

Spalding University  
Graduate Studies  
Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program  
Annual Report

Launched in the Fall of 2020 in the midst of a pandemic, the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program has come out of the other side and views the past year as a success. Program faculty received good news on June 5, 2020, that they had received approval from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The program admitted thirteen students in the Fall of 2020 and eight of those students enrolled. While the program started with eight students, one withdrew due to personal reasons and a second student withdrew after completing the first semester. This student cited the need for a fully online program due to work and home conflicts. A total of six students remain in the program. One student is currently on medical leave. Presently, five students are active in the program.

### **Accreditation Status**

The faculty of the CMHC program are hard at work completing the self-study for application for accreditation approval through the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). At this time, graduates of the program are not eligible to apply and become licensed professional counselor associates (LPCA) or licensed professional clinical counselors (LPCC) in the Commonwealth of Kentucky until the program is accredited. The accreditation requirements mandates that the program must have students and at least one student is in their last year before CACREP will conduct a site visit to the program. Our current timeline is aggressive.

Self-Study Application Submission	August -September 2020
Response anticipated	February 2022
Submission of Addendum	April 2022
Site Visitation	May 2022
CACREP Board Sits	July 2022
CACREP Response	August 2022

It is anticipated that in the fall of 2022 the program will learn of its accreditation status. There are three different types of responses that can be given in response to the self-study:

1. *Accreditation for 8 years*
2. *Accreditation for two years with notification of deficits to be addressed within the two year.*
3. *Accreditation denied*

Program faculty will make periodic updates as to the accreditation progress.

We recognize our students for taking this journey alongside us.

### **Critical Core Faculty Hiring**

A coordinator for the Clinical and Field Experiences was hired. Dr. Nicole Ellis started July 16, 2021. This fulfills the requirement of having a designated person in the CFE position. It also helps the program meet the accreditation requirement of three core faculty members. In

September 2021, the program added a third faculty member who will join as a core counselor education faculty member. Dr. Hannah Bland has been selected to join the team. This person is scheduled to start January 3, 2021.

### Demographics Admission

	Gender	Race/ Ethnicity	Degree	In-State	Undergraduate Grade Point Average	Full-Time
Admitted	13 F 0M	10 White 3 Black	Counseling Related	10 In-State 3	12 Met 1 Waiver*	4 (12 cr) 9 (6 cr)
Enrolled	8	5 White 3 Black	Counseling Related	7 In-State	7 Met 1 Waiver*	SAA

\*One student received a conditional admission related to GPA. A Student was admitted with the condition that they obtain and maintain a 3.0 GPA or above their first two semesters. The student met those conditions and has been released from their conditional status.

### Graduate and Post-Graduate Information

Number of Graduates	Graduate Rates	Post-Graduate Employment	Pass Rate for National Counselor Exam
*	*	*	*

\*The Clinical Mental Health Counseling program launched in Fall 2020. Successful matriculation through the program will take at least two years or six semesters if candidates take four courses per semester. Not data is available at this time. Please check back next year.

### Program Evaluation and Student Assessment

Program Evaluation of Program Objectives

Program Objectives

1. To develop the professional identity as a proficient professional clinical counselor
2. To develop a professional counselor who understands the multicultural implications of working with diverse persons in a pluralistic society.
3. To develop a professional counselor who understands the relationship of human development, the nature of persons, and the environmental impact on the individual.
4. To develop individuals with the knowledge and skills to provide appropriate intake, assessment, and treatment planning to individuals impacted by trauma, crisis, and life transitional experiences.
5. To develop proficient professional counselors who exhibit clinical counseling skills.

This table depicts the objectives that are assessed in each of the courses that students have enrolled in thus far in the program. In the outcome column are the overall impressions of student performance based on the assessment approaches used in that course.

