

**Clinical Mental Health Counseling
Master's Program**

**Three-Year Systematic Program
Evaluation Report
2014, 2015, 2016**



**School of Counseling
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Completed January 2017

Introduction

This report is written to comply with the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2009) standard I.AA which states that every accredited counseling program must distribute an official report that documents outcomes of a systematic program evaluation, with descriptions of any program modifications, to students currently in the program, program faculty, institutional administrators, personnel in cooperating agencies (e.g., employers, site supervisors), and the public.

The purposes for this systematic program evaluation report are specific to the Clinical Mental Health Master's Program (CMHC) and include, but are not limited to, objective and well-rounded faculty reflection about program strengths and areas for improvement, program-related transparency with stakeholders (e.g., students, graduates and employers), and communication about the program's status with institutional administrators.

The data compiled for this systematic program evaluation report was drawn from calendar years 2014, 2015 and 2016 (i.e., Spring 2014, Summer 2014, Fall 2014, Spring 2015, Summer 2015, Fall 2015, Spring 2016, Summer 2016, and Fall 2016 semesters).

Throughout this program evaluation period there were three core CMHC program faculty: Dr. Maryann Meniru (Visiting Professor), Dr. Varunee Faii Sangganjanavanich (Associate Professor) and Dr. Robert Schwartz (Professor and Program/Clinical Coordinator).

Accreditation Standards Monitoring and Evaluation Data

CACREP Section I. Evaluation

AA. Program faculty members engage in continuous systematic program evaluation indicating how the mission, objectives, and student learning outcomes are measured and met.

Throughout this three-year period program faculty engaged in continuous assessment of program strengths and areas for improvement. This occurred through regular faculty conversations, meetings, informal forums with students, formal student/graduate/supervisor/employer surveys, and feedback from professionals in the field. The program evaluation data obtained lead to three years of in-depth program reflection yet minimal updates including but not limited to the following areas: revised content published in the student handbook (Spring 2015 semester), program resources and marketing information (e.g., program brochures and websites), and training requirements and resources (e.g., practicum forms and internship site lists). None of these changes had a substantive impact on the day-to-

day functioning, management or educational missions of the program. Rather, these updates were designed to enhance specific and targeted features of already well-functioning aspects of the program.

AA.1. A review by program faculty of programs, curricular offerings, and characteristics of program applicants.

Program Application, Enrollment and Graduation Data

Program Active (Matriculated) and Graduated Student Summary:

Academic Year →	2014	2015	2016
Total Graduated	22	28	26
Cumulative Total Enrolled (Matriculated)	95	105	101

Program faculty were pleased with the high application rate throughout this program evaluation period. This trend resulted in a more selective admission process, and consequently a slightly lower admission percentage rate over time semester-by-semester (approximately 60-70% of applicants). Program faculty also noted a stable active (matriculated) student rate throughout the program evaluation period.

Despite a desire to grow the program for reputability, financial, and other reasons, program faculty have attempted to maintain a steady and limited pool of high-quality new students for program quality assurance purposes. Throughout the program evaluation period approximately 20-25 new students were admitted each Fall and Spring semester. A range of diversity was noted among currently enrolled students regarding sex, race, nationality and age of applicants, however the majority of student admissions were Euro-American/White females aged 21-30 years.

AA.2. Formal follow-up studies of program graduates to assess graduate perceptions and evaluations of major aspects of the program.

Program faculty routinely conduct formal follow-up studies for both current students toward the end of their program (i.e., an exit survey during internship semester) and program graduates/alumni (once annually). Online follow-up exit and graduate alumni surveys were developed separately in order to better assess key perceptions and evaluations about major aspects of the program.

Current Student Exit Survey Results (N=75):

Ratings are scored using a Likert-Type scale ranging from 1 (Very Dissatisfied) to 5 (Very Satisfied). Higher scores equate to a higher level of student satisfaction.

