

Department of Counseling Master of Science in Counseling

2022-2023 Annual Assessment Report

Note: Data includes Summer 2022 – May 2023 semesters

Mission Statement

The mission of the SMU Program in Counseling is to prepare students with culturally sensitive knowledge and skills to practice effectively and ethically in counseling-related positions in schools, agencies, private practices and mental health facilities.

Summary

The Counseling program maintains data on three priority program objectives important for assessing our overall effectiveness as a program. These data help guide program analysis efforts and the overarching direction and focus of the program.

The Counseling program collects data related to nine student learning outcomes (SLOs) that are measured at least two times for each student throughout their program of study and three SLOs, one for each CACREP Specialty including School Counseling; Marriage, Couple and Family; and Clinical Mental Health. Data from SLOs provide indicators of students' level of preparedness to work as future counseling professionals. Counseling faculty review SLOs each year and make changes as necessary to ensure high quality training and supervision.

Using the Clinical Progress Assessment (CPA), the Counseling program collects data related to clinical competencies for each counseling program student across the following clinical courses: Basic Clinical Methods, Advanced Clinical Methods, and Practicum. Data from CPAs indicate clinical skills competencies and preparedness for Internship I and II and future counseling practice.

The Counseling program collects data related to student professional dispositions recognized as essential for effective, ethical, and responsible functioning in the counseling profession (e.g., professionalism, communication skills, attitude towards peers/instructors, ability to self-regulate, and other characteristics required in a clinical or professional environment) and monitors student progress individually and aggregately.

The Counseling program collects data from key stakeholders (e.g., alumni, site supervisors and employers of graduates) every three years (last assessed in 2021-2022) to assess the stakeholders' perceptions of the quality of the students' educational experiences and clinical preparedness. This data helps the Counseling program faculty to assess and prioritize curricular and programmatic updates in keeping with professional trends.

Table 1: Program Objectives

	Data to be Collected: Program Objectives	
Program Objective	Measure(s) used to evaluate program objectives	Data

PO.1. Prepare and equip graduates with the knowledge base and skill set necessary to pass the National Counselor Examination (NCE).	National Counselor Exam (NCE) Score reports Key Performance Indicator scores	In 2022 – 2023, 45 students completed the NCE with a 89% pass rate compared to the national exam pass rate of 80%. See Key Performance Indicator data below.
PO.2. Maintain or increase the number of prospective student applications each year with the aim of recruiting and enrolling well-qualified applicants.	1) Number of applications 2) Percentage of applicants offered admission	In the fall of 2022, received 90 applications and accepted 59, which is a 65% acceptance rate. In the spring 2023, received 66 applications and accepted 41, which is a 62% acceptance rate.
PO.3. Cultivate a cohesive, programmatic counselor identity among faculty through professional organization involvement, professional service, publications, presentations, and outreach.	Annual report on faculty participation in activities related to the counseling profession.	Data is collected through Qualtrics Survey. For 2022 – 2023, all Counseling program core faculty maintained memberships in the American Counseling Association and the Texas Counseling Association. Faculty members maintained other professional association memberships related to their specialty areas including the National Career Development Association, Association for Play Therapy, and the American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors and Therapists. Three full time faculty held positions on professional counseling association boards (e.g., TACES President Elect, TACES Member-at-Large, & TCDA Secretary). Counseling core faculty developed a total of 31 professional presentations and publications.

