - COUN 575 Substance Abuse Counseling;
 - COUN 693 Ethical, Legal, and Professional Issues in School Counseling
 - COUN 654 School Counseling (combined two 2 credit courses into one course)