Core Topic Area	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Count
Individual Counseling Theory	2.00	5.00	3.96	0.94	75
Group Counseling Theory	1.00	5.00	4.17	1.00	75
Multicultural Counseling	2.00	5.00	4.28	0.79	75
Career Counseling	2.00	5.00	4.31	0.75	75

Core Topic Area	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Count
Professional Orientation	1.00	5.00	3.92	1.04	74
Research & Program Evaluation	2.00	5.00	3.84	0.82	74
Assessment & Testing	2.00	5.00	3.72	0.89	74
Human Growth & Development	1.00	5.00	3.97	0.93	74

Core Course Survey Data: Program faculty noted that during this program evaluation period ratings in all core course areas averaged between “Somewhat Satisfied” and “Satisfied.” The two lowest rated core course areas were Assessment & Testing (5600:645) and Research & Program Evaluation (5600:601). These two courses are usually more technical, difficult, and although perhaps a misnomer are perceived as somewhat less experiential and/or less practical by students. It will be important for School of Counseling administration to be thoughtful about instructor assignments in these courses, and faculty teaching the courses will be encouraged to consider teaching methodologies satisfactory to students.

Specialty Topic Area	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Count
Legal & Professional Issues	1.00	5.00	3.81	1.05	75
Addiction Counseling	1.00	5.00	3.66	0.95	74
Crisis & Trauma Counseling	1.00	5.00	2.93	1.16	75
Mental Disorder Diagnosis & Treatment	1.00	5.00	4.16	0.88	75
Clinical Skills (Pract & Internship)	2.00	5.00	4.13	0.87	75

Clinical Counseling Specialty Course Survey Data: Program faculty noted that during this program evaluation period ratings in all clinical counseling specialty course areas averaged between “Somewhat Satisfied” and “Satisfied.” For two of the five clinical counseling specialty course areas (5600:664 DSM and 5600:675/685 Practicum/Internship) ratings averaged between “Satisfied” and “Very Satisfied.” The lowest rated clinical counseling specialty course area (Crisis & Trauma Counseling) is not a separate course per se and is infused in approximately three separate courses (5600:600 Professional Orientation & Ethics, 5600:664 DSM, 5600:666 Treatment in Clinical Counseling). Program faculty will be thoughtful about how additional and more effective transmission of knowledge can be infused in the program.

- Regarding use of technology, survey data showed an average rating of 4.11 (out of 5) when students were asked “How satisfied are you with the department's use of technology (e.g., Springboard, websites, email, instructional technology)?”
- Regarding acceptance of student feedback, survey data showed an average rating of 3.52 (out of 5) when students were asked “How satisfied were you with CMHC program faculty receiving/accepting student feedback?”
- Regarding program support, survey data showed an average rating of 3.75 (out of 5) when students were asked “How satisfied were you with CMHC program faculty help/support when student/program issues/concerns arose?”
- Regarding faculty advising, survey data showed an average rating of 3.99 (out of 5) when students were asked “How satisfied were you with CMHC faculty advising availability/effectiveness?”
- Regarding program organization, survey data showed an average rating of 3.46 (out of 5) when students were asked “How satisfied were you with how clear/thorough CMHC program information was for students - for example guidelines, policies, and procedures?”

- Regarding overall ratings, survey data showed an average rating of 3.88 (out of 5) when students were asked “Overall how would you rate the CMHC program if someone else asked you (e.g., a prospective student)?”

Positive Qualitative Feedback - Faculty noted positive program-related feedback consistently showing that CMHC faculty advisors were key aspects of students’ success. Students consistently praised CMHC core faculty for their conscientiousness, professionalism, knowledge and personal mentoring. Students also praised the DSM class and mentioned Dr. Schwartz and Dr. Faii consistently as organized, helpful, professional and ‘holding things together well.’

Constructive Qualitative Feedback – Faculty noted constructive program-specific feedback related to too many courses being taught by doctoral students. Constructive feedback also related to non-program-specific issues such as selection of certain names non-core instructors, difficulties related to class scheduling, and requests for additional CMHC core program faculty members like Dr. Schwartz and Dr. Faii. All of these constructive feedback points related to School of Counseling administrative decision-making rather than program-level faculty issues. Program faculty will be thoughtful about forwarding such feedback for consideration by administration.

