

Annual Report

Introduction

Annually, the School of Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) faculty at Spalding University (SU) create a report that includes: a summary of the program evaluation results and any program changes. The 2024/25 annual year was very busy. The program welcomed a new School of Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) Chair, began transitioning to the new 2024 CACREP standards, partnered with the College of Education, and welcomed our largest cohort in program history. Also, program faculty were actively engaged in our community and their teaching excellence was recognized. The following report will briefly cover how information was gathered before providing the report.

University and CMHC Mission Congruence

The Mission of Spalding University is supported by and congruent to the CMHC Mission Statement and Program Objectives.

Mission of Spalding University

Spalding University is a diverse community of learners dedicated to meeting the needs of the times in the tradition of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth through quality undergraduate and graduate liberal and professional studies, grounded in spiritual values with emphasis on service and the promotion of peace and justice.

Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Mission Statement

The clinical mental health counseling program exists to prepare, equip, and educate culturally competent clinical mental health practitioners who demonstrate compassion and readiness to meet the behavioral and mental health needs of a multicultural and pluralistic society.

Program Objectives

1. To develop 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.

Information Related to How Objectives are Achieved

The School of Clinical Mental Health Counseling is accredited by the the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational programs (CACREP) and are in good standing. CACREP sets high standards in counselor education which are aligned with CMHC Program Objectives and are a guiding influence.

Because many CACREP standards have changed in the 2024 standards revision, the CMHC faculty began the physical year by reviewing prior curriculum and the new 2024 CACREP Standards. A student-centered approach was taken and course curriculum was modified to meet the new standards and align with program objectives while modifying the comprehensive evaluation plan for systematically evaluating, monitoring, and reporting achievement of program objectives on an annual basis. The evaluation plan includes gaining information on:

1. academic quality indicators aligned with program objectives determined by counselor education program faculty with minimum thresholds,
2. procedures for what data will be collected, when collection will occur, and how data will be stored and evaluated, used and reported,
3. a process for addressing unmet minimum thresholds, trends in the data across multiple years, and how data will be used for curriculum and program improvement.

How Information is Gathered:

CMHC faculty gather and document information at weekly faculty meetings, at the end of each semester, and at the end of each academic year for each student and cohort. The program uses information from a number of sources such as student academic performance on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on knowledge acquisition, weekly and end of semester faculty meetings to assess student professional dispositions & opportunities to support students as well as monitor field supervisor evaluation of students' skills, and annual assessment of student National Counselor Exam results to meet the written program assessment plan. Adjunct faculty participate in the gathering of data so that a more complete understanding of student growth and the health of the program is available.

2024 CACREP standards were assigned to courses, taught, and learned by students.

1. Academic quality indicators aligned with program objectives determined by counselor education program faculty with minimum thresholds.

Quality indicators are grouped into three types of key performance indicators (KPI) which include academic (knowledge), field experience (skills), and dispositions (professionalism). Knowledge KPIs are included in the eight CACREP areas of curriculum. Academic KPIs are spread across 10 different core courses. All KPIs were passed by all students in 9 of 10 courses. One student failed to pass one KPI in Fundamentals of Research. Field experience KPIs are assessed in five different courses. One student failed to pass one KPI in one class. Dispositions are assessed throughout the program and assessment is discussed in weekly faculty meetings to provide any needed support or mentorship as soon as possible. Dispositions are assessed at the end of each semester with scores recorded per each professional disposition and tracked to identify trends in student development. All but one student meet or exceeded all disposition standards by graduation.

2. Graduate Outcomes.

The CMHC program analyzes graduate outcomes and the achievement of minimum thresholds on: a) pass rates on the National Counselor Exam (NCE) which is the CMHC credentialing examination in Kentucky, b) degree completion rates determined by the number of students enrolled in the first semester of the cohort program and the number of graduates, and c) employment rates as reported by the graduates at the time of graduation. All students that attempted the NCE passed. For the graduating cohort of Summer 2025, 73% of the beginning students graduated. The 27% that have not yet graduated either decided to pursue different career options, refused to engage in remediation efforts by faculty, or are still in good standing but have not yet finished the program of study. Of the students that did graduate, all reported having already attained employment in the field or actively interviewing for CMHC related employment positions. No student from the 2025 cohort has report applying to a Ph.D. program as many stated they would prefer to gain Kentucky state licensure first.

3m how effective the new . Curriculum Modifications and Program Improvement Informed by Program Evaluation. Due to the new CACREP 2024 standards and feedback from stakeholders, the CMHC Faculty meet several times to review prior curriculum, courses, and assessment plan. The faculty team adjusted curriculum assigning all 2024 curricular standards to appropriate courses and identifying the primary course all curricular standards would be covered. Faculty also addressed students' desires to take courses relevant to CMHC Faculty practice and research interests. For the incoming 2025 cohort, students will be able to take two electives in the second year. Six electives were developed from prior courses. Two of the six elective courses were developed to assist students graduating with a CMHC degree to complete an additional School Counseling degree in less time. This allows students to have additional opportunities to enter the profession and use Clinical counseling skills in a school setting. Both courses adhere to CACREP standards and will be taught by qualified faculty with experience in School Counseling. Lastly, to increase students' abilities to pass the NCE or other required assessments as needed, faculty added NCE like exams in each of the ten courses where student content knowledge is assessed. Results of the exams will be added to the program assessment plan to info

