



Opportunity afforded

**COUNSELING PROGRAM
ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
2017-2018**

Annual Improvement Plan

Purpose: The Counseling (CNS) Program is dedicated to improve the Program curriculum, organization, and communication by frequent and routine evaluations. Various groups help in the evaluation process: CNS students during their last semester of the Program, graduates of the CNS Program within six months of graduating, employers of recent graduates, and practicum and internship site supervisors. Through an anonymous survey format, each of these groups provide feedback on the strengths and challenges of our Program curriculum and student educational experiences. The surveys are the Program Evaluation, the Graduate Survey, the Graduate Employer Survey, and the Site Supervisor Evaluation of Counseling Program. The CNS faculty compile, analyze, discuss and utilize the feedback to determine future foci and/or changes to the Program. In addition, at the end of each semester, CNS faculty review the progress of each student on all CACREP standards and utilize this information to enhance program curriculum and develop student remediation, if necessary. Lastly, we share the reports with our Advisory Board and discuss possible changes to the program.

Major Findings: There were a few trends found throughout the four surveys for both strengths and challenges of the Program.

Program strengths. Survey participants strongly identified the:

- ❖ Approachability of faculty
- ❖ Rigor of Program
- ❖ Experiential nature of the program (e.g., hands-on-activities, case studies, etc.)
- ❖ Faculty support
- ❖ Diversity of Faculty
- ❖ Faculty commitment to student success
- ❖ Faculty commitment to helping students develop and enhance foundational counseling skills
- ❖ Thoroughness of program to prepare counselors with high counseling-efficacy

Site Supervisors: Overall, the site supervisors ranked the counseling program between adequately prepared and well prepared on all standards. The highest rankings were in professional/personal growth, professional identity, ethics, and openness to feedback. Supervisors also ranked the students skills highest in career/lifestyle development (though there were three not applicable) and human growth and development. The overall ratings in actual skills were fairly consistent and at the high end of adequately prepared.

Need for Program improvement. Responses to program improvement included: preparation for CPCE, preparation for testing classes, requiring legal and ethical issues in counseling for both tracks, and increased attention to grief and loss.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's): In addition to the above surveys, the CNS faculty also reviewed each CACREP standard for every student in courses the previous academic year. Below is an overview of the results.

Met or Exceeded Core Standards: All students met or exceeded the core standards measured in the following classes: CNS 617- Introduction to Counseling, CNS 618- Issues in Mental Health Counseling, CNS 734- Marriage, Couples and Family Counseling, CNS 752- Trauma and Crisis Counseling, CNS 686- Career Counseling, CNS 619- Foundational Counseling Techniques, CNS 624- Theories of Counseling, CNS 692- Group Counseling, CNS 790- Practicum (fall 2016, spring 2017), CNS 794- Internship I (fall 2016, spring 2017), CNS 795- Internship II (fall 2016, spring 2017), CNS 635- Human Growth and Development (summer 2016, fall 2016, spring 2017), CNS 671- Multicultural Counseling (summer 2016, spring 2017). No Core Standards were assessed in CNS 676- Diagnosis and Treatment Planning or CNS 722- Substance Use and Addictions Counseling.

Developing or Did not Meet Core Standards: Three students did not meet standards G1h, G1i, and G8e in CNS 720- Elementary School Counseling. One student did not meet standard G1c and G5g in CNS 725- Middle/High School Counseling

Met or Exceeded Clinical Mental Health Counseling Standards: All students met or exceeded the CMHC standards measured in the following courses: CNS 618- Issues in Mental Health Counseling, CNS 734- Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling, CNS 752- Trauma and Crisis Counseling, CNS 722- Substance Use and Addictions Counseling, CNS 790- Practicum (spring 2017, fall 2016), CNS 794- Internship I (fall 2016), CNS 795- Internship II (fall, 2016, spring 2017), CNS 671 (summer 2016, spring 2017). No CMHC standards were assessed in CNS 692- Group Counseling.

Developing or Did not Meet CMHC Standards: One student did not meet standard D9 in CNS 625- Legal and Ethical Issues due to not submitting paper.

Met or Exceeded School Counseling Standards: All students met or exceeded the SC standards measured in the following courses: CNS 617- Introduction to Counseling, CNS 624- Theories of Counseling, CNS 671- Multicultural Counseling, CNS 635- Human Growth and Development (summer 2016, fall 2016, spring 2017), CNS 676- Diagnosis and Treatment Planning. CNS 790- Practicum (fall 2016, spring 2017), CNS 794- Internship I (fall 2016, spring 2017), No standards were assessed in CNS 692- Group Counseling.

Developing or Did not Meet School Counseling Standards: CNS 720- Elementary School Counseling: Five students performed below standard for at least one of the following: A1, A3, A5, D3, E1, E2, F3, H3, I2, I3, I4, J2, J3, K1, K3, M1, M3, M4, M5, M6, N4, O2, O4, P1 and P2. One student failed to submit an assignment and therefore was not assessed on a number of these standards. This student is required to retake the course. One student failed to demonstrate knowledge of many of these standards because of cheating and plagiarism. This student is not allowed to retake the course, and has not been allowed to continue in the school counseling program. Two students graduated at the end of the semester. Each student was able to articulate the standards, but has a weakness in professional writing. The final student will continue in the program. She will be asked to demonstrate knowledge of standard G3 and O2 within other courses. CNS 725- Middle/High School Counseling- One student did not meet or is developing competency in standards A6, A7, B2, C2, C4, C6, E3, G1, G2, I5, J1, K2, M7, O1, O3, and P1. This student performed poorly on a midterm task, and did not complete three

assignments. This student attempted to drop the course toward the end of the semester. She will be required to retake the course, during which she will receive extra support to help her meet the standards.

