



Opportunity afforded

**COUNSELING PROGRAM
ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
2018-2019**

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.

Program Evaluation: The counseling faculty aim to conduct an assessment of the effectiveness of the counseling program. An important component of this review is to ascertain the quality and relevancy of the program and course content from the point of view of current students and graduates. Results are analyzed and used to help the program identify areas of strength and areas that are in need of enhancement. The following are the results of the evaluation administered to six students who each completed a program evaluation at the completion of their exiting exam.

Program strengths:

- 6 of 7 respondents reported that the program completely met their expectations.
- 4 of 6 respondents (one respondent did not address the item) reported that program content completely met their expectations
- 5 of 7 respondents reported that overall quality of faculty as excellent
- 3 of 6 respondents (one respondent did not address the item) reported that program content was excellent
- Knowledge of faculty and support that faculty provide was noted by respondents
- Respondents indicated that they acquired skills in their ability to provide counseling services
- CNS 748 was a course that received positive comments from several respondents
- Multicultural counseling issues received positive comments from several respondents

Need for program improvement:

- A few respondents pointed to some courses feeling too constricted (e.g., online courses, school counseling courses, 676); and were desirous of these courses being fleshed out
- Issues with CNS 683 & 689 were noted (this is consistent with respondents from previous semesters)

Curriculum content strengths. Courses that left an impression on students continue to be foundational courses (e.g., CNS 617, 619, 624, & 671) and clinical classes (e.g., CNS 790, 794, & 795)

Need for curriculum improvement. CNS 689 continues to be a course that is deemed to be less relevant to students in the program.

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

Disposition Standards: Student dispositions are measured after CNS 619- Foundational Counseling Techniques (n = 6), CNS 790- Practicum (n = 6), and CNS 795- Internship II (n = 3). All students met or exceeded the dispositional standards at these points in their programs.

Clinical Standards: During their clinical experiences (CNS 790- Practicum [n = 6], CNS 794- Internship I [n = 5], and CNS 795- Internship II [n = 3]), students counseling skills are assessed by faculty supervisor and site supervisor. All students met or exceeded the clinical standards at these points in their programs.

Capstone Projects: Students complete three capstone assignments during the course of their counseling program (Midpoint Exam [n = 3], Oral Defense [n = 3], and CPCE [n = 2]). All students met or exceeded the capstone projects at these points in their programs.

Core Standards: Each Core CACREP standard is assessed via an assignment, evaluation, or task in the program. Faculty review each standard for each student. All core standards were met by all students.

Clinical Mental Health Counseling Standards: Each CMHC CACREP standard is assessed via an assignment, evaluation, or task in the program. Faculty review each standard for each student. All but one standard was met by each student. One student did not meet C9 (Understands professional issues relevant to the practice of clinical mental health counseling). C9 is assessed in an exam in CNS 618- Issues in Mental Health Counseling. The student will be reassessed in CNS 790- Practicum.

School Counseling Standards: Each SC CACREP standard is assessed via an assignment, evaluation, or task in the program. Faculty review each standard for each student. All standards were met by all students.

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:

- ❖ In lieu of CNS 689- Individual Testing, school counseling students will now take CNS 752- Trauma and Crisis Counseling
- ❖ Revitalization of Mu Sigma Chi (Murray State's chapter of Chi Sigma Iota) to the promote advocacy & leadership aspects of the counseling profession
- ❖ Integration of web-enhanced, synchronous course offerings
 - This format will require courses to meet for two hours each with one hour of supplemental online instruction
- ❖ Midpoint exam is being replaced with the Case Conceptualization, Ethics, and Skills Assessment (CESA) to better capture clinical readiness
 - The CESA will be part of the practicum experience
 - The CESA will assess foundational knowledge from CNS 619- Foundational Counseling Skills, CNS 624- Theories of Counseling, CNS 625- Legal & Ethical Issues, CNS 671- Multicultural Counseling
- ❖ CPCE Remediations
 - Faculty will no longer provide CPCE remediations; rather, students will continue to take the CPCE until passed (i.e., obtaining an overall score that is at least within one standard deviation of the national mean).
- ❖ Interviews for admission into the counseling program
 - Individual interviews will be scheduled as complete applications are submitted
 - Application deadlines are removed

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.