



2018 Annual Assessment Review

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Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC)
Marriage and Family Counseling/Therapy (MFC/T)

The annual assessment review examines multiple data points throughout the program to develop a plan for future recommendations. The review also focuses on changes made during the 2018 calendar year. This report will focus on program changes and future recommendations initially in the document, to be followed by the report; the report below informs the future recommendations.

Master's Program Changes and Progress Made in 2018

- Development and implementation of a syllabi template (All courses will fully implement by April 2019)
- Changed the course placement of standards CMHC B-2, MFC/T A-3 and A-4; review and adjust placement for all multicultural standards
- Changed CMHC schedule to Monday and Monday/Thursday schedule
- Partially developed methods to increase employer, site, and alumni survey response rates
- Reviewed where APA style is the focus of a course assignment; identified ways to improve an emphasis on writing and APA in multiple courses across the program
(*Partially completed in 2018; New Implementation Date 9/11/19; Dr. Lahey)

Future Recommendations (Master's)

- Review and adjust methods of candidacy (including adjusting the measure to better assessment disposition, knowledge, and skills) **(Dr. Lahey/Heather/Erin/Dr. Schut – Date 9/15/19)**
- Refine and adjust specialty (MFC/T and CMHC) comprehensive examination questions **(Heather/all faculty – Date 4/1/19)**
- Explore option for adjusting writing sample prompt for admissions requirement **(Dr. Lahey/Heather – Date 7/1/19)**
- Evaluate all research-based student learning outcomes (CACREP standards) in multiple courses to determine best method for evaluation and improvement of student scores **(Dr. Schut – Date 8/1/19)**
- Development and implementation of core rubrics for APA formatting, group presentations, class participation, etc. **(Dr. Lahey/Dr. Christian/Heather; Implementation Date 8/1/19)**

Doctoral Program Changes and Progress Made in 2018

- Significant increase in the number of students and faculty presenting at ACA, ACES, SACES, TCA, and TACES conferences

- Updated the process of doctoral remediation including follow-up procedures
- Developed and implemented of a syllabi template (final implementation by April 2019)
- Reviewed the writing requirement during the admissions process and potentially add a new method of assessing writing
- Created writing style rubric for Dissertation Proposal, Research, and Continuation courses
- Standardized syllabus for Dissertation Research and Continuation to include required dissertation submissions, rubric, expectations, etc.

Future Recommendations (PhD)

- Evaluate all research-based student learning outcomes (CACREP standards) in multiple courses to determine best method for evaluation and improvement of student scores (**Dr. Schut – Date 8/1/19**)
- Continue to develop new methods to encourage doctoral student scholarly research, conference presentation, publications, etc. (i.e. More faculty submit at least one proposal with students a year) (**Implementation Date 12/1/19; all faculty**)
- Review writing assignments in all doctoral level courses; ask faculty to update syllabi to emphasize multiple submission points for one paper to encourage greater student learning with the editing and review process. If this is not possible, encourage faculty to add a review of literature to the course (***Not completed in 2018; New Implementation Date 11/1/19; Dr. Lahey/Dr. Schut; all faculty**)
- Development and implementation of core rubrics for APA formatting, writing style, group presentations, class participation, etc. (**Implementation Date 8/1/19; Dr. Lahey/Dr. Schut**)

Student Admissions

Admission Ratings

Admission data, from 2018 faculty admission interviews, was reviewed for 59 students. Of 58 students with data, 30 had perfect scores of five (excellent) on every item (51.7%); this is somewhat higher than the 42.5% reported for 2017 and much higher than 31% and 35% reported prior in the two years prior. In addition, 20 students received high scores between 4.5 and 4.9 (34.5%), six received moderate scores between 4.1 and 4.4 (10.3%), and two received lower scores between 3.9 and 4.0 (3.4%). The overall mean of all items for these 58 students was 4.78 ($SD = .29$), virtually identical to 4.77 ($SD = .36$) in 2017 and 4.73 in 2016.

Anecdotally, we continue to observe overall improvement in candidate quality over the past four years compared to years prior. Although the lack of improved scores does not reflect this, during this time we have sought to better differentiate between interviewees. Focusing on the differences between the exemplary candidate (on one end) and the unqualified candidate (on the

other), we continue to do a better job distinguishing between the qualifications of more and less qualified applicants.

Strength Areas: During the interview process, students were strong in areas related to *self-awareness and motivation for entering the field* ($M = 4.84$) and *higher order thinking abilities* ($M = 4.84$).

Growth Areas: During the interview process, students were minimally weaker in areas related to *oral communication skills* ($M = 4.67$).

Admission Decisions

In 2018, the large majority of students who started the program in 2018 were accepted “unconditionally” (74.1%) into the CMHC or MFC/T programs. Students about whom we have general academic concerns (based on GRE, MAT, and/or undergraduate GPA), writing concerns (based on a writing assessment), or both academic/ writing concerns, are accepted on a conditional basis.

