

Clinical Mental Health Counseling Master's Program

Annual Systematic Program Evaluation Report

Calendar Year 2025



**School of Counseling
302 Buchtel Common
Akron, OH 44325-5007**

Completed February 2026

Introduction

This report is written to comply with the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2024) Section 2: Academic Quality, Standard F.3, which states “counselor education program faculty create an annual report for entry and doctoral (if applicable) levels that includes: (1) a summary of the program evaluation results, including achievement of academic quality indicators; (2) subsequent curriculum modifications and program improvement informed by program evaluation; and (3) any other significant program changes” and Standard F.4., which states “the annual report is published on the program website in a location accessible to the public.” (from <https://www.cacrep.org/section-2-academic-quality/>).

The purposes for this annual report are specific to the Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) master’s Program and include, but are not limited to, faculty reflection about program strengths and areas for improvement, sharing program-related information 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 year 2025 (i.e., Spring 2025, Summer 2025, Fall 2025).

During this program evaluation period there were six core CMHC program faculty: Dr. Yue Dang (Associate Professor of Instruction), Professor Amanda Cole (Assistant Professor of Instruction), Dr. Melanie Kautzman (Assistant Professor), Dr. Varunee Faii Sangganjanavanich (Professor, School Director) and Dr. Robert Schwartz (Professor), and Dr. Jessica Wiener (Assistant Professor of Instruction).

Program Annual Statistics

Minimum number of credit (semester) hours required for the degree?	60
Number of students currently enrolled in the program?	156
Number of students graduated from the program in the past year (Spring 2025, Summer 2025, Fall 2025)?	46
Approximate completion rate of students from the program?	90%
Approximate licensure examination pass rate of students graduating from the program?	90%
Approximate job placement rate of graduates from the program who were actively seeking employment?	90%

Program Annual Evaluation Results

Program faculty conduct formal follow-up studies through online surveys each semester for current students toward the end of their program (i.e., during internship semester), and annually for program graduates/alumni and site supervisors/employers.

Current Student Exit Survey Results (N = 22):

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.

<u>Core Course Topic Area</u>	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std Deviation</u>
Ethics & Professional Orientation	2.00	5.00	4.27	0.77
Research & Program Evaluation	2.00	5.00	4.09	0.81
Assessment & Testing	2.00	5.00	4.05	0.72
Human Growth & Development	2.00	5.00	3.91	0.87
Individual Counseling Theory	2.00	5.00	4.09	0.92
Group Counseling Theory	2.00	5.00	4.09	0.81
Multicultural Counseling	2.00	5.00	3.91	0.75
Career Counseling	2.00	5.00	3.64	1.00
<u>Clinical Counseling Topic Area</u>	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std Deviation</u>
Addiction Counseling	2.00	5.00	3.68	0.84
Mental Disorder Diagnosis & Treatment	3.00	5.00	4.50	0.67
Clinical Skills (Pract & Internship)	1.00	5.00	4.14	0.99

Regarding the first core program objective, when asked “Taking the entire program into account, how satisfied are you with the first program training objective: Demonstrating ethical and evidence-based diagnosis knowledge and skills” the following ratings were shown:

<u>Program Objective #1</u>	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std Deviation</u>
	2.00	5.00	4.18	0.91

Regarding the second core program objective, when asked “Taking the entire program into account, how satisfied are you with the second program training objective: Demonstrating ethical and evidence-based treatment intervention knowledge and skills” the following ratings were shown:

<u>Program Objective #2</u>	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std Deviation</u>
	2.00	5.00	4.05	0.90

Regarding program-related organizational feedback, the following ratings were shown:

	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std Deviation</u>
Program Faculty Guidance	1.00	5.00	4.05	1.13
Program Published Resources	2.00	5.00	4.09	0.81

Overall Satisfaction With Program	1.00	5.00	4.09	1.02
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Sample Positive Qualitative Feedback:

