School Counseling Program Evaluation – 2016-17 Annual Report

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

1. Admissions Data:

Characteristics of Applicants for 2016-17 Admission
Total Applicants = 38
# Offered Admission = 22
% Offered Admission = 58%
New Students Starting = 14 (1 deferred for 1 year)
% admitted who Came = 64%

Total Applicant Demographics:
90% female, 10% male
87% White, 8% African American, 5% Hispanic

New Student Demographics:
93% female, 7% male
93% White, 7% Hispanic

New Student Academic Profile
Undergraduate GPA = 3.69
GRE - Verbal = 151
GRE - Quantitative = 147
GRE - Writing = 4.0

Feedback from students who accepted offers of admission:
- Clemson had the only school counseling program in the local area that I heard really good things about. Upon researching the program it seemed like a good fit for me. I also know many people who have had great experiences at Clemson and had great things to say about the faculty.
- I felt that the admissions process was very clear. I liked the setup of the interview process. It was great to have the opportunity to meet different faculty members as well as some current students and to have the opportunity to collaborate and work with peers during an interview. This was the fastest I have ever heard back from any interview, which was awesome!
- Meeting Dr. Milsom was a large component of choosing to attend Clemson. She looked great on paper, but meeting her and hearing how she spoke about the program got me excited. Learning more from students currently in the program while I was interviewing was another component. Seeing how well students do after they graduate from the
program in finding a job in South Carolina and out of state was huge for me. I loved the location of Greenville. This program seemed very well rounded and the interview day was put together well.

- I think the admissions process was like any other school's admissions process. I enjoyed how the interview was done in a group. I've liked all the Clemson personnel I've interacted with.
- I had a positive experience with the admissions and interview process. I felt that the admissions requirements gave me an opportunity to communicate who I am beyond my academic history and test scores, through the personal statement questions. I enjoyed that part of the application. I also felt the interview process was appropriate for a counseling program in that it was not so formal -- the format was less like a structured interview, but more collaborative and discussion-oriented. I thought that was very unique and said a lot for the program values. My interactions with Clemson personnel prior to my arrival on campus were minimal but positive.
- I did research about the program and I really liked what I saw. After the group interview, I was even more interested in the program!
- I was able to speak with a former student of this program who spoke highly of what she was learning. I liked how the Ed.S was available to us as well and how many relationships were already formed with the community for internships and practicums. From the interview process, I could also tell how everything was transparent and straightforward, which I enjoyed. Also helped that I already lived really close!
- The interview process was great. Something so unique was that Dr. Milsom got back to students within four days of being interviewed. That allows students to make the best possible decision about where to attend because they know right away. Everything has been very smooth with personnel.
- I was impressed with the reputation of the program at Clemson University, and was sold after the interview weekend. I loved how happy the current students appeared, how engaging the faculty were, and how supportive the program seemed. My husband also was offered 3 jobs in the area, so that was our final definite sign that this was the right decision for the both of us.
- I went to three different interview days and out of all of them Dr. Milsom was the only professor that shook all of our hands and made a point to talk to each of us. That made a huge impression on me. I felt welcome and accepted from the minute I walked in the door. I also felt comfortable talking with the current grad students and they made me feel welcome as well. Also, I really like the fact that we will get an MEd and EdS at the end of the program.
- The interview atmosphere made me feel very comfortable and everyone was so welcoming. Also, when talking to students of the program they seemed very confident in their education and ready to take on the field.
Feedback from students who declined offers of admission:

- Of the students who provided us feedback, all indicated they were attending other institutions, often for financial reasons (e.g., received funding elsewhere) or to be closer to family.

Admissions Summary and Recommendations –

Our application pool continues to be only slightly diverse – we have maintained similar recruitment efforts over the past couple of years. We need to continue to proactively work to attract diverse students who are of high quality with strong potential for success in graduate school, including males and individuals from underrepresented groups. We get strong students and are selective in who we admit, so we would like to maintain the high quality of students we have currently.

Applicants continue to appreciate the admissions process, specifically in relation to the timeliness of decisions, the opportunity to interact with peers, the clarity of information provided, and the sense of community we have created. We will be maintaining our current admissions and interview process.

2. Student Enrollment and Course Enrollment Data:

Student enrollment - The school counseling program currently has 29 students enrolled in classes – 13 new this 2016-17 academic year, and 1 who needed to defer admission for one year.