Strength Areas: Overall, we rated unconditional students highest on interview ratings ($M = 4.83$). As expected, students with academic and/or writing concerns scored somewhat lower (M s = 4.37 to 4.77) on the assessment portion of the applicant interview.

Knowledge / Learning Outcomes

Summary of Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Results

In 2018, all 193 standards were assessed in the spring, summer, and fall semesters. Instructors in every master’s and doctoral level course assess students across standards. When students were rated more than once on a given standard, an average score was calculated.

The minimum benchmark for all course standards (i.e., meeting expectations) is a score of 2.2 out of 3.0. A score of 2.55 or greater, which represents 85% of the highest possible score, represents the ideal benchmark (i.e., exceeds expectations). In the appendix, we have identified any scores of 2.5 or lower as areas of potential concern, but here we highlight scores under 2.2.

Growth Areas: Starting with the 56 Core Standards for the three semesters (168 standards in three semesters), the number not meeting expectations was 8, 4, and 2, respectively (a total of 13 of 168, or 7.7%). The lowest scores were primarily found in *Research and Program Evaluation* (11 or 13).

Strength Areas: Those categories in which average scores for a set of standards was above 2.7 (i.e., exceeded expectations) were noted as strength areas. For Core Standards, strength areas included *Social and Cultural Diversity*, *Human Growth and Development*, *Career Development*, *Helping Relationships*, *Group Work*, and *Assessment*.

Specialty Area Standards

Growth Areas: With regard to 101 CMHC and MFC/T Specialty Standards (303 standards in three semesters), only 11 ratings did not meet the 2.55 minimum benchmark (3.6%). Six low ratings were in CMHC, five low ratings were in MFC/T.

The lowest CMHC area was 2.10 (Spring 2018 CMHC-I Standards 1-3). The lowest MFC/T area was 2.63 (Summer 2018 MFCT-G Standards 1-3) (Most of which are research-related).

Strength Areas: Specific strengths were found in 28 of 36 CMHC areas and 24 of 30 MFC/T areas.

Comprehensive Exam Scores (CPCE)

Strength Areas: For spring, summer, and fall, students exceeded ($M = 90.2$, 94.2 , and 87.6 respectively) the total score as compared to national statistics – exit exam ($M = 87.13$).

Growth Areas: Lower scores were noted in *Assessment*, *Career*, and *Helping Relationships*

Assessment of Skills/Practice

Evaluation of Counseling and Therapy Videos (Skills Assessment)

However, ratings in 2018 “bounced back,” showing increases in all areas assessed. In fact, 2017 to 2018 showed the most change from one year to the next with an increase of .30 points ($M = 7.04$, $SD = .70$).

Strength Areas: Students were strong with *warmth* ($M = 7.62$) and *acceptance* ($M = 7.64$) in the evaluation of counseling and therapy videos.

Growth Areas: *Advanced reflection* ($M = 6.70$) and *Cohesion* ($M = 6.73$; for MFC/T only) were rated the lowest.

Personal and Professional Fit for Counseling

Candidacy

The candidacy process involves assessment of (1) student academic progress and advancement toward completion of degree requirements, (2) knowledge of self (insight/awareness of assumptions, personal values, and biases that may affect beliefs about and interactions with others), (3) career motivation and aptitude (strengths/growth areas), (4) appropriateness of future career plans, and (5) progress toward securing a practicum/internship site. Students must complete a four-page candidacy paper addressing the last four areas. A candidacy form is used to rate students in these areas, and each student receives a decision from core faculty.

According to data thirty students achieved eligibility for candidacy in 2018, of which 29 became candidates on the first attempt (96.7%).

Internship Evaluation

Ratings increased to 7.70 (out of an 8 point scale) in 2018. Professional disposition scores varied only slightly (7.69 to 7.88), indicating consistently strong ratings of dispositional characteristics. All 32 students with completed evaluations met or exceeded expectations. Professional behaviors scored a little lower, with ratings ranging from 7.38 to 7.88. *Knowledge of the professional literature* was the weakest area.

These areas are assessed using an 8-point scale.

Strength Areas: The students were also stronger in the professional disposition *motivated to learn and grow* ($M = 7.88$) and stronger for professional behaviors *seeks consultation* ($M = 7.88$).

Growth Areas: The ratings also noted decreases in regards to *multicultural competencies* ($M = 7.69$) and *knowledge of professional literature* ($M = 7.38$) in the final evaluation from the site supervisor evaluating professional behaviors. Of note, the overall scores still exceed expectations.

Site Supervisor and Employer Survey Information (Master's)

Site supervisors were surveyed in 2018 and asked questions related to the overall graduate counseling program. Ratings range from a high of 4.50 (out of 5.00) to a low of 4.00. New areas of growth in 2018 include *Understanding what it means to be a professional counselor/therapist*, and *Understanding research methods, assessment standards, and program evaluation*, each with mean scores of 4.0. Areas of strength identified in 2018 include *maintain appropriate professional boundaries in individual and group counseling settings* ($M = 4.50$) and the *supervisee can set professional goals* ($M = 4.29$). It should be noted that poor ratings given to three students had a negative impact on scores.