Graduate/Alumni Survey Results (N=26):

Survey results show that 70% of program graduates are currently employed in the counseling profession, and 96% are currently licensed as a Professional Counselor or Professional Clinical Counselor.

Ratings are scored using a Likert-Type scale ranging from 1 (Very Dissatisfied) to 5 (Very Satisfied). Higher scores equate to a higher level of student satisfaction.

Core Topic Area	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Count
Ethics & Professional Identity	3.00	5.00	4.23	0.70	26
Research & Program Evaluation	2.00	5.00	3.81	0.73	26
Assessment & Testing	2.00	5.00	3.69	0.87	26
Human Growth & Development	3.00	5.00	4.12	0.64	26
Career Counseling	3.00	5.00	4.31	0.67	26

Core Topic Area	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Count
Individual Counseling Theory	3.00	5.00	4.08	0.73	26
Group Counseling Theory	2.00	5.00	4.12	0.89	26
Multicultural Counseling	3.00	5.00	4.35	0.55	26
Legal & Advocacy Information	2.00	5.00	3.42	0.88	26
Addiction Counseling	1.00	5.00	3.46	0.97	26

Core Course Survey Data: Program faculty noted that during this program evaluation period ratings in all core course areas averaged between “Somewhat Satisfied” and “Satisfied.” The two lowest rated core course areas were Legal & Advocacy Information (5600:600 and 5600:635) and Addiction Counseling (5600:732). Assessment & Testing (5600:645) and Research & Program Evaluation (5600:601) were also rated somewhat low, similar to the exit/completer survey results. It will be important for School of Counseling administration to be thoughtful about instructor assignments in these courses, and faculty teaching the courses will be encouraged to consider teaching methodologies satisfactory to students.

Specialty Topic Area	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Count
Crisis & Trauma Counseling	1.00	5.00	3.35	1.04	26
Diagnosis of Mental Disorders	3.00	5.00	4.58	0.57	26
Treatment of Mental Disorders	1.00	5.00	3.38	1.24	26
Clinical Skills	1.00	5.00	3.96	0.85	26
Overall Professionalism	3.00	5.00	4.27	0.59	26

Clinical Counseling Specialty Course and Professionalism Survey Data: Program faculty noted that during this program evaluation period ratings in all clinical counseling specialty course areas except one averaged between “Somewhat Satisfied” and “Very Satisfied.” The two highest rated areas (Diagnosis of Mental Disorders [5600:664] and Overall Professionalism) are taught and/or directly coordinated by core program faculty. The lowest rated clinical counseling specialty course area (Crisis & Trauma Counseling) was not a required course/content area during this program evaluation period. Program faculty will be thoughtful about how additional and more effective transmission of knowledge in this area can be infused into the program.

- Regarding faculty support, survey data showed an average rating of 3.58 (out of 5) when alumni were asked “Post-graduation, overall how satisfied are you with the program's faculty?”

- Regarding clinical training in the field, survey data showed an average rating of 3.69 (out of 5) when alumni were asked “Post-graduation, overall how satisfied are you with the program's coursework/training?”
- Regarding overall perceptions, survey data showed an average rating of 3.64 (out of 5) when alumni were asked “Post-graduation, how would you rate the program if someone else asked you (e.g., a prospective student)?”

Positive Qualitative Feedback - Faculty noted positive program-related feedback consistently showing that CMHC faculty mentoring, approachable core faculty, clinical training, and specific courses such as DSM were key aspects of students’ success. Students consistently praised Dr. Schwartz and Dr. Faii as CMHC core faculty for their professionalism and knowledge of counseling, in addition to their support as mentors.

