Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Evaluation – Annual Report Fall 2015

What follows is a summary of CMH program and student data reviewed along with recommendations and/or specific modifications to be implemented.

1. Admissions Data:

Characteristics of Applicants from Spring 2015
Total Applicants = 62
# Offered Admission = 33
% Offered Admission = 53%
New Students Starting = 16 + 1 transfer from School program
% Admitted who Came = 48%

Applicant Demographics:
81% female, 19% male
94% White, 5% African American, 1% other/not indicated
Average Undergraduate GPA = 3.54

Fall 2015 New Student Demographics:
62% female, 38% male
81% White, 19% African American

Enrolled Student GPA and GRE Scores 2015
2015 Average Undergraduate GPA = 3.54
2015 Average GREV = 153
2015 Average GREQ = 151
2015 Average GREW = 4.25

Feedback from students who accepted offers of admission:
• Quick response in determining whether I was in or not, and of course being accredited! Clemson was also listed as one of the happiest schools in the nation.
• The strong academic reputation, practice-based learning, and large amount of time spent in practicum led me to Clemson's program.
• I really appreciate the pragmatic orientation of this program and that it is not research heavy like a number of other programs I looked into.
• Clemson has a strong reputation and the program was recommended to me. The school has a good history. I wanted to be a part of a well known program and learn from qualified individuals.

Feedback from students who declined offers of admission:
• Better financial offer from ________.
• Accepted offer at ___________—better fit and got assistantship.
• Accepted into a PhD program
**Admissions Summary and Recommendations –**

The ethnic diversity of our applicants continued to be somewhat limited (although it is similar to Clemson’s general student population ethnic diversity), resulting in the ethnic diversity of the students we admit being limited. However, we do admit diverse students in terms of age, experience, and those from different parts of the country. We did see an increase in the amount of male applicants and an increase in males accepted into the program. We will continue to brainstorm ways to increase interest in our program among more ethnically diverse individuals as well as males. One option will be to make contact with various undergraduate groups on campus to present information about our program and encourage students from diverse backgrounds to apply.

We are fortunate to have a lot of strong applicants who represent not only SC but also many other parts of the country. We would like to engage in discussions about possibly increasing the number of students we admit each year.

We need to discuss how to convey to students possible future opportunities they can pursue after our program, including doctoral work and careers in numerous counseling related settings.

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**2. Student Enrollment and Course Enrollment Data:**

**Student enrollment** - The CMH program is in its fourth year of a fall-only admissions process, and most of the final group of students who had previously started during the spring start option has graduated. The CMH program currently has 42 students enrolled in classes – 16 new this year (48% acceptance rate from those we offered admission) and 19 new last year (63% acceptance rate). The remaining students have taken courses on a part time basis, entering the program as far back as Spring 2010.

**Course enrollment** - Sequences are in place and being enforced to ensure course availability as well as sufficient course enrollment so that courses do not need to be cancelled.

**Course Enrollment Summary** – Informally, students seem to develop into a clear cohort and support each other throughout the program. We plan to maintain fall-only admissions and given our acceptance rates, need to monitor if we need to make more offers of admission so that we can admit our desired 20-24 per year. With the program course sequences in place, we continue to have fewer issues with students needing classes that are not available when they want them. We will also examine any new issues that may arise as we transition into a new department.
3. Perceptions of the Program
Based on Exit Surveys (N=18) and Alumni Surveys (N=5)

Strengths noted:
- Our exit surveys and alumni surveys reflect the strength we have in program faculty and in the relationships we foster between faculty and students.
- Graduating students indicated appreciating the attention to understanding and ability to work with diverse populations (65% strongly agree, 35% agree).
- Graduating students indicated the program taught them to make ethical decisions (94% strongly agree, 6% agree).
- Graduating students indicated the internship/practicum experience prepared them well for professional practice (71% strongly agree, 29% agree).

Areas for improvement:
- We believe the Advocacy Project we started last year is a strength of our program, though our graduating students suggested more clarity is needed around this project.

Moving forward- what should we keep doing and what revisions do we need to consider?
We plan to continue building strong mentoring relationships with our students.

We plan to continue the Advocacy Project, while making the process more clear in the future.

