

Western Carolina University Counseling Program Annual Report 2019-2020

The mission of the Western Carolina University (WCU) Counseling program is to subscribe to the standards of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Program (CACREP) and prepare ethically-bound professional counselors for entry-level positions in clinical and school settings. During the 2019-2020 academic year, approximately 75 students were enrolled in both the Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) and School Counseling (SCH) tracks. Twenty-eight students graduated (20 CMHC, 8 SCH), indicating a 91% completion rate (four students (1 CMHC, 3 SCH) withdrew due to personal reasons). Ninety-three percent of graduates were employed as professional counselors within three months of graduation (95% CMCH, 88% SCH). One-hundred percent passed the National Counselor Exam (N = 14), 100% passed the Comprehensive exam (N = 28), and 100% passed the North Carolina Praxis-II (Professional School Counseling portion) exam (N = 8).

The WCU Counseling program's objectives and student learning outcomes (SLO) are as follows: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in:

- 1) Ethical practice
- 2) Social and cultural diversity
- 3) Human development
- 4) Career development
- 5) Individual counseling
- 6) Group counseling
- 7) Assessment, diagnosis, and treatment planning
- 8) Research and program evaluation
- 9) Specialty area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling or School Counseling
- 10) Professional dispositions and behaviors

The WCU Counseling program faculty conduct continuous, systematic program evaluation, both formally and informally, to determine how student learning outcomes are met. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed, both semesters (Fall 2019 and Spring 2020), and included: (a) faculty end-of-semester review of each student, (b) site supervisor evaluations, (c) graduate exit survey, (d) Comprehensive exam scores, (e) National Counselor Exam (NCE) scores, (f) NC Praxis-II (Professional School Counseling portion) exam scores, and (g) alumni and/or employer surveys.

The Faculty End-of-Semester Review is conducted by Counseling program faculty of each student, each semester (Fall and Spring). Performance measures include academic performance, counseling skills, and professionalism, with scales of 0 – 3 (0 = harmful, 1 = below expectations, 2 = meets expectations, and 3 = exceeds expectations).

Site-Supervisor Evaluations are conducted by site-supervisors in schools and agencies. Each student is measured on all 10 student learning outcomes, each semester (Fall and Spring), with scales of 0 – 3 (0 = harmful, 1 = below expectations, 2 = meets expectations, and 3 = exceeds expectations).

Graduate Exit Surveys are given to students at the end-of-the-semester they graduate (December and May). Measures of graduates' self-report include preparedness in terms of knowledge and skill for all 10 student learning outcomes, and their perceptions of the quality of instruction, supervision, and advisement they received. Ratings are on a 1 - 5 scale (1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = not Sure, 4 = strongly disagree, and 5 = disagree); the rating scale for perceptions of program quality is a 1 – 5 scale (1 = highly satisfactory, 2 = satisfactory, 3 = not sure, 4 = unsatisfactory, and 5 = highly unsatisfactory).

Comprehensive Exams are given to students in their last semester of the program. For the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 academic years, students took the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam (CPCE); however, due to COVID-19 challenges in testing sites administering the CPCE in Spring 2020, Counseling students were offered a program-administered comprehensive exam.

National Counselor Exam is offered by the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC) testing administrators in Spring and Fall semesters.

NC Praxis-II (Professional School Counseling portion) Exams are offered to Counseling students in the Fall and Spring semesters by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) via Western Carolina University.

Alumni Surveys are given to attendees at two program-offered conferences, each year. Employers measure students on all 10 student learning outcomes, with a scale of 1 = 5 (1 = poor, 2 = fair, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = excellent).

Employer Surveys are given to attendees at two program-offered conferences, every 2 -3 years (last measure Fall 2018; next measure Spring 2021). Employers measure students on all 10 student learning outcomes, with a scale of 1 = 5 (1 = poor, 2 = fair, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = excellent).

Assessment	Data Collected & Analyzed by Faculty
Faculty End-of-Semester Review of each student	104 total; 48 students reviewed Fall 2019, 56 students reviewed Spring 2020
Site-Supervisor Evaluations	57 total: 29 students (26 practicum, 3 internship) Fall 2019; 28 students (5 practicum, 23 internship) Spring 2020
Graduate Exit Survey	14 total: 26 surveys sent to graduates in December 2019 and May 2020 (54% completion rate)
Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam (CPCE) Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 Comprehensive Exam scores (Comps) Spring 2020	25 of 25 students passed exam; 5 students completed the CPCE (2 Fall 2019, 3 Spring 2020), 20 students completed Comps Spring 2020
NCE scores	14 of 14 students passed exam (Spring 2019 and Fall 2019; Spring 2020 scores not available at time of report)

NC PRAXIS-II (school counseling portion)	8 of 8 professional school counseling students (Fall 2019 and Spring 2020)
Alumni Surveys *No employer surveys were collected; next collection 2021	2 received from school counseling alumni Fall 2019

Following is an aggregated report on each SLO, a program modification plan by the Counseling program faculty to maintain or modify curricular offerings, and an Appendix that identifies SLO, methods of measurement, and assessors.