Table 2. Key performance indicator data

4.A.1. Data to be Collected: Student Learning Outcomes in Core Areas				
Student Learning Outcomes	Relation to KPI	T1 Measure	T2 Measure	T3 Measure
ETHICS SLO. 1. Knowledgeably apply professional ethical and legal standards in practice, and exercise ethical and responsible conduct in their profession.	2.F.1.i. ethical standards of professional counseling organizations and credentialing bodies, and applications of	HDCN 6318: Ethics I & Mental Health Final exam (selected questions) <i>(knowledge)</i> 2022-23 – 89%	MoCce Pre-Practicum Exam <i>(knowledge)</i> 2022-23 – 42%	HDCN 6395 Practicum Clinical Progress Assessment (CPA) <i>(skills)</i> 2022-23 – 95%

	ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling.			
DIVERSITY SLO.2. Integrate multicultural competence in counseling practice.	2.F.2.c. multicultural counseling competencies	HDCN 6304: Counseling Diverse Communities Final exam (selected questions) <i>(knowledge)</i> 2022-23 – 98%	MoCCe exam <i>(knowledge)</i> 2022-23 – 74%	HDCN 6395 Practicum CPA <i>(skills)</i> 2022-23 – 92%
LIFESPAN SLO.3. Promote resilience, optimal development, and wellness for their clients across the lifespan.	2.F.3.i. ethical and culturally relevant strategies for promoting resilience and optimum development and wellness across the lifespan	HDCN 6320 Lifespan Development <i>(knowledge)</i> Note – 2017-2018 KPI was changed to Final exam questions. 2022-23 – 86%	MoCCe exam <i>(knowledge)</i> 2022-23 – 64%	No Time 3 measure
CAREER SLO.4. Recognize and skillfully navigate the intersections between mental well-being, work, relationships, and other life roles and factors.	2.F.4. b. approaches for conceptualizing the interrelationships among and between work, mental well-being, relationships, and other life roles and factors	HDCN 6321: Lifestyle & Career Development Autobiography/Personal Career Report <i>(knowledge)</i> 2022-23 – 97%	MOCCE Exam <i>(knowledge)</i> 2022-23 – not measured	HDCN 6398: Internship Work-Life Balance Assessments <i>(skills)</i> 2022-2023 – 97%
THEORIES SLO.5. Possess a broad knowledge of counseling theories, and capably apply theory to practice.	2.F.5.a. theories and models of counseling	(5a) HDCN 6301: Counseling Theories Final Exam (selected questions) <i>(knowledge)</i> 2022-23 – 80%		MOCCE Exam <i>(knowledge)</i> 2022-23 – 78%
BASIC and ADVANCED SLO.5. Possess a broad knowledge of	2.F.5.f. counselor characteristics and behaviors that	(5f) HDCN 6302 : Basic skills	HDCN 6305 : Advanced Methods Final Project	

counseling theories, and capably apply theory to practice.	influence the counseling process	KPI was changed to CPA after video 3. 2022-23 – 87%	<i>(skills)</i> 2022-23 – 91%	
GROUP SLO.6. Achieve competence in clinical skills, including interviewing, counseling, and case conceptualization, in a variety of individual and group modalities.	2.F.6.b. dynamics associated with group process and development	HDCN 6303 : Group Counseling Final Exam (selected questions) <i>(knowledge)</i> 2022-23 – 89%	MOCce Exam <i>(knowledge)</i> 2022-23 –	HDCN 6395 Practicum CPA <i>(skills)</i> 2022-23 – 95%
ASSESSMENT SLO.7. Demonstrate the ability to use assessments relevant to academic/educational, career, personal, and social development	2.F.7.i. use of assessments relevant to academic/education, career, personal, and social development.	HDCN 6340: Assessment Term Test Project <i>(knowledge and skills)</i> 2022-23 – 91%	MOCce Exam <i>(knowledge)</i> 2022-23 – 84%	HDCN 6395 Practicum CPA <i>(skills)</i> 2022-23 – 92%
RESEARCH SLO.8. Comprehend research findings and their implications for practice.	2.F.8.f. Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research methods	HDCN 6349: Research Design and Statistics Final Exam (selected questions) <i>(knowledge)</i> 2022-23 – 83%	MOCce Exam <i>(knowledge)</i> 2022-23 – 72%	No Time 3 measure
SLO.9. Achieve and maintain a strong counselor identity through affiliation and engagement with professional organizations and professional service.	(No affiliated KPI) 2.1.c. Students actively identify with the counseling profession by participating in professional counseling organizations and by participating in seminars, workshops, or other activities that contribute to personal and professional growth.			Counselors for Social Justice – 20 student members Chi Sigma Iota, Sigma Mu Chapter – XX students Play Therapy Association – XX students Students Specializing in Addictions Studies – XX members