Employers were surveyed in 2018 and asked questions related to their overall experience with alumni as well as satisfaction with the graduate counseling program. For most ratings, 90%-100% of scores were 4s and 5s (on a scale from 1 to 5). The lowest score was 4.13, *Understanding career development and the impact of related life factors on career development*, followed by *Managing personal anxiety during counseling and/or supervision sessions* ($M = 4.17$) and *My employee can use the current DSM to make accurate diagnoses* ($M = 4.25$).

Doctoral Program in Counselor Education and Supervision (Ph.D.)

Student Admissions

Of the doctoral students admitted in 2018, the mean interview ratings were good ($M = 4.70$) to excellent ($M = 5.00$). The mean of all items for the admitted students slightly lower than in 2017.

Strength Areas: During the interview, students rated high in *concept of own preferred theoretical orientation* ($M = 5.00$).

Growth Areas: During the interview, students rated lower in *fits professionally with the program* ($M = 4.42$) and *professional demeanor* ($M = 4.86$).

Personal and Professional Dispositions

Doctoral Candidacy

Candidacy in the doctoral program involves an annual team assessment by all doctoral faculty members. The current cumulative GPA, number of courses with Cs or lower, student concern forms, writing assessment, and progression toward completion of dissertation is used as means of assessment. Based on these criteria, students may be (1) approved for continuance in the program, (2) continuance with remediation for (a) behavioral issues or (b) academic issues, or (c) writing issues, or (3) denied continuance. Students receive notice of these decisions by letter. The continuing increase of students in remediation, therefore, is in large part due to several students nearing the time-out phase of the program in which dissertations need to be completed.

Growth Areas: 8.5% of the students were indicated for *timing out concerns*.

Doctoral Practicum (Dispositions and Skills)

During the doctoral practicum within the CSL 7104 Specialized Systemic Family Therapy course, students are evaluated twice by the site supervisor—once at the semester midterm and once at the end of the semester. The students are evaluated across a variety of areas including professional dispositions and behaviors, as well as skills and interventions.

Strength Areas: During doctoral practicum, students were strong in regards to all assessed areas.

Growth Areas: During doctoral practicum, students were weaker in regards to *practices and sensitivity to diversity issues, handles constructive criticism well, and shows appropriate insight into own behaviors*.

Knowledge/Learning Outcomes

Summary of Student Learning Outcome (SLO) Results

In the doctoral CES program, 42 of 45 standards rated in 2018 met or exceeded expectations (93.3%). This is an improvement from 2017 (84.4%), and similar to 2016 when 44 of 45 standards met or exceeded expectations (97.8%). Unmet standards are listed here (all of which are research-based):

CES-IV-E-3, Fall (2.5)
 CES-IV-F-3, Fall (2.2)
 CES-IV-G-3, Spring (2.4)

Written Comprehensive Exams

The structure of the doctoral written comprehensive exams changed from 2017 to 2018. Overall, passing rates increased. Exam performance was strongest in the specialty areas of Teaching/Supervision and Counseling (M=7.0 and 7.2, respectively).

Doctoral Alumni

2018 employs data from doctoral alumni, including *Learning Outcomes* and *Personal and Professional Skills*. Of the 12 learning items, eight of 12 met or exceeded the threshold of 4.0 (66.7%). Of the 10 personal/professional skills, seven of 10 met or exceeded this threshold (70%). *Ability to effectively employ consultation procedures* had the lowest score (3.67). (*overall scores were impacted by one low rating outlier)

Employer and Site Supervisor Survey Information (PhD)

Employers were surveyed regarding their experience working with doctoral graduates in 2018. The majority of the surveys responded to were regarding graduates working as counselor educators. Scores range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). All 13 supervision and counseling skills exceeded the 4.0 threshold. Concerning teaching and research, the only area that failed to reach 4.0 was *Demonstrating the ability to formulate research questions and create research designs appropriate for professional research and publication* (M= 3.67).

Only one respondent completed the survey.

Summary

A comprehensive systematic assessment of the CMHC, MFC/T, and CES (doctoral) programs was conducted for review of the 2018 calendar year. Assessment areas included Admissions, Knowledge/Learning Outcomes, Personal and Professional Fit for Counseling, and Skills/Practices. Data sources include admission interview ratings, candidacy assessments,

student learning outcomes based on coursework, national and comprehensive exams, evaluations of counseling videos, and internship evaluations.

Areas of strength for the master's programs include the admission of high quality candidates at the master's level. Admission ratings were higher compared to previous years. With regard to knowledge/learning outcomes, students excelled. Doctoral students showed strong counseling practicum dispositions and skills.

Areas of growth for the CMHC, MFC/T, and CES program(s) emerged in less favorable scores in research-specific learning outcomes.