- Good communication between faculty and students.
- the professors were very supportive
- I appreciated the strong leadership and guidance in this program. Everything was explained in an easy to follow way. I greatly valued my time as a student in the CMHC program and will cherish the things I've learned throughout my career.
- The program provides modern approaches/information to prepare students for the field.
- The faculty is extremely supportive and does a great job teaching the material necessary to being a successful counselor. Practicum was also a great experience.
- Faculty is helpful & very nice
- classes prepared me for clinical work
- The professors were overall fantastic, knowledgeable in their areas of expertise, and were available when needed for extra support.
- The program's largest strength is its dedicated and passionate faculty who very highly convey their care and passion for teaching in each course. These faculty work diligently to go beyond the textbook and provide students with real-world examples and experiences in order to prepare the next generation of clinicians to the best of their ability. The extra work these teachers put into the classroom to help prepare students for the CPCE, practicum, internship, and licensure is this program's biggest strength.
- The strengths of this program were the knowledgeable professors, their willingness to bring real-life experience and examples to the classroom, and the practicum experience at the University of Akron's on-site clinic. It made a world of difference to be surrounded by peers and advisors during our practicum experience, ultimately making it an easier transition into internship.

Sample Constructive Qualitative Feedback:

- If possible, I would include a requirement for students to complete "x" hours for shadowing. We observed, I think, 4 sessions at the clinic during preprac, but I feel that more hours of shadowing throughout the program would be beneficial. Especially if students can shadow licensed counselors (not just students at the clinic). I think this would give students a better understanding of what counseling looks like and give them the opportunity to observe different theories and techniques.
- Better technology in practicum.
- more communication among the students
- Structuring more opportunities into the curriculum to practice applying theoretical knowledge and clinical skills with peers or faculty members in a supervised manner, allowing for greater feedback from instructors before practicum, would be helpful.
- more practice applying theories
- I would like to see increased flexibility with class times and instructor availability.
- Effective communication. Support groups during internship. Resources for comprehensive exams. Additional knowledge about diagnosis for substance use disorder.

Graduate/Alumni Survey Results (N = 5):

Survey results show that all respondents reported being licensed as a Professional Counselor or Professional Clinical Counselor, and all respondents reported being currently employed in the counseling profession.

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.

Topic Area	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std Deviation</u>
Understanding and using a counselor identity and related ethical codes	4.00	5.00	4.60	0.49
Using multiculturally informed treatment approaches	3.00	4.00	3.60	0.49
Using human growth and development knowledge/skills within counseling	3.00	4.00	3.80	0.40
Practicing career development and/or counseling	3.00	5.00	4.00	0.63
Demonstrating knowledge/skills related to counseling theories and core techniques	4.00	5.00	4.40	0.49
Practicing group counseling interventions	4.00	5.00	4.40	0.49
Performing client assessment and/or testing-related skills	2.00	5.00	4.20	1.17
Using counseling-related research and/or program evaluation to inform counseling practice	3.00	5.00	4.00	0.63
Competently diagnosing mental disorders in counseling practice	4.00	5.00	4.60	0.49
Competently treating mental disorders in counseling practice	4.00	5.00	4.80	0.40

When asked “Reflecting on your experience since graduating, overall how would you rate the UA CMHC program” the following ratings were shown:

Overall Satisfaction	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std Deviation</u>
	4.00	5.00	4.40	0.55

Sample Positive Qualitative Feedback:

- The CMHC program at The University of Akron emphasized the importance of developing a counselor identity, how we are different than other mental health professions, and the value of belonging to counseling associations such as the OCA, ACA, and Chi Sigma Iota which is a strength of our program. The on site counseling center provided a practicum experience with rigorous training through the use of video recorded sessions and group consultation with peers and supervisors with expertise in the field.

- The biggest strength the program has is having passionate and caring staff teaching the courses. They made the courses interesting and cared about their students.

Sample Constructive Qualitative Feedback:

- I wish the classes were offered at more times throughout the year so that those working full-time could have more options, especially in the summer semester.
- More planning in regard to when certain classes will be offered, and thus when students need to make sure to take them.
- long term staff members for main courses

Supervisor/Employer Survey Results (N = 7):

Survey results showed that 86% of respondents provided supervision to current students, and 43% were involved in employment decisions for one or more graduate.