4.A.1. Data to be Collected: Student Learning Outcomes for Entry-Level Specialty Areas -

Student Learning Outcomes	Relation to KPI	T1 Measure	T2 Measure
SCHOOL COUNSELING SPECIALTY AREA			

SCHOOL COUNSELING SLO.10. Demonstrate theoretical and practical knowledge in designing and evaluating school counseling programs.	G.3.b. design and evaluation of school counseling programs	HDCN 6309: School Counseling School Counselor Notebook with First Year Plan <i>(skills)</i> 2022-23 – N/A	Practice Exam (selected questions) <i>(Knowledge)</i> 2022-23 -
MARRIAGE, COUPLE AND FAMILY COUNSELING SPECIALTY AREA			
FAMILY THERAPY SLO. 12. Students will identify key theoretical and practice characteristics of the marriage, couple, and family counseling theories and models.	5.F.1.c. theories and models of marriage, couple, and family counseling	HDCN 6312: Introduction to Family Therapy Model Comparison Chart <i>(Knowledge)</i> Starting Fall 2021 Family therapy KPI measure was changed to questions from Final exam in Family Therapy I course. 2022-23 – 90%	HDCN 6311: Foundations of Marriage and Family Therapy Reflections & Ruminations Project Starting 2017-2018 – this KPI will be collected in Family Therapy II Starting Fall 2021 Family therapy KPI measure was changed to questions from Final exam in Family Therapy II course. 2022-23 – 97%
CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING AREA			
DIVERSITY SLO.13. Integrate multicultural competence in clinical mental health	5.C.2.j. Cultural Factors relevant to clinical mental health counseling	HDCN 6304: Counseling Diverse Communities <i>(knowledge)</i> <u>Final exam selected questions</u> 2022-23 – 98%	MoCCe exam <i>(knowledge)</i> 2022-23 – 74%

Table 3. CPA score (2022 – 2023)

Course	KPI: 2.F.5.f. counselor characteristics	KPI: 2.F.7.e. assessment	KPI: 2.F.1.i. ethical standards	KPI 2.F.5.a. theories & models	KPI 2.F.2.c. multicultural	KPI 2.F.6.b. Group	Supervision & Professional Conduct (Disposition)	TOTAL average
Basic skills	92%	87%	96%	87%	93%	93%	97%	92%
Advanced	76%	73%	76%	72%	73%	75%	78%	75%
Practicum	93%	90%	93%	88%	89%	92%	97%	92%
Total	87%	83%	88%	82%	84%	86%	90%	86%

Data to be Collected: Student Professional Dispositions

Disposition	Time 1 measure	Time 2 measure
PD.1. Personal motivation and enthusiasm	Student Update Reports	CPA disposition scores
PD.2. Ability to communicate (written)	Application Essay Scores	Student Update Reports
PD.3. Ability to communicate (verbal)	PONI Interview Day scores (Introductions and Group Interview)	Student Update Reports
PD.4. Attitude towards peers	PONI Interview Day scores (Group Fit)	Student Update Reports
PD.5. Concern for others (empathy, compassion, etc.)	PONI Interview Day scores (Warmth and Approachability)	Student Update Reports
PD.6. Overall rating of student	Admissions Application and PONI Interview Day scores	Student Update Reports
PD.7. Attitude towards instructor/staff	Student Update Reports	CPA disposition scores (feedback)
PD.8. Ability to self-regulate	PONI Interview Day scores (Emotional and Professional Maturity)	Student Update Reports