Plan for improvement: The CNS Program will continue to work on various areas to enhance the curriculum and the learning experiences for students. Many changes have already been made. For instance, each course syllabus has been reorganized, standardized (according to CACREP national standards, CAEP, and EPSB), and updated to strengthen the focus on counseling theory, multicultural issues, and application of skills. Also, the organization of the Program itself has been restructured to offer consistency in course offering and uniformity of student expectations.

In the upcoming year, the Program will use the results of these surveys and SLO's to further develop the curriculum and Program structure. While the vast majority of the students met or exceeded the Core and program specific CACREP standards, there are some areas to review.

- ❖ Adjustments that will be made to specific courses include:
 - Given feedback from students and other stakeholders, the faculty will develop and propose a course in counseling children and adolescents. To maintain the 60-hour limit in the EdS CMHC track, this child and adolescent course will replace the required CNS 617 (Introduction to Counseling). Much of the content in CNS 617 was being delivered in the other classes, and per stakeholders, including program faculty and students, a specialty class that focuses on providing mental health services to children and adolescents was needed. Furthermore, the program will selectively identify courses to teach the standards that were originally being taught in 617 to insure maintenance of program rigor.
 - To provide more opportunity to explore diversity in a pluralistic society, faculty will explore the possibility of offering counseling students a study abroad experience.
 - To assist students in their ability to conceptualize cases, faculty will integrate the use of case studies and oral presentations in CNS 619 and CNS 624.
 - Given the mixed results regarding the midpoint exams, faculty will continue to monitor students and determine if a change in exam methodology is needed.
 - Case presentation rubric for practicum and internships is being redeveloped to accurately assess student skills.
 - CNS 625 – Additional discussion board responses will be added
 - CNS 619 – Additional hands on practice using written scripts will be incorporated into course
 - CNS 752- Trauma and Crisis Counseling now includes online modules for students to complete in Psychological First Aid and Incident Command.
 - CNS 635- Human Growth and Development: Case study rubric was updated to better assess students. Added optional live video conferences and video for juggling assignment.
 - CNS 618- Issues in Mental Health Counseling: Exam was updated to cover three more CMHC standards.

- ADM 630: Methods of Research: Infuse writing component in course to aid in development of research proposals.
- CNS 624- Theories of Counseling: Require students to present case conceptualizations based on the theories covered each week.
- CNS 694- Advanced Counseling and Supervision: Greater focus on supervision.
- CNS 619- Foundational Counseling Techniques: added current handouts and reading quizzes.
- CNS 790- Practicum: Changed course textbook to require students purchase a seminal work in the theory they choose.
- ❖ Faculty will continue keep a list of students who have not successfully met each standard and identify a future class; however, faculty will determine how students are to meet those standards in that particular class.
- ❖ Faculty will continue to enhance the advising process by using and regularly updating a database that outlines student progress through program and continue to utilize Facebook, twitter and Instagram to better reach students and community.

Changes will be made to the curriculum if they align with MSU, CNS Program and CACREP standards. Program faculty are/have:

- ❖ CNS 617- Introduction to Counseling is being eliminated and CNS 710- Counseling Children and Adolescents is being added. Standards currently covered in CNS 617 have been moved to CNS 790- Practicum, CNS 618- Issues in Mental Health, CNS 635- Human Growth and Development, and CNS 619- Foundational Skills.
- ❖ continuing to enhance the curriculum of courses by updating course material according to up-to-date research, the needs of students and the feedback from graduates and employers. CNS faculty have made changes to course structure and material according to CACREP standards.
- ❖ continuing to fine-tune the program organization, including course scheduling, student assessments and evaluations.
- ❖ increasing the communication between faculty and students, administration, site supervisors, etc. about program modifications by updating the CNS website regularly and contacting students in-class and through e-mail about changes. Also, CNS faculty will maintain communication with site supervisors by an on-site visit around midterm, and through phone, email, or in person contact.
- ❖ Mu Sigma Chi is starting its third year as a chapter of Chi Sigma Iota. Student projects for the year will include efforts in advocacy, personal and professional development and community service.
- ❖ reviewing the Midpoint Clinical Application Examination to ensure we are accurately assessing the case studies. Revised adult question and rubric.
- ❖ Faculty will continue to encourage students to participate in advocacy activities. This past year, students in CNS 618 participated in the CACREP advocacy week completing projects in transformational advocacy, social network advocacy, political advocacy and program advocacy.

The counseling faculty is taking the proper steps to make positive changes to the structure, organization and flow of the counseling program. This will be an ongoing process, but it is necessary to meet our purpose of preparing our students for careers as professional counselors.