Course	Program Objective(s) Assessed	How Assessed	Outcome(s)
Clinical Mental Health Counseling	1. To Develop the professional identity as a proficient professional clinical counselor.	Assignment and discussions.	Student work demonstrated a developing knowledge of the importance of a professional identity.
Pre-Practicum	5. To develop proficient professional counselors who exhibit clinical counselor skills.	Clinical Skills Assessment	Students performed at expected level as they developed their beginning clinical skills.
Counseling Theories	1. To develop the professional identity as a professional clinical counselor.	Personal model of counseling paper and final examination	Students identified their preference of a counseling theory towards development of their personal model. All students performed well on the final exam.
Human Growth and Development	4. To develop a professional counselor who understands the relationship of human development, the nature of persons, and the environmental impact on the individual.	Self-application to development theories.	Students demonstrated the ability to apply at least one developmental theory to their life demonstrating a beginning knowledge of using theory to understand the individual.
Group Theory and Process	5. To develop proficient counselors who exhibit clinical counseling skills.	Group leadership assignment- Rubric	Students displayed a variety of group counseling and demonstrated knowledge of inventions and conceptualization.
Mental Health Assessments and Evaluation in Counseling	4. To develop individuals with the knowledge and skills to provide appropriate intake, assessment, and	Assessment practice and presentations.	Overall, students developed knowledge with regards to a variety of assessments and measures. Mastered

	treatment planning to individuals impacted by trauma, crisis, and life transitional experiences.		the ability to administer, interpret, and report on one assessment tool.
Career and Lifestyle Development	4. To develop individuals with the knowledge and skills to provide appropriate intake, assessment, and treatment planning to individuals impacted by trauma, crisis, and life transitional experiences.	Self-application and exploration of career theories.	Students performed well on the self-application of career theories, displaying an emerging knowledge and skill base.
Professional Orientation and Ethics	1. To develop the professional identity as a proficient professional clinical counselor.	Professional Identity Collage	Students displayed their knowledge of the development of professional identity and the role it plays in their professional self.
Psychopharmacology	4. To develop individuals with the knowledge and skills to provide appropriate intake, assessment, and treatment planning to individuals impacted by trauma, crisis, and life transitional experiences.	Discussions, quiz, and in-class scenario	Students demonstrated knowledge of applicable medications and reactions. Recognized the neurotransmitters associated with psychopharmacology. Performed well on assessment.
Clinical Diagnosis and Treatment	4. To develop individuals with the knowledge and skills to provide appropriate intake, assessment, and treatment planning to individuals impacted by trauma, crisis, and life transitional experiences.	Presentations and in-class discussions	

<p>Practicum</p>	<p>1.To develop the professional identity as a proficient professional clinical counselor. 4.To develop individuals with the knowledge and skills to provide appropriate intake, assessment, and treatment planning to individuals impacted by trauma, crisis, and life transitional experiences. 5. To develop proficient professional counselors who exhibit clinical counseling skills.</p>	<p>Video reviews, discussions, session notes, and evaluations.</p>	<p>1. Students are showing signs of their professional sense of self and the type of clients they desire to engage.  4. Session notes indicate somewhat of a struggle on identifying the problem (conceptualization) or what to focus on. Session notes are a necessary focus to remediate all the students in order to build their confidence of creating session notes. 5. While clinical skills evidence ongoing development, sessions notes indicate that their conceptualization skills need further / additional development.</p>
<p>Multicultural Counseling</p>	<p>3. To develop a professional counselor who understands the multicultural implications working with diverse persons in a pluralistic society.</p>	<p>Presentation Multicultural Counseling and Social Justice Competencies</p>	<p>Displayed ability to self-examine and identify areas of development. Did well with not just presenting information on their self-selected group but identified relevant cultural counseling aspects.</p>

Based on the results, program students demonstrate an acceptable level of development with regards to the program objectives. Students' knowledge, skills, and dispositions overall indicate that they are on-track.

