



UNIVERSITY OF WEST GEORGIA

Professional Counseling, Clinical Mental Health - MED [13110101_3203_MED_OC_A]

Cycles included in this report:
Jun 1, 2021 to May 31, 2022

**Program Name: Professional Counseling, Clinical Mental Health - MED
[13110101_3203_MED_OC_A]****Reporting Cycle: Jun 1, 2021 to May 31, 2022****Program Student Learning Outcome SLO1**

Candidates will demonstrate professional dispositions consistent with the field of professional counseling

Measure/Method

In Fall 2014 and continuing to the present, the CEP faculty implemented a rubric to evaluate students' professional dispositions and behaviors. This 11-item rubric was developed by the faculty to reflect dispositional standards that are consistent with professional standards established by the Council on the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The rubric utilizes a 4-point Likert scale (unacceptable, developing, proficient, exemplary) to rate students on dispositions and behaviors in the following areas: (1) punctuality and attendance, (2) preparedness and adherence to deadlines, (3) professional dress and presentation, (4) openness to feedback and supervision, (5) ethical conduct, (6) communication skills, (7) appreciation of diversity and adjusting counseling interventions to meet clients' diverse needs, (8) fairness and equity in professional tasks, (9) collaboration, (10) professional boundaries, and (11) self-awareness. This rubric is administered at four important points in the students' matriculation: (1) CEPD 6160, Group Counseling [completed by supervising faculty member], (2) CEPD 6188, Practicum [completed by both the site supervisor and faculty supervisor], and (3) CEPD 6182, Internship [completed by both the site supervisor and faculty supervisor]. Students are able to see their ratings at each of these three points and use this feedback to adjust their conduct accordingly.

Type of Measurement

Direct (Involves looking at actual samples of student work produced in the program, i.e. essay, exam, presentation, etc.)

Success Criterion

The average rating of students' professional dispositions and behaviors will meet or exceed 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale), which is a rating of proficient or better, on a summative administration of the Professional Dispositions and Behaviors Rubric in CEPD 6182 (the final class in which this rubric is utilized during matriculation). Data is reported as the mean student score for all students in the respective programs (CMHC and School [SC]) for the academic year.

Results

CMHC: 3.65

Result Status

Met

Interpretation & Analysis of Results

Reviewing this data shows that the program is surpassing student performance goals (3.65), but with an insignificant decrease of .01 from AY21 (3.66). CEP students continually earn high ratings on their professional dispositions and behavior, compliance with ethical codes, and intrapersonal awareness from their University Supervisor and Site Supervisor. However, in reviewing patterns of ratings across three AYs, there is some room for students to improve in applying theoretical frameworks. Also, there is a minor difference in the mean between collaborating teachers (site supervisors) and faculty ratings (3.53 compared to 3.76). The largest gap in ratings is related to identifying appropriate diagnostic tools.

To address the difference between site supervisors' and faculty ratings, the faculty will implement a more structured conversation with site supervisors regarding the evaluation(s) during the midterm site visit. Previously, the site visits were more casual in nature to check in on the student's performance. In future semesters, during the site visit, faculty will go through the major topics from the Professional Dispositions & Behaviors rubric with the site supervisor to ensure each topic is covered thoroughly. Before site visits are completed, all faculty teaching Internship courses will be

required to meet and review the rubric and discuss the protocol for covering it with site supervisors. Due to the subjective nature of the content on the evaluation forms, it is expected that with more intention being placed on the definitions of each content area by both faculty and site supervisors, the difference between ratings will decrease.

Program Student Learning Outcome SLO2

Candidates will demonstrate professional skills consistent with the field of professional counseling

Measure/Method

In Fall 2014 and continuing to the present, the CEP faculty implemented two rubrics (one for the CMHC program and one for the SC program) to evaluate students' knowledge and skills related to practice as a professional counselor. These rubrics are referred to as the Field Placement Evaluation and are used exclusively in CEPD 6188, practicum, and CEPD 6182, internship. These rubrics were developed by the faculty to rate multiple knowledge and skill standards developed by CACREP for the respective areas of Clinical Mental Health Counseling and School Counseling. These rubrics are completed by the students' site supervisors in both practicum and internship because the site supervisors are able to physically observe students in actual clinical practice. Students are able to view the results of these evaluations and use that feedback to adjust their professional work.

Type of Measurement

Direct (Involves looking at actual samples of student work produced in the program, i.e. essay, exam, presentation, etc.)