4. Program Graduates and Employment Data:
- Of the students who started in program in Fall 2013 (n=18): 15 graduated in 2 years and 2 are on track to graduate in 2 1/2 years. One student withdrew from the program.
- Of the students who started the program in Fall 2014: 15 are on track to graduate in 2 years, 4 in 3 years.
- Of the 17 spring and summer 2015 and winter of 2014 graduates, 14 have provided employment updates. All 14 are employed as counselors.

Program Graduates and Employment Data Summary -
We are continuing to explore ways to increase the ability to track our graduates so that better monitor employment outcomes.

*An update on our 15 spring and summer 2014 graduates showed that 14 are employed as counselors. We do not have employment information on the remaining one graduate.
5. Broad Student Outcomes

**Fall 2014 NCE Results:**
- 3 test takers, 100% pass rate
- Clemson overall Mean = 110.00, SD = 22.52
- All CACREP Institutions Mean = 108.25, SD = 17.97

**Spring 2015 NCE Results:**
- 12 test takers, 100% pass rate
- Clemson overall Mean = 120, SD = 9.94
- All CACREP Institutions Mean = 109.71, SD = 16.26

**NCE Results Summary**- We have a long history of our students successfully passing the NCE on their first attempt (100% pass rate since April, 2009) and scoring at or above the average scores by students from other CACREP-accredited institutions, so we hope to continue doing what we’re doing.

6. Student Learning Outcomes

- Across all courses where program area standards are covered, we identified 59 out of the 61 program area standards for which all students “met” the standard at a “progressing” or better level (on a scale including unacceptable, progressing, average, and exceptional).
- Across all courses where program area standards are covered, we identified only 2 program area standards for which only 1 student did not achieve a “progressing” or better level.

**Student Learning Outcome- Strengths Summary**

With all of the new information that is provided to counselors-in-training, our students did well in grasping many of the concepts and standards related to the profession.

All students scored “exceptional” (highest rating) on CMH standard E3 again this year, demonstrating their ability to understand and utilize the current literature on various theories and approaches that are effective with specific client populations with mental disorders.

Related to utilizing scholarly literature in their work, all students scored “exceptional” on standard I1, which demonstrates their ability to understand how to critically evaluate research relevant to clinical mental health counseling. Further, during the past year, all of our students scored “exceptional” on standard J3, which demonstrates their ability to analyze and use data to increase the effectiveness of clinical mental health counseling interventions and programs.
All students scored “exceptional” on CACREP Knowledge standard C3, which demonstrates their knowledge of the models, methods, and principles of program development and service delivery (e.g., support groups, peer facilitation training, parent education, self help).

On three standards related to addictions counseling, all students scored “exceptional”. Those standards are: CACREP Knowledge standard D8, demonstrating ability to provide appropriate counseling strategies when working with clients with addiction and co-occurring disorders; standard G4, demonstrating ability to identify standard screening and assessment instruments for substance use disorders and process addictions; and CACREP Knowledge standard H4, ability to apply the assessment of a client’s stage of dependence, change, or recovery to determine the appropriate treatment modality and placement criteria within the continuum of care.

Related to couples and family counseling, all students scored “exceptional” on CMH: Knowledge Standard C8, showing the ability to recognize the importance of family, social networks, and community systems in the treatment of mental and emotional disorders.

Further, all students scored “exceptional” on CMH: Knowledge standard D5, demonstrating an appropriate use of culturally responsive individual, couple, family, group and systems modalities for initiating, maintaining, and terminating counseling.

Finally, all students scored “exceptional” on CACREP Skills & Practices standard D7, in their ability to apply current record-keeping standards related to clinical mental health counseling.

The faculty were very encouraged by the large and growing number of standards met this year, and see this as growing evidence of an effective program.

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**Student Learning Outcomes- Areas for Growth and Recommendations**

As noted above, this year’s scores indicated almost all students met all standards. A breakdown of the two standards that did have an “unacceptable” score show there was only 1 student for standard I2, and 1 student for standard C2. With a majority of students meeting the standards this year, the faculty will remain committed to providing appropriate curriculum and training to maintain established high levels of meeting standards.