**Knowledge-** Students continue to demonstrate the acquisition of foundational knowledge and display emerging ability to synthesize the knowledge into practice. This will be more available as they enter into the Internships which focuses beyond clinical skill development and examines their ability to synthesize knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

**Skills-** Skill areas are continual areas of development. It is indicated that while their clinical skills are developing, two areas need to be addressed: conceptualization and session notes.

a. **Session notes-** Students tend to write lengthy sessions notes or avoid completing the notes. Based review the sessions notes seem to consist of content versus process. They write extraneous information that suggests they are unsure of what to write. The notes also lack focus. Faculty are working to remediate this concern.

b. **Conceptualization skills-** based on video review and session notes it is indicated that students may be struggling with their ability to identify what is going on with the client. Premature problem solving is not indicated but with some students the sessions go beyond 50 minutes and appear to lack focus. While information gathering is vital, it appears to continue through multiple sessions and missing a working stage. Remediation for this cohort, especially those students who evidence much of this behavior is to work on their conceptualization skills during the Internship I course. Individually students will get additional guidance and teaching during individual supervision.

**Dispositions –** Students are evidencing emerging dispositions and positively reflect professional dispositions. However, for at least two students there are indicators that they struggle with aspects of professional behaviors, such as meeting deadlines, time management, and professional identity. This is reflected in their attitudes demonstrated by lack of communication or responses to emails. For one student a corrective action plan was implemented due to extreme exhibits of communication and professional behaviors.

Overall, student performances in related courses appear to be teaching, guiding, and training students in the right direction towards meeting the program objectives.

Transitional Points are established in the program to monitor student progress and performance. There are four transitional points in the program. The admitted and current students have progressed through two of those transitional points.

*Transitional Point One- Admissions into the program*

Students meeting the admission requirements evidence the following:

- a). ability to perform graduate level work
- b). respect for diversity
- c). ability to form relationships with others.
- d). displays professional counselor dispositions

*Transitional Point Two- Successful completion of Pre-Practicum*

Students receive an average score of 2 or better on the Pre-Practicum Clinical Skills Rubric and the Counseling Session Rubric. They also must receive acceptable scores on the Professional Counselor Disposition rubric.

This table illustrates the students' performance based on the clinical skills assessment.

Clinical Skills Assessment

STUDENT	RELATIONSHIP BUILDING	Work Stage	Termination Stage
		3	3
		3	3
		3	3
		3	3
		3	3
		3	3
		2.5	3
		0	0
Totals	2.603174603	2.66666667	2.66666667
w/0withdrwal	2.928571429	3	3

Aggregated Totals for Pre-Practicum Assessment

This table does not depict the individual items scores for the students.

- a). All students evidenced target level of micro-counseling skills and evidenced the ability to conduct a counseling session from opening to closing.
- b). Clinical Skills Assessment Session Students are assessed in three areas. Relationship Building; Work Stage; and Termination Stage. Mastered (4); Proficient (3); Trainee (2); Novice (1). Student performance after Pre-practicum should be at the trainee level and may exceed. The students in the 2020 Pre-Practicum course scored most

Professional Counseling Dispositions Pre-Practicum (redacted)

Student	PE1	PE2	PE3	PE4	MSJ1	MSJ2	MSJ3	SASC1	SASC2	SASC3	SASC4	IRC1	IRC2	IRC3	IRC4	PPG1	PPG2	PPG3	StudentAverage
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	3 NA	3	3	3	2.705882353
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3 NA	3	3	3	2.941176471
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	2	1	3	3	2 na	2	2	2	2.470588235
	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	2 na	2	2	2	3	2.647058824
	2	2	3	1	3	2	1	2	1	2	3	2	1	2 na	1	1	1	1	1.764705882
	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	3	3 na	2	2	2	2	2.470588235
	Withdrew from program																		
Averages	2.666667	2.833333	3	2.5	3	2.833333	1.833333	2.5	2.5	2.333333	2.166667	2.666667	2.5	2.5	2.166667	2.166667	2.333333		

- c). Most students averaged a score of 2 or better on the Professional Counselors Disposition. Candidates are scored in five areas which consist of sub scores. There are four levels- 4: Exceeds Expectations; 3: Target; 2: Present, needs to be more consistent; 1: Absent or Needs Improvement; N/A- not yet applicable. Students are expected to perform at level 2 by the end of the pre-practicum course.

