Counseling Program 2021

Counseling Student Outcomes, Annual Report, and Program Adjustments

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CACREP Annual Report
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Introduction
The University of Nevada, Reno Counselor Education Program engages in yearly quantitative and qualitative program evaluation to inform systemic program changes. This evaluation process is guided by the 2016 standards from the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The annual report is intended to provide students, administrators, field site supervisors, and other key stakeholders with information about the vital statistics, program evaluation results, and program modifications initiated between the summer of 2020 and May, 2021.

The University of Nevada, Reno Counselor Education Program is administered through the Human Development, Family Science, and Counseling Department in the College of Education. The program delivers 4 CACREP-accredited program areas:

- Master of Science: School Counseling
- Master of Science: Clinical Mental Health Counseling
- Master of Science: Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling
- Ph.D. in Education: Counselor Education and Supervision

Counseling Program Student Outcomes
Counseling Program Student Outcomes and Vital Statistics for the University of Nevada, Reno Counseling Program are uploaded annually to CACREP. The data below reflect the vital statistics reported to CACREP on December 22, 2021.

Number of Graduates in the Past Year
In 2021 the University of Nevada Counseling Program graduated 15 master’s students and 4 Ph.D. students. The master’s graduates were in the following program areas:

- School Counseling—1 graduate
- Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling—10 graduates
- Clinical Mental Health Counseling—4 graduates
- Doctoral Level—Counselor Education and Supervision—4 graduates

Completion Rate
Across all three master’s program areas, in 2021 the 3-year completion rate was 100% for Clinical Mental Health Counseling students, 100% for Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling students, and 100% for School Counseling students, with 87% of students graduating within the expected time frame. Because of the switch from a 2-year to 3-year school counseling track, only one school counseling student graduated in 2021. One reason for the high graduation rate is careful student selection. In addition, the courses are delivered through a cohort model, which has a positive influence on student retention.

The completion rate of doctoral students who entered the program four years ago was 75%. The doctoral student retention rate can be difficult to calculate because the university allows doctoral students a generous time frame for degree completion. The
doctoral program is highly structured, which is the key reason for the strong completion rate.

**Licensure or Certification Examination Pass Rate**
All 15 graduates in 2021 passed the CPCE Comprehensive Examination, a 100% pass rate. The national examination encompasses the NBCC core areas that serve as a foundation for the practice of counseling. Data are not available on licensure exam passing rates for Clinical Mental Health and Marriage, Couple, and Family graduates, because per state licensure laws, graduates do not take the exam until two years post-graduation or 2,000 hours of supervised clinical practice.

All School Counseling graduates (100%) became licensed school counselors within six months of graduating from the program.

**Job Placement Rate of Students/Graduates**
100% of the School Counseling graduates in 2021 secured positions as school counselors. The placement rate of CMHC graduates was 100%, with students accepting positions at community agencies. The placement rate of Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling was 100%. Two MCFC students were not actively searching for employment at the time of data collection.

**Counseling Program Enrollment**
In the 2020-2021 school year, the counseling program had 71 master’s students enrolled amongst 3 program areas, as well as 5 doctoral students. A sharp reduction in the number of graduate assistantships allocated to the counseling program in 2020-2021 led to a decrease in the doctoral enrollment for the fall of 2021. The overall enrollment for the counseling program has been strong for the past several years.

**Program Applicants**
In 2021 56 applicants applied to the master’s program with 28 of the applicants accepted into the program (50%). Enrollment is carefully monitored by program faculty to align with the 1:12 faculty/student FTE ratio required by CACREP. The doctoral program had 6 applicants for the fall of 2021. 2 were accepted for an acceptance rate of 33%. If more graduate assistantships become available, faculty anticipate accepting more doctoral students.

**Assessment Data Summary**
In 2021 the Counselor Education Program continued collecting data following the procedures described in the UNR CACREP Assessment Plan. Because the doctoral program is individualized and has fewer than eight students, doctoral assessment data is kept individually in student files. All current doctoral students in 2021 met or exceeded
doctrinal program outcomes. Doctoral student portfolios will be reviewed in April of 2022 and results will be published in the 2022 CACREP Annual Report.

Taskstream, an assessment system produced by Watermark, was utilized in 2021 to collect data for the master’s students in SC (School Counseling), MCFC (Marriage, Couples, and Family Counseling), and CMHC (Clinical Mental Health Counseling). The data collected on Taskstream addressed the following Key Performance Indicators:

1. **Students will demonstrate the capacity to practice counseling from a strong foundational understanding of ethical and legal issues, intentionally integrating counseling ethical practices into day-to-day professional activities.**
2. **In keeping with the ACA multicultural competencies, students will develop self-awareness, knowledge, and skills to prepare them to be contemporary, relevant, and culturally informed practitioners in clinical, marriage and family, and school counseling settings.**
3. **Students will demonstrate knowledge of lifespan development and the capacity to integrate knowledge of developmental theory into practice.**
4. **Students will demonstrate competence in understanding the world of work and the relationship between mental health and life roles such as work, school, and home.**
5. **Students will gain an understanding of the theories and research related to helping relationships and will develop the skills to apply their knowledge in professional, therapeutic relationships.**
6. **Students will demonstrate knowledge of group process dynamics, group counseling, and group work, including group theories, stages of group, leadership styles, and therapeutic factors.**
7. **Students will demonstrate a broad understanding of validity and reliability of assessments, the selection and use of assessment tools, client assessment and diagnosis, trauma assessment, and the assessment of self-inflicted harm and danger to others.**
8. **Counseling students will demonstrate the capacity to select, analyze, and apply research to inform practice, including evidence-based practices and theory-based interventions appropriate to their designated setting and personal theoretical orientation.**
9. **Clinical Mental Health Counseling students will demonstrate an understanding of foundational knowledge (such as psychological testing), contextual factors (such as trauma, co-occurring disorders, poverty, and culture), and the demonstration of competence in clinical mental health practice.**
10. **Marriage, Couple, and Family counseling students will demonstrate an understanding of foundational knowledge (such as family systems theory and assessment), contextual factors (such as trauma, intergenerational influences, and culture), and the demonstration of competence in the practice of marriage, couple, and family counseling.**
11. **School counseling students will demonstrate an understanding of foundational knowledge (such as models of school program development and school assessment), contextual dimensions (such as the roles of school counselors, signs of substance abuse, and effective school leadership), and the demonstration of competence in the practice of school counseling.**