Success Criterion

The average rating of students' professional knowledge and skill will meet or exceed 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale), which is a rating of proficient or better, on a summative administration of the Field Placement Evaluation Rubric in CEPD 6182 (the final class in which this rubric is utilized during matriculation). Data is reported as the mean student score for all students in the respective programs (CMHC and School [SC]) for the academic year.

Results

CMHC: 3.56

Result Status

Met

Interpretation & Analysis of Results

In reviewing this data, it is evident that the program is meeting student performance goals with a slight decrease of .1 from AY21 (AY21: 3.66; AY22: 3.56). Students consistently score high marks, particularly related to instilling hope and fostering resilience, writing clinical records, and adhering to ethical codes. However, a detailed review of the data indicates some room for improvement in the following areas: assessing for suicide risk, identifying appropriate diagnostic tools, generating an accurate differential diagnosis, and utilizing multicultural knowledge and competence.

To address the lower rating on assessing suicide risk, we are reimplementing the ASIST Suicide Prevention Training Program for all students enrolled in Practicum. In regards to the other topics that were rated lower, in AY23, faculty will review and edit the syllabi and course SLOs as a team for those corresponding courses (CEPD 7111 Diagnosis and Treatment of Mental and Emotional Disorders; CEPD 7138 Multicultural Counseling).

Measure/Method Near-Completer Survey

Additionally, the students are given a Near-Completer Survey 1-2 semesters before they plan to graduate. One item asks them to state if they believe the program has prepared them to be skillful, competent counselors in the field. Another item asks them to identify any areas for improvement in the program. These questions allow faculty to gauge what students are feeling in anonymously.

Type of Measurement

Indirect (Information gathered through means other than looking at actual samples of student work. These include surveys, exit interviews, focus groups, etc.)

Success Criterion

90% of students will rate their satisfaction with the program's preparation of their counseling skills as 'Agree' or 'Strongly Agree.'

Results

From AY21, 13 CMHC students completed the Near-Completer Survey and 100% of them chose 'Agree' (6) or 'Strongly Agree' (7) on the question asking if they believed the program sufficiently prepared them to be competent counselors.

There is also a short answer question that asks students for feedback regarding areas that could be improved. The AY21 data suggests that students would like the Multicultural class to be more in-depth and in a different semester than Summer. Also, students would like more information about the licensure process in their Practicum/Internship courses, as well as more opportunities to practice their counseling skills before they begin Practicum.

Result Status

Met

Interpretation & Analysis of Results

Firstly, the amount of students that complete the Near-Completer Survey is low compared to the total amount of graduating students. Faculty will discuss ways to improve rates of completion. Additionally, regarding the suggestions made in the short-answer question about program improvements, students noted that they would like more skills practice before they begin Practicum. Faculty have agreed to review and edit the Applied Counseling Theories course to allow for more practical skill application. This course was taught by a faculty member that is no longer at UWG in the past, so it is believed that with an overhaul of the course, this suggestion could be sufficiently addressed. Another piece of feedback included students wanting more information about the licensure process in their Practicum course. Faculty have already added this module item to the said course for Spring of 2023.

Program Student Learning Outcome SLO3

Candidates will know the major concepts, theories, and practices articulated in current counselor preparation standards

Measure/Method

The Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) is a nationally standardized exit examination in counselor education. All students in the program are required to pass this exam as an exit criterion. The CPCE has 8 scales, which align directly with one program objective. The CPCE is administered by the UWG Testing Center each semester (Fall, Spring, Summer). Data is analyzed by the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC). Scoring is done through NBCC; national means and standard deviations are calculated for all administrations of the exam across the country. NBCC reports data to the program. The program has defined a passing score as one standard deviation below the national mean, which is a definition that is also used by many CACREP accredited programs. Students are individually contacted by the program and informed of their test results.

Type of Measurement

Direct (Involves looking at actual samples of student work produced in the program, i.e. essay, exam, presentation, etc.)

Success Criterion

80% of students will score a minimum of one standard deviation below the national mean on the CPCE. Data is reported as the pass rate for all students who took the exam during the respective AY.

Results

95% of CMHC students scored a passing score (one standard deviation below the national mean or higher) on the CPCE. Passing scores for each semester - Fall 21: 62 or 73 (various versions were given); Spring 22: 75; Summer 22: 75.

Result Status

Met

Interpretation & Analysis of Results

In reviewing this data, the program is meeting the student performance goals for AY22. Although some of the evaluation scores have dropped slightly (no significance), the CPCE data for CMHC students has increased by 17% from AY21. The faculty have been and continue to discuss ways to improve CPCE scores by implementing additional and creative teaching strategies in the courses with the lower scores (currently those areas are Research, Multiculturalism, Career Counseling, and Assessment/Testing). In AY23, faculty will review and edit the syllabi and course SLOs as a team for those corresponding courses. Additionally, an agenda item has been added to the monthly CEP faculty meeting to discuss how each active course is addressing CPCE material.