SLO #1: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in Ethical Practice

Faculty End-of-Semester Review of Students F19/S20	2.04 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Fall 2019	2.6 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Spring 2020	2.8 (meets expectations level = 2)
CPCE/Comps	Met national average/100% pass
NCE	Above national average
Graduate Exit Surveys	100% students reported strongly agree/agree to being prepared in knowledge and skill in ethical practice
Alumni surveys	3 (exceeds expectations)

Summary: The aggregate data indicate students met or exceeded expectations in knowledge and skills in Ethical Practice. And, compared to last year's data, there were fewer incidents of academic integrity (2 incidents).

Action Plan: Faculty will continue teaching and assessing students' knowledge and skills related to professional orientation and ethical practice, including continued monitoring academic integrity.

SLO #2: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in Social and Cultural Diversity

Faculty End-of-Semester Review of Students F19/S20	2.03 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Fall 2019	2.4 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Spring 2020	2.5 (meets expectations level = 2)
CPCE/Comps	Above national average/100% pass
NCE	Above national average
Graduate Exit Surveys	100% students reported strongly agree/agree being prepared in knowledge and skill in social and cultural diversity
Alumni surveys	2.5 (meets expectations level = 2)

Summary: The aggregate data indicate students met or exceeded expectations in knowledge and skills in Social and Cultural Diversity.

Action Plan: Faculty will maintain current practices, including teaching and assessing students' knowledge and skills related to social and cultural diversity.

SLO #3: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in Human Development

Faculty End-of-Semester Review of Students F19/S20	2.1 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Fall 2019	2.5 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Spring 2020	2.3 (meets expectations level = 2)
CPCE/Comps	Above national average/100% pass
NCE	Passed/Slightly below national average
Graduate Exit Surveys	100% students reported strongly agree/agree being prepared in knowledge and skill in human development
Alumni surveys	2.5 (meets expectations level = 2)

Summary: The aggregate data indicate students met or exceeded expectations in knowledge and skills in human development in all measures except NCE scores for cmhc students (100% students passed the NCE). It was noted, however, that site supervisors rated students as meeting expectations of this SLO, and 100% of graduates' responses on the exit survey indicated the COUN 625: Developmental Perspectives of Counseling course was rated as a strong, preparatory course in their preparation as a counselor. And, compared to last year's data, school counseling students improved their scores to meet national standards.

Action Plan: Faculty will maintain current practices, including teaching and assessing students' knowledge and skills related to human development, and will re-assess cmhc students' NCE scores for this SLO, next year.

SLO #4: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in Career Development

Faculty End-of-Semester Review of Students F19/S20	2 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Fall 2019	2.3 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Spring 2020	2.3 (meets expectations level = 2)
CPCE/Comps	Above national average/100% pass
NCE	Above national average
Graduate Exit Surveys	100% students reported strongly agree/agree being prepared in knowledge and skill in knowledge and skill in career development
Alumni surveys	3 (exceeds expectations)

Summary: The aggregate data indicate students met or exceeded expectations in career development.

Action Plan: Faculty will maintain current practices, including teaching and assessing students' knowledge and skills related to career development.

SLO #5: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in Individual Counseling

Faculty End-of-Semester Review of Students F19/S20	2.1 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Fall 2019	2.4 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Spring 2020	2.4 (meets expectations level = 2)
CPCE/Comps	Met national average/100% pass
NCE	Above national average (Helping Relationships subsection)
Graduate Exit Surveys	100% students reported strongly agree/agree being prepared in knowledge and skill in individual counseling
Alumni surveys	3 (exceeds expectations)

Summary: The aggregate data indicate students met or exceeded expectations in individual counseling.

Action Plan: Faculty will maintain current practices, including teaching and assessing students' knowledge and skills in individual counseling.