These transitional points are important components of readiness to enter the initial field experience. Five students moved through these transitional points and completed all pre-requisite course to be admitted into the initial field experience- Practicum.

*Transitional Point Three-Practicum*

The Practicum field experience focuses primarily on the clinical aspects of counseling. Practicum is a ten weeks or more experiential learning that includes an accumulation of 100 clock hours of experience of which 40 hours must be direct services to clients. Candidates must demonstrate the ability to synthesize the knowledge of counseling, the clinical skills of counseling, and the dispositions of counseling in order to successfully complete this level. Due to the pandemic, a number of services had to be offered through telehealth. Program students completed training on the provision of counseling services via telehealth. Telehealth Counseling was provided through the online platform Lyssn.io which meets the HIPAA requirements.

Four students were able to complete the requirements of the practicum experience. Part of the challenge for the students was related to availability of clients. This affected one student who has a remediation plan in order to support and assist the student in meeting the practicum course requirements.

*Stakeholder Feedback*

Program evaluation is a valuable component to managing a successful program. We value the feedback of our stakeholders, i.e. students, site supervisors, and community persons. The newness of the program limits the amount and type of feedback we have access to and can be of value. Throughout the program our first cohort of students have provided much feedback with regards to course content, course offerings, and program components. This combined with student assessments has informed the program faculty and program and curriculum modifications have been made and /or being proposed.

Program Modifications

Data Gathered	How Used	Program Modifications
National Certified Counselor eligibility- graduate students must complete a two-year program consisting of six semesters.	To check if the program meets the National Board of Certified Counselor standards.	Program curriculum modifications and inform students of the requirement. Students may still matriculate through an expedited program but must sign their program of study of such knowledge. .
Admissions Status Some candidates do not have the required GPA.	While broad factor is one measure of a student's ability to perform graduate level work. Consideration for an alternative eligibility method.	The Miller's Analogies Test results have been shown to correlate with performance in counselor education programs. Therefore, the MAT scores can be used in lieu of GPA.

Admissions: References did not quite convey the information the program faculty was seeking	To provide program faculty of possible changes needed to increase the desired type of information from references.	Modified the reference to as a Likert scale with more specific behavioral and professional counselor dispositions. .
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### Program Modifications (Cont.)

Data Gathered	How Used	Program Modifications
The Program Essay was not being addressed by students. The wording appeared too insufficient.	To inform program faculty how essay format might be better used.	Written Essay response to assist in analyzing candidate writing ability, knowledge of the profession of counseling, and self-knowledge.
Program Interviews One program faculty conducted interviews and the questions appeared to not fully address or provide the information sought with regards to professional counselor dispositions, self-knowledge, and respect for diversity.	To determine if the program interviews provided sufficient information for faculty to make good, informed decisions on candidates in alignment of CACREP admission guidelines in the standards.	Modified interview questions to better ascertain, respect for diversity, presence of professional counselor dispositions, and candidate self-knowledge.

### Curriculum Modifications

Data Gathered	How Used	Curriculum Modifications
Course Sequencing. Students report some confusion with pre-practicum and counseling theories.	To determine the best sequencing of course curriculum.	Career Development was moved to a Fall course offering while Counseling Theories was moved to a Spring course offering.
Students shared that Psychopharmacology course provided good information, but it was discussed if it needs to be a three-credit hour course.	While the relevance of psychopharmacology is high, counselor knowledge applies more to coordination of services and continuity of care.	It will be proposed that the course be reduced to a 1 credit course and two other courses be built to make up the two missing credits.