Impact of Prior Improvement Plan(s)

Reviewing the AY2021 data and Prior Improvement Plans, many of the concerning areas have improved. Expectations for ratings from site supervisors and faculty evaluators in the Internship course have been exceeded over the last two AYs. As previously noted, we will improve our communication efforts with Site Supervisors to decrease the difference in their evaluation ratings and faculty evaluations of students' Professional Dispositions at their Internship site. Additionally, the CPCE scores for CMHC students over AY21 have increased by 17% from AY20.

Previously, there was a concern about students' readiness and aptitude for graduate studies. Due to a high number of CMHC applications over the past two cycles, as well as a cap placed on acceptances (due to CACREP standards and the calculation of FTE), this no longer appears to be as much of a concern. The quality of students (none being admitted that were below our minimum admissions requirements in AY21) and readiness for the Counseling field seems to be at a high level and the faculty is excited to see if this also rings true in AY23 data.

Status of Prior Improvement Plan

Ongoing

Improvement Plan for Next Year SLOs 1 & 2

Although our Student Performance Goals were met for AY22, SLO 1 & 2's scores have slightly decreased. Because there is a small difference in ratings between site supervisors and faculty on student evaluations in Internship, the faculty has created a plan to discuss these evaluations more in-depth with site supervisors. Faculty will implement a more structured conversation with site supervisors regarding the evaluation(s) during the midterm site visit. Previously, the site visits were more casual in nature to check in on the student's performance. In future semesters, during the site visit, faculty will go through the major topics from the Professional Dispositions & Behaviors rubric with the site supervisor to ensure each topic is covered thoroughly. Before site visits are completed, all faculty teaching Internship courses will be required to meet and review the rubric and discuss the protocol for covering it with site supervisors. Due to the subjective nature of the content on the evaluation forms, it is expected that with more intention being placed on the definitions of each content area by both faculty and site supervisors, the difference between ratings will decrease. Moreover, if necessary, faculty will pursue specific reliability training to participate in for inter-rater reliability. Additionally, faculty have agreed to remind students in each course of the Professional Dispositions evaluation that faculty and Site Supervisors complete to ensure they are made aware of all the traits for which they will be evaluated. At this point, it is not discussed much within the program or other courses, so this plan should increase scores on those evaluations as well as provide students with a deeper understanding of the roles of their supervisors and gatekeeping process for the counseling profession.

Improvement Plan for Next Year SLOs 1&2 (2nd goal)

Although our Student Performance Goals were met for AY22, SLO 1 & 2's scores have slightly decreased. Faculty have planned to integrate more information in their courses (especially the course for which these topics are featured) about the following topics: application of theoretical frameworks, assessing suicide risk, identifying appropriate diagnostic tools, generating an accurate differential diagnosis, and utilizing multicultural knowledge and competence. In AY23, faculty will review and edit the syllabi and course SLOs as a team for those corresponding courses. Additionally, an agenda item has been added to the monthly CEP faculty meeting to discuss how each active course is addressing current CPCE material.

It should be noted that we were unable to provide ASIST Suicide Prevention Training Program in AY22 due to COVID-19 and pandemic-related issues in providing the program. Typically this program

is provided in an intensive two-day, in-person format during the students' Practicum course. It is expected that once this program is implemented again, the ratings on assessing suicide risk will improve. ASIST training has already been completed for Fall of 2022.

Improvement Plan for Next Year SLO 3

Despite the fact that the CMHC students' scores on the CPCE have significantly increased from the previous AY, there are still some common areas from the exam that our students consistently score low. These areas include research and program evaluation, career theories, social and cultural diversity, and assessment and testing. Each of these areas represents an entire course offered in our CMHC program. Due to some faculty changes, it is our plan to focus on these courses over AY23 and improve scores in these areas. Beyond placing faculty that are experts in those areas within those courses, we will also provide more creative and effective teaching strategies.

Additionally, we will implement quizzes and/or present actual CPCE/NCE test questions about the lower-rated topics in their corresponding courses so students will have a greater understanding of potential exam questions. We will also better prepare students for general CPCE testing by creating /updating the resource folder for the CPCE that all students have access to. Within this resource folder, there will be test-taking tips, a list of available outside resources, and more. To keep faculty accountable for students implementing the above-mentioned strategies, an agenda item has been added to all CEP meetings for the coordinators to check in with what CPCE preparation is happening in each course.

End of report