SLO #6: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in Group Counseling

Faculty End-of-Semester Review of Students F19/S20	2.03 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Fall 2019	2.5 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Spring 2020	2.4 (meets expectations level = 2)
CPCE/Comps	Above national average/100% pass
NCE	Above national average
Graduate Exit Surveys	100% students reported strongly agree/agree being prepared in knowledge and skill in group counseling
Alumni surveys	3 (exceeds expectations)

Summary: The aggregate data indicate students met or exceeded expectations in group counseling.

Action Plan: Faculty will maintain current practices, including teaching and assessing students' knowledge and skills in group counseling.

SLO #7: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in Assessment, Diagnosis, and Treatment Planning

Faculty End-of-Semester Review of Students F19/S20	2.03 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Fall 2019	2.4 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Spring 2020	2.2 (meets expectations level = 2)
CPCE/Comps	Above national average/100% pass
NCE	Above national average
Graduate Exit Surveys	100% students reported strongly agree/agree being prepared in knowledge and skill in assessment, diagnosis, and treatment planning
Alumni surveys	2 (meets expectations level = 2)

Summary: The aggregate data indicate students met or exceeded expectations in assessment, diagnosis, and treatment planning.

Action Plan: Faculty will maintain current practices, including teaching and assessing students' knowledge and skills in assessment, diagnosis, and treatment planning.

SLO #8: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in Research and Program Evaluation

Faculty End-of-Semester Review of Students F19/S20	2.1 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Fall 2019	2.4 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Spring 2020	2.3 (meets expectations level = 2)
CPCE/Comps	Above national average/100% pass
NCE	Above national average
Graduate Exit Surveys	100% students reported strongly agree/agree being prepared in research and program evaluation
Alumni surveys	2.5 (meets expectations level = 2)

Summary: The aggregate data indicate students met or exceeded expectations in research and program evaluation.

Action Plan: Faculty will maintain current practices, including teaching and assessing students' knowledge and skills in research and program evaluation.

SLO #9: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in Specialty area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Faculty End-of-Semester Review of Students F19/S20	2.01 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Fall 2019	2.3 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Spring 2020	2.1 (meets expectations level = 2)
NCE	Not assessed on NCE

Graduate Exit Surveys	100% students reported strongly agree/agree being prepared in knowledge and skill in clinical mental health counseling
Alumni surveys	No responses on surveys received

Summary: The aggregate data indicate students met or exceeded expectations in the specialty area of clinical mental health counseling.

Action Plan: Faculty will maintain current practices, including teaching and assessing students' knowledge and skills in clinical mental health counseling.

SLO #9: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in Specialty area: School Counseling

Faculty End-of-Semester Review of Students F19/S20	2.12 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Fall 2019	2.3 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Spring 2020	2 (meets expectations level = 2)
NCE	Not assessed on NCE
NC PRAXIS II	100% pass
Graduate Exit Surveys	100% students reported strongly agree/agree being prepared in knowledge and skill in school counseling
Alumni surveys	3 (exceeds expectations)

Summary: The aggregate data indicate students met or exceeded expectations in the specialty area of professional school counseling.

Action Plan: Faculty will maintain current practices, including teaching and assessing students' knowledge and skills in professional school counseling.

SLO #10: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in Professional dispositions and behaviors

Faculty End-of-Semester Review of Students F19/S20	2.1 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Fall 2019	2.6 (meets expectations level = 2)
Site-Supervisor Evaluations- Spring 2020	2.7 (meets expectations level = 2)
NCE	Not assessed on NCE
Graduate Exit Surveys	100% students reported strongly agree/agree being prepared in knowledge and skill in professional dispositions and behavior
Alumni surveys	3 (exceeds expectations)

Summary: The aggregate data indicate students met or exceeded expectations in professional dispositions and behaviors.

Action Plan: Faculty will maintain current practices, including teaching and assessing students' professional dispositions and behaviors.

Additional data: From the Graduates Exit survey, students measure the quality of the instruction, supervision, and advisement received during the program. All graduates (N = 14) reported 100% satisfaction (either highly satisfactory or satisfactory) in overall quality of instruction in content courses by counseling faculty, and in overall quality of supervision in field experiences by counseling faculty. Additionally, faculty meet with the Counseling Program Advisory Board (consisting of alumni, site supervisors, employers, and community stakeholders) each year, and discuss student and program outcomes and initiatives, and seek feedback and suggestions for improvements. Data analyzed from the Board led to faculty discussion about tele-health counseling skills obtained in field placement sites and courses, especially due to COVID-19 restrictions experienced in Spring 2020.