Rubrics were used to measure the 11 key performance indicators, with a rating of ‘3’ on the rubric representing “meets expectation.” Mean averages and percentages on Taskstream showed that all admitted master’s students met or exceeded the expected standard. Taskstream data are not kept for Graduate Special (non-admitted) students.
The PDCA-RI (Professional Dispositions Competency Assessment, Revised Incident) was used to track and respond to student dispositional incidents. Another version assessing the same dispositions (the PDCA-R) was used to collect basic dispositional assessment for aggregate purposes. The cumulative results showed the disposition of most concern in 2021 to be Conscientiousness followed by Openness. All student individual dispositional issues reported by or to the core faculty were addressed by the faculty in faculty meetings followed by either conversation with students or student remediation plans. No students were suspended or dismissed from the Counselor Education Program due to dispositional concerns during 2021.

In the summer of 2021 two anonymous Qualtrics surveys were conducted, one with recent alumni and one with current students. Summer was selected as an ideal time for data collection because the May graduates were excluded and the new students not yet enrolled, yielding data from the current student group. Three current students assisted in the development of the survey items. Most items related directly to the 11 key performance indicators above. The graduate survey data will be analyzed in 2022. The survey participants for the current survey data included:

- 88.89% female; 8.33% male; 2.78% Gender non-conforming (no Two Spirit or Transgender reported)
- 5.56% AIAN; 2.78% Black/African American; 16.67% Latino/Hispanic; 58.33% White/Caucasian; 11.11% Multi-Racial; 2.78% Other; 2.78% declined to respond
- Marriage, Couples, and Family majors dominated the survey responses (50.0%), followed by Clinical Mental Health (30.56%), and School Counseling (19.44%).
- 51.43% had within the prior month completed their first year in the program with the remainder of participants having finished their second year

Program Changes Based Upon Survey Data

Three assessment meetings were held in the fall of 2021 (August, November, and December) at which faculty discussed the qualitative and quantitative survey results and determined program changes based upon survey data. The program changes indicated below were agreed upon in the fall of 2021 and are based upon student survey data. The implementation of most of the program adjustments will occur in 2022, though some adjustments have already been partially implemented.

1. Students reported a high level of impact of Covid-19 on their overall well-being. Faculty agreed to continue with flexible policies on student absences from classes due to covid-related reasons, following published university guidelines. Faculty agreed not to structure grading policies in such a way that students missing classes due to Covid-19 would be academically punished.
2. In response to student concerns about accessing the CPCE exam, faculty agreed to host the exam on campus (hosted in October 2021).
3. Students indicated a desire for more faculty ethnic diversity. The faculty determined that though the core faculty are currently Caucasian, efforts would be made to recruit and hire adjunct faculty who bring greater diversity to the program.
4. Some master’s students indicated on the survey an interest in involvement in faculty research projects. The faculty determined that instead of making all research
opportunities open only to doctoral students, in future semesters opportunities to serve on research teams would be made available to master’s students.

5. Students had negative reactions to the scheduling of the Trauma course during Wintermester; the course has been moved to spring semester.

6. Students suggested that though they appreciate the doctoral students, they would like to see fewer master’s courses taught by doctoral students. Program faculty agreed that a careful examination of this issue is needed. The faculty made the decision to design a policy during 2022 related to doctoral student course instruction.

7. On the issue of diversity in the program curriculum, students indicated agreement with an increased emphasis on inclusion of diversity. The faculty made the determination that a matrix showing the nature of the inclusion of diversity in every counseling course would be developed and distributed to students at New Student Orientation, including a wide range of aspects of diversity.

During the summer of 2021 informal feedback from students regarding challenges securing client direct Internship hours in the Downing Clinic led to the development of three new external sites in the fall of 2021.

An additional program adjustment decision was made regarding the Lifespan Development course. Student understanding of lifespan development concepts appears to be uneven, based upon course instruction. In 2022 the faculty plan to review the rotation and instruction of this course to bring about more consistency.

**Summary and Forecast for 2022**

This report summarizes the 2021 program evaluation and quality improvement action steps taken by the UNR Counselor Education Program.

Some of the COVID-19 challenges from 2020 have continued into 2021. Contact tracing and masks, along with unexpected hybrid classes added to complex nature of the year. We still have concerns about resources, specifically replacing our retiring faculty member, Dr. Harrison as the university continues to freeze positions. This year, the College of Education reorganized, and programs combined and became departments. Our previous name of Counseling and Educational Psychology no longer reflected the program within this department structure and the name changed to Counselor Education Program.

We appreciate our students taking the time to complete the survey. In 2022, we will implement the 7 proposed program changes to address the recommendations made by the students.

Counseling academic programs are a collaborative effort. We owe our deepest appreciation to the field sites, including the Eddy House, Churchill County and Washoe County School districts, and select community agencies, as well as to our supportive program alumni. Our site supervisors engage our students in the important work of translating theory into real-world practice. We are also grateful to the many University of
Nevada administrators who continue to support and resource our program, the Nevada Counseling Community Advisory Board, and (most of all) our students.