Table 4. Disposition data

	2018 - 2019	2019 - 2020	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022	2022- 2023
Disposition 1 - Personal motivation and enthusiasm					
Time 1 - SP report Average of Personal motivation/enthusiasm %	81%	75.4%	77.2%	70%	74%
Time 2 – CPA Counselor characteristics average of all classes	96%	96%	94%	95%	93%
Disposition 2 - Ability to communicate (written)					
Time 1- PONI	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data
Time 2 - SP report Average of Ability to communicate (Written) %	70%	79%	74%	74.8%	72%
Disposition 3 - Ability to communicate (verbal)					
Time 1 – PONI Average of Speak Attire %	79%	77%	75%	76%	76%
Time 2 - SP report Average of Ability to communicate (verbal) %	78%	77.8%	75.9%	75%	73%
Disposition 4 - Attitude towards peers					
Time 1 – PONI Average of Group_Fit %	75%	74%	74%	76%	Not measuring
Time 2 - SP report Average of Student's attitude towards peers %	89%	85%	87.5%	80%	84%
Disposition 5 - Concern for others (empathy, compassion, etc.)					
Time 1 – PONI Average of Warm %	75%	74%	73%	74%	75%
Time 2 - SP report	87%	80.8%	84.8%	79%	80%

Average of Concern for others (empathy, compassion) %					
Disposition 6 - Overall rating of student					
Time 1 - PONI total Average of Eval_Total %	76%	75%	75%	76%	76%
Time 2 - SP report Average of Overall rating of student %	74%	69%	72.9%	68%	67%
Disposition 7 - Attitude towards instructor/staff					
Time 1 - SP report Average of Attitude toward instructor /staff %	88%	82.1%	84.8%	78%	83%
Time 2 - CPA Supervision & Professional Conduct Average of all classes	96%	96%	94%	96%	98%
Disposition 8 - Ability to self-regulate					
Time 1 – PONI Average of Emotion_Maturity %	73%	74%	74%	74%	74%
Time 2 - SP report Average of Ability to regulate self inside and outside the class %	82%	72.4%	72.4%	73%	66%

Table 5. Student Update Reports versus Program Enrollment

2022 – 2023	# of students who got concerns	Program enrollment	% of students who had concern forms filled for them.
Summer 2022	7	201	3.48%
Fall 2022	20	267	7.49%
January 2023	0	63	0.00%
Spring 2023	12	276	4.3%
May 2023	2	74	2.70%
		Average:	4.65%

Observations and Program Modifications

Faculty reviewed all the assessment data as well as the Vital Statistics Report and discussed observations. Overall, faculty noted trends in applicant data, demographics data, and acceptance rate data. Faculty noticed that Black/African American applicant numbers have dropped from 2018 to present. The highest percentage of Black/African American applicants was 18% in 2018. In following years, the total number of Black/African American applicants has trended downward, and it was 7.7% in 2022. Faculty discussed the potential need for more targeted marketing and discussed recruiting efforts. Faculty discussed that face-to-face recruiting has essentially been eliminated since the move from Plano in 2019 and the global pandemic of 2020. Additionally, faculty noted that Hispanic/Latino and Asian student populations continue to be lower in the program compared to the population demographics of the surrounding area. In addition, faculty suggested a focus on retaining students in the program, particularly students who self-identify as first-generation college students or first-generation graduate students. Lastly, a faculty member commented on our collection of data on the gender binary. There was discussion that the University collects data on the binary, and this is where the information is collected. Faculty discussed the possibility of advocating for more inclusive data collection to include gender non-binary individuals. Faculty decided to update the new student survey administered in new student orientation to add an inclusive gender identity question as well as provide an opportunity for students to self-identify as first-generation students.

Faculty noticed a trend related to the acceptance rate percentage. In 2019-2020, the program accepted about 90% of applicants compared to 2022-2023 when the acceptance rate was approximately 63% of applicants. While the program application numbers continue to increase, the overall percentage acceptance rate is decreasing which makes application to the program more competitive.