Constructive Qualitative Feedback – Faculty noted constructive program-specific feedback related to the need for additional required crisis/trauma counseling training, fewer courses taught by doctoral students, and more support by non-CMHC faculty including clinic staff for LPC identity and holistic skills. Constructive feedback also related to non-program-specific issues that CMHC faculty do not administer, such as the selection of non-core faculty members teaching CMHC-related courses. Topic-related issues will be thoughtfully considered by program faculty for inclusion into the program, and non-program-related issues will be forwarded to administration for review.

AA.3. Formal studies of site supervisors and program graduate employers that assess their perceptions and evaluations of major aspects of the program.

Supervisor/Employer Survey Results (N=39):

Survey results show that approximately 20 different mental health agencies were represented in this survey. 98% of those completing the survey have served as site supervisors for CMHC trainees. 67% of those completing the survey were involved in employment decisions for one or more graduate. Respondents have supervised CMHC trainees for between 1 and 20 years. Between 1 to 15 CMHC trainees have been supervised by each supervisor/employer completing the survey.

Ratings are scored using a Likert-Type scale ranging from 1 (Very Dissatisfied) to 5 (Very Satisfied). Higher scores equate to a higher level of student satisfaction.

Core Topic Area	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Count
Ethics & Professional Identity	4.00	6.00	4.68	0.52	37

Assessment & Testing	3.00	6.00	4.86	1.00	36
Human Growth & Development	4.00	6.00	4.62	0.54	37
Career Counseling	3.00	6.00	5.19	1.09	37
Individual Counseling Theory	2.00	6.00	4.62	0.71	37

Core Topic Area	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Count
Group Counseling Theory	3.00	6.00	4.71	0.76	38
Multicultural Counseling	1.00	6.00	4.42	0.94	38
Client/Professional Advocacy	4.00	6.00	4.55	0.55	38
Diagnosis of Mental Disorders	2.00	6.00	4.50	0.75	38
Overall Professionalism	4.00	6.00	4.82	0.45	38

Core Course, Clinical Counseling Specialty Course and Professionalism Survey Data: Program faculty noted that during this program evaluation period ratings in all core counseling and clinical counseling specialty course areas except one averaged between “Satisfied” and “Very Satisfied.” The three highest rated areas (Career Counseling, Testing & Assessment, and Overall Professionalism) are important areas for licensed professional counselors. However, supervisors and employers reported very positive overall knowledge and skills among CMHC interns.

- Regarding overall perceptions, survey data showed an average rating of 4.66 (out of 5) when supervisors/employers were asked “Based on your experience, overall how would you rate the UA Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program?”

Positive Qualitative Feedback - Faculty noted consistent positive program-related feedback showing that trainees are knowledgeable about the field, professional and “very well prepared” (reported by a majority of all supervisors/employers. Survey results also highlight program faculty support of students, “going the extra mile” for students in the field, and site/supervisor support. One respondent reported “University of Akron students are the best prepared of all students I take on. I have worked with KSU, CSU, John Carroll. No other program compares.”

Constructive Qualitative Feedback – Many respondents advocated that few if any limitations are apparent in the program or its trainees. Faculty noted some constructive feedback related to the need for additional training in treatment of specific mental disorders.

AA.4. Assessment of student learning and performance on professional identity, professional practice, and program area standards.

Comprehensive Examination Results Summary

The Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) is a required student evaluation method. During this program evaluation period program faculty reviewed CPCE data to determine appropriateness and trends related to the examination.

Comprehensive Examination Results By Semester:

Academic Year →	2014	2015	2016
Total Exams	34	31	30
Total Passed	33	30	30
% Passed	97%	97%	100%

The average pass rate throughout the entire program evaluation period was approximately 98% indicating a high success rate among students. The very high pass rates on the CPCE helped to confirm current student quantitative ratings on core courses described above. These very high pass rates on the CPCE are also consistent with high pass rates on the National Counselor Examination (NCE), which Ohio uses as its Professional Counselor state examination. Program students averaged an approximate 97% pass rate on the NCE during this program evaluation period, sowing a 100% pass rate for 2015, compared to an average approximate 76-78% pass rate nationally.