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 supervisor/employer satisfaction.

Topic Area	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation
Understanding and using a counselor identity and related ethical codes	3.00	5.00	4.50	0.76
Using multiculturally informed treatment approaches	3.00	5.00	4.50	0.76
Using human growth and development knowledge/skills within counseling	3.00	5.00	4.33	0.75
Practicing career development and/or counseling	3.00	5.00	4.17	0.69
Demonstrating knowledge/skills related to counseling theories and core techniques	3.00	5.00	4.17	0.69
Practicing group counseling interventions	3.00	5.00	4.50	0.76
Performing client assessment and/or testing-related skills	3.00	5.00	4.33	0.75
Using counseling-related research and/or program evaluation to inform counseling practice	3.00	5.00	4.50	0.76
Competently diagnosing mental disorders in counseling practice	3.00	5.00	4.50	0.76
Competently treating mental disorders in counseling practice	3.00	5.00	4.33	0.75

When asked “Based on your experience during the prior year, overall how would you rate the UA CMHC program” the following ratings were shown:

Overall Satisfaction	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation
	3.00	5.00	4.17	0.75

Sample Positive Qualitative Feedback:

- Internship supervisors were easily accessible and willing to work with myself and the student to help them grow and address any concerns. Students are encouraged to research, get feedback on skills and try getting out of their comfort zone.
- The program appears to prepare students to be open for growth and skills development.
- The interns have been motivated to learn, self-sufficient, and receptive to feedback and coaching. They complete assignments I give them related to cases and are eager to learn! They do well with multicultural counseling awareness.

Constructive Qualitative Feedback:

- Would like to have more coordination with their internship coordinator/supervisor. While I haven't had any problems at all with my 2 Akron interns, would like to at least check in once throughout the semester.

Curriculum Modifications and Program-Related Improvement

The program faculty engaged in a comprehensive review of the program curriculum in 2025, consulted with the program advisory board, and proposed the following changes:

- Proposed course title and/or description updates for COUN 635, COUN 662, COUN 664, COUN 666, and COUN 732. The proposed updates improve clarity for students and align with current professional guidelines and terminology.
- Proposed one new course—COUN 668 Trauma, Disaster Response, and Crisis Counseling—to reflect current terminology, professional expectations, and current demands for counselor education.
- Proposed program curriculum modification by (a) removing COUN 714 Evaluation of Mental Status from the curriculum, (b) removing COUN 621 Counseling Youth At Risk from the program elective, (c) adding COUN 734 Addiction Counseling II: Treatment Planning & Intervention Strategies as a new program elective, and (d) adding COUN 668 Trauma, Disaster Response, and Crisis Counseling as a program requirement to the curriculum.

The program expects to implement the aforementioned proposed changes starting Fall 2026, pending curriculum proposal approvals. The curriculum guide for the degree and related updates can be viewed online at <https://bulletin.uakron.edu/graduate/colleges-programs/health-professions/counseling/clinical-mental-health-counseling-ma/#requirementstext>.

The program received the “reaffirm accreditation with a progress report” decision from CACREP in March 2025. The program completed and submitted the requested progress report in November 2025.

Significant Program-Related Changes

One core CMHC faculty, Dr. Robert Schwartz, retired in 2025. Dr. Schwartz served as the CMHC Program and Clinical Coordinator prior to his retirement.

The School of Counseling conducted a faculty search for the CMHC program in Fall 2025. Based on the search, one new CMHC faculty, Dr. Darla Slagh, joined the program starting Spring 2026.

The program has adopted a new management model since Fall 2025 with one Program Coordinator for both the CMHC and School Counseling Programs and one Clinical Coordinator for both the CMHC and School Counseling Programs. Currently, Dr. Yue Dang serves as the Program Coordinator and Dr. Jessica Wiener serves as the Clinical Coordinator for both programs.