Course enrollment – Course sequences are in place and being enforced to ensure their planned availability as well as sufficient course enrollment so that courses do not need to be cancelled. The summer program start has been well received by students, and does seem to lighten the course load during the first semester of internship.

Course Enrollment Summary – The majority of students complete the program in two years, allowing them to develop a supportive cohort. The program continues to be successful at graduating students in a timely manner. Students appreciated the opportunity to develop connections with their cohort over the summer prior to fall classes.
3. Perceptions of the Program

Based on Student Exit Surveys (N=20)

Strengths noted:
- Graduating students indicated they gained skills in individual counseling (90% strongly agreed), advocating for students and being an agent of change in their schools (85% strongly agreed to both), and collaborating effectively with others (80% strongly agreed)
- Graduating students strongly agreed that they gained knowledge about the foundations of school counseling (90%), the importance of understanding the school, family, and community context in which they work (90%), and their strengths and weaknesses as a counselor (85%)

Areas for improvement:
- In relation to knowledge of diverse populations and cultures and how to engage diverse populations in schools, 50% and 58% respectively strongly agreed they gained knowledge.
- In relation to gaining skills to design culturally relevant interventions, although no students disagreed, only 35% strongly agreed that they gained skills in this area.
- Regarding gaining skills to use technology relevant to school counseling, 58% strongly agreed.

Moving forward – what should we keep doing and what revisions do we need to consider?

Based on Student Exit Surveys:

For the most part, we should continue to do more of what we are doing, as it seems overall that students feel very prepared when they leave the school counseling program at Clemson and appreciate the experiential and applied aspects of the program.

We would like to continue to help students feel more confident in their skills to implement interventions that are culturally relevant. Evidence from practicum and internship shows that the students actually demonstrate good skills, but their comments suggest they might not appear as confident in their skills or knowledge in these areas. We talk quite a bit in our classes about diversity, but these same discussions are not as frequent when they are at the practicum and internship sites – so we can provide suggestions for site supervisors regarding how to engage in more discussions about culture and diversity.
The concerns about technology arise each year. We take advantage of opportunities in class to demonstrate and discuss various technologies available to school counselors and how those might be used, but many of the technologies they will use are not available on campus. We must rely on site supervisors to provide access and exposure – we continue to share this feedback with our site supervisors and encourage students to take advantage of these opportunities during their internships. They need to understand there are many things they will have to learn on the job.

We need the university to administer employer surveys again so we can obtain their feedback.

4. Program Graduates and Employment Data:

- 20 total graduates in 2016-17
- 100% have found employment: 9 elementary school counseling, 4 middle school counselors, and 7 high school counselors.

Program Graduates and Employment Data Summary -
Our graduates are successful in finding employment in the school counseling field. Local principals contact us directly to ask for our students, and we receive unsolicited feedback frequently from district-level counseling directors who have interviewed our graduates.

5. Broad Student Outcomes – PRAXIS Results:

- 20 test takers, 100% pass rate (passing score = 156)
- Clemson overall Median score = 179

PRAXIS Results Summary – Our students continue to be successful in passing the PRAXIS and scoring above the average scores from other CACREP-accredited institutions. Our plan is to continue to support our students.

6. Student Learning Outcomes:
Strengths

- Adheres to legal and ethical standards (100% exceptional)
- Demonstrates developmentally and culturally relevant counseling skills (75% exceptional, 25% average)
- Knowledge of the ASCA National Model (75% exceptional, 25% average)

Student Learning Outcome - Strengths Summary

School counseling students scored average or exceptional in most areas by the time they graduated, suggesting that the instructional approach we use is effective in helping them develop knowledge and skills and apply those to the practice of school counseling. We will maintain the strategies we use, which include collaborative and experiential opportunities for students to engage with and critically analyze the content.

Growth Areas

- Holistically assessing student needs and strengths (53% exceptional, 47% average)
- Developing meaningful and relevant counseling goals (50% exceptional, 50% average)
- Applies counseling theories (35% exceptional, 60% average, 5% progressing)

Student Learning Outcomes - Areas for Growth and Recommendations

This group of student seemed to struggle more with counseling sessions - looking at the big picture and developing a plan that was grounded in theory. We spend a good bit of time in the practicum course working on this, but there is less opportunity for feedback from faculty during internship. As they rely on site supervisors, who often don’t discuss theory or articulate clear goals for their individual counseling sessions, our students receive limited help. Program faculty need to work more with site supervisors to give them tools for helping our students in these areas.