Program-Related Updates

During this program evaluation period program faculty made no substantial curricular or program-related policy changes due to a high degree of stability within the program and positive feedback from current students, alumni, supervisors, and employers. Minor updates included wording (although no policy) revisions to the student handbook, updated program websites, and minor updates to program course syllabi.

AA.5. Evidence of the use of findings to inform program modifications.

A thorough and objective review of all data presented in this program evaluation report lead program faculty to retain all essential components of the program:

Program Name Change

The CMHC program is accredited by CACREP until March 2017 as a Community Counseling program. In order to prepare for the reaccreditation process, and to better align with current nomenclature in the profession, during the 2013 academic year the program officially changed it's name to Clinical Mental Health Counseling. No change has occurred since that time.

Program Objectives, Philosophy and Mission Statement Updates

Program objectives, philosophy, and mission statements remain unchanged. During this program evaluation period program faculty determined that a clear description of the CMHC program's objectives, philosophy and mission are available distinguishing core aspects of what the program aims to achieve, why and how.

Program Diversity Inclusion/Recruitment Standards Updates

During this program evaluation period diversity-related inclusion/recruitment efforts were made throughout the program's marketing, information-sharing, and internal (e.g., program and department-wide) communications efforts. Program-related diversity remains a priority for faculty, as evidenced by the hiring of one Black full-time faculty member during this evaluation period. Current program faculty include:

- One White male
- One Asian female
- One Black female

Program Curricula Updates

After a review of CACREP (2009) CMHC standards, Ohio Professional Counselor licensure standards, and after a review of student/alumni/supervisor/employer feedback obtained throughout this program evaluation period, no significant program curriculum updates occurred.

Program Evaluation Report Summary and Conclusions

Program faculty strongly endorse the use of this program evaluation report as a means of better understanding the program's status, strengths, and areas for growth to ensure effective and efficient world-class counselor education and training. The quantitative and qualitative data obtained during this three-year program evaluation period resulted in better educational opportunities for students, greater reputability and accountability for the university, increased professional readiness for graduates and enhanced public mental health service to the community.

Application rates were steady across the program evaluation period, and for all semesters were higher than the maximum number of applicants who were able to gain admission into the program. Program faculty have therefore been increasingly selective during the application review process. Admission rates have also been steady throughout the program evaluation period, although the number of active (matriculated) students has increased particularly during the last year of the program evaluation period. Although graduation rates have remained steady throughout the program evaluation period program faculty will attempt to better understand these data in order to help increase the overall graduation rate for all students.

Diversity of current students was broad in terms of sex, race, nationality and age, however a trend is apparent in that the majority of applicants are White females age 21-30 years. This trend is common within the counseling profession. Although program faculty note a broad range of student diversity, including males (15-20% of current students) and non-traditional aged students (e.g., those over 50 beginning new careers), program faculty will continue to help broaden the multicultural base of applicants and current students.

Program faculty were pleased that students had a very high 97% pass rate on the comprehensive examination throughout the program evaluation period, consistent with a high pass rate on the National Counselor Examination (NCE), also averaging an approximate 97% pass rate compared to an average approximate 76-78% pass rate nationally.

Quantitative data showed that current students were satisfied with courses taught in the program. Ratings were high when students were asked "Overall how would you rate the CMHC program if someone else asked you (e.g., a prospective student)?" Data showed that program alumni were satisfied with courses taught in the program. Ratings were high when alumni were asked "Post-graduation, how would you rate the program if someone else asked you (e.g., a prospective student)?" Importantly supervisors/employers were very satisfied with the knowledge and training students received. Ratings were very high when supervisors/employers were asked "Based on your experience, overall how would you rate the UA Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program?"

Regarding qualitative data, several program-specific positive themes emerged from current students, alumni, and supervisors/employers: (a) core program faculty professionalism and mentoring; (b) core program faculty availability and concern for students; (c) core program faculty knowledge of the profession; (d) high-quality clinical training and readiness for field work as a result of program-specific knowledge and skills.