Faculty noticed that School Counseling (SC) and Marriage, Couple and Family (MCF) Specialties have significantly smaller representation in the program. Faculty discussed some of the reasons for a lower SC number including lower teacher salaries, cost of education at SMU, and difficulty taking all coursework in the evenings (no hybrid or online options). Faculty discussed the potential opportunity of raising scholarship dollars for a specific SC cohort (possibly targeted for Fall 2026). Faculty also discussed other efforts to recruit to the SC Specialty including a reduced tuition rate (e.g., matching the Teach for America [TFA] tuition rate). Faculty also discussed using Performance Based Funding to support a recruitment event at the West Dallas STEM School (WDSS) and possibly leveraging WDSS scholarship dollars to recruit into the program. Faculty also discussed recent legislation in Texas allowing non-educators to become school counselors and the need to update the program admission application process accordingly.

Faculty noted the Supreme Court ruling impacting admissions processes in college and universities and reviewed the program admissions application in relationship to the ruling and the internal guidance at SMU. Faculty noted that race has not been a determining factor in the Counseling program's admissions process. However, faculty recognized a need to update the admissions application essay question by removing a reference to cultural background. Faculty replaced the reference to cultural background with a question related to how the applicant's background and significant experiences may have impacted their interest in pursuing a degree in counseling.

Faculty discussed Program Objectives at length. There was revisited discussion around changing PO3 (Cultivate a cohesive, programmatic counselor identity among faculty through professional organization involvement, professional service, publications, presentations, and outreach). Faculty discussed changing the PO3 to reflect teaching practice and effectiveness of teaching and supervision as counselor educators. Also, faculty discussed measuring teaching effectiveness through student evaluations. Some faculty objected to using teaching evaluations as a sole measure of teaching performance. Faculty were concerned that collecting data around refereed presentations and publications seemed to be inappropriate for a clinical teaching faculty. Ultimately, faculty decided to add "and/or" to the PO3 so that refereed presentations would be included in the data collection but not required. Moving forward, the data collected will be more focused on professional association memberships, board positions, and outreach (invited) presentations.

Faculty noted depressed scores across several Time 2 measures for the SLOs. Faculty reflected on the timing of the Measure of Core Competency exam (MoCCe; Time 2 measure for many SLOs) and realized that many students who were taking the MoCCe this academic year took their classes during the COVID pandemic when SMU abruptly shifted to remote learning. Faculty wondered about the impact on learning and knowledge acquisition during this time. Faculty also noted that the MoCCe was updated in Summer 2022 and started rotating regular and Key Performance Indicator questions from a question bank. This alone may contribute to differences in the scores as this is the first year collecting data with the new updated MoCCe. While we can make some comparisons year to year as we are assessing the same content areas, the questions have been updated and trend analysis will be impacted. Faculty will continue to discuss SLO data in future assessment meetings.

Faculty reviewed SLO.9. and decided to keep the SLO but measure it differently. Beginning 2023-2024, the program will assess professional organization membership in the Basic Clinical Methods course (Time 1 measure) and in Internship II (Time 2 measure).

Faculty noted that our headcount growth has increased steadily since our move from Plano in 2019. This scaled growth was intentional as the program needed to make headcount adjustments after switching from a 10-week term to a 15-week semester system. The additional headcount initially resulted in flat enrollment growth. Since 2021, the slow but steady enrollment growth has reached a point where additional resources are needed. Specifically,

additional faculty are needed, and the program has plans to add another full-time faculty member effective fall 2024. Additionally, the clinic space is still large enough to accommodate the number of clients that need to be served; however, the physical space for Practicum students to be able to be in the clinic, do their paperwork, and prepare for clients is limited. Securing additional space close to the clinic will be a priority in academic year 2023-2024. Additionally, revisiting software for an electronic notetaking system may help streamline clinic operations and documentation and appears to be a more scalable solution than the current notetaking system. Faculty noted that an electronic notetaking system needs to be revisited in academic year 2023-2024 in hopes of implementation in Fall 2024.