Program Modifications Based on Data Findings

In addition to the above action plans, faculty will continue efforts to increase the number of completed Alumni and Employer surveys. Due to program-applicants' requests, the Counseling program now offers a professional school-counseling licensure pathway for individuals with degrees in counseling in other specialty tracks who wish to obtain eligibility to become professional school counselors.

As aforementioned, due to complications taking the CPCE because of COVID-19 restrictions at testing sites, students were given the choice of completing a program-administered comprehensive exam (Comps) or the CPCE (if they wished to wait to complete the CPCE at later date). Three students chose to take the CPCE, 20 students chose to take Comps. As of Fall 2020, comprehensive exams will return to being program-administered, rather than completing the CPCE.

Appendix

Student Learning Outcomes	Measures of Assessment	Assessor(s)
SLO #1: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in Ethical Practice	Faculty End-of-Semester Review	COUN faculty
	Site Supervisor evaluations	Site supervisors
	Comprehensive exam subsection on Professional Orientation and Ethics	Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE)
	National Counselor Exam (NCE) subsection of Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice	National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC)
	Alumni Survey item #1	Alumni of WCU Counseling program
SLO #2: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in Social and Cultural Diversity	Faculty End-of-Semester Review	COUN faculty
	Site Supervisor evaluations	Site supervisors
	Comprehensive exam subsection on Social and Cultural Foundations	Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE)
	National Counselor Exam (NCE) subsection of Social and Cultural Diversity	National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC)
	Alumni Survey item #2	Alumni of WCU Counseling program
SLO #3: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in Human Development	Faculty End-of-Semester Review	COUN faculty
	Site Supervisor evaluations	Site supervisors
	Comprehensive exam subsection on Human Growth and Development	Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE)
	National Counselor Exam (NCE) subsection of Human Growth and Development	National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC)
	Alumni Survey item #3	Alumni of WCU Counseling program
SLO #4: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill	Faculty End-of-Semester Review	COUN faculty
	Site Supervisor evaluations	Site supervisors
	Comprehensive exam subsection on Career and Lifestyle Development	Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE)

in Career Development	National Counselor Exam (NCE) subsection of Career Development	National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC)
	Alumni Survey item #4	Alumni of WCU Counseling program
SLO #5: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in Individual Counseling	Faculty End-of-Semester Review	COUN faculty
	Site Supervisor evaluations	Site supervisors
	Comprehensive exam subsection on Helping Relations	Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE)
	National Counselor Exam (NCE) subsections of Helping Relationships and Counseling Process	National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC)
	Alumni Survey item #5	Alumni of WCU Counseling program
SLO #6: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in Group Counseling	Faculty End-of-Semester Review	COUN faculty
	Site Supervisor evaluations	Site supervisors
	Comprehensive exam subsection on Group Work	Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE)
	National Counselor Exam (NCE) subsections of Group Work	National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC)
	Alumni Survey item #6	Alumni of WCU Counseling program
SLO #7: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in Assessment, Diagnosis, and Treatment Planning	Faculty End-of-Semester Review	COUN faculty
	Site Supervisor evaluations	Site supervisors
	Comprehensive exam subsection on Appraisal, Research, and Program Evaluation	Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE)
	National Counselor Exam (NCE) subsections of Assessment and Diagnostic & Assessment Services	National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC)
	Alumni Survey item #7	Alumni of WCU Counseling program
SLO #8: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in Research and Program Evaluation	Faculty End-of-Semester Review	COUN faculty
	Site Supervisor evaluations	Site supervisors
	Comprehensive exam subsection on Research and Program Evaluation	Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE)
	National Counselor Exam (NCE) subsection of Research & Program Evaluation	National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC)
	Alumni Survey item #8	Alumni of WCU Counseling program
SLO #9: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill	Faculty End-of-Semester Review	COUN faculty
	Site Supervisor evaluations	Site supervisors
	National Counselor Exam (NCE) overall score	National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC)

in Specialty area: Clinical Mental Health Counseling --OR--	Alumni Survey item #9	Alumni of WCU Counseling program
SLO #9: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in Specialty area: School Counseling	Faculty End-of-Semester Review	COUN faculty
	Site Supervisor evaluations	Site supervisors
	Praxis II: Professional School Counselor exam overall score	Educational Testing Service (ETS)
	Alumni Survey item #9	Alumni of WCU Counseling program
SLO #10: The counselor-in-training demonstrates knowledge and skill in Professional dispositions and behaviors	Faculty End-of-Semester Review	COUN faculty
	Site Supervisor evaluations	Site supervisors
	Alumni Survey item #10	Alumni of WCU Counseling program