



MARYMOUNT
UNIVERSITY

College of Health and Education
School of Counseling
Continuous Systematic Program Evaluation
(2009 CACREP Standards 1.AA.1-6)
April 8, 2021

Program Evaluation Overview

The purpose of the continuous systematic program evaluation is to provide a comprehensive report that highlights various evaluative processes and tools used to measure the School of Counseling's mission, objectives, and student learning outcomes. This report highlights current assessment and program data that are used to measure and evaluate 2009 CACREP Standards 1.AA.1-6. Specifically, this report provides a brief overview and current outcomes of various measures used to evaluate or identify Standards 1.AA.1-5. These measures include: 1) the *Marymount University 2019 Alumni Survey—Supplemental Report*; the *Marymount University School of Counseling 2021 Employer Survey*; the *Marymount University Student Learning Assessment Report*; data from NBCC's *National Counseling Exam* and *National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Exam*; and data from the School of Counseling *End-of-Year Faculty Review*, monthly faculty meeting minutes, and annual *Current Student Review Survey*.

Marymount University Alumni Survey

Marymount University conducts an annual survey of all graduates to assess students' overall experience, perceptions of academic quality, program reputation, and employment and salary data. The University, in collaboration with the School of Counseling, also conducts a supplemental survey for graduate counseling programs, which is conducted every two years. This survey provides alumni perceptions of CACREP core courses and practicum and internship. Questions focus on the importance of core courses, their rating of each course relative to their education received, the most/least useful aspects of their education, content they would like to have learned more about while in the program, employment data, information regarding the NCE/NCMHCE, and their licensure status.

The sample size for the 2019 supplemental survey was comparable to sample sizes from previous survey administrations ($n = 25$). Data from the current survey revealed over 60% graduating from the CMHC program, nearly 40% from SC (~20%) and PCMHC (~20%) programs.

- ✓ Overall respondents perceived the level of education (1 = *unsatisfactory*; 5 = *excellent*) received from each of the CACREP core courses and practicum and internship as *very good* ($M = 4.00$).
- ✓ Respondents found practicum/internship, faculty expertise, and professional ethics most useful aspects of the program.
- ✓ Regarding least useful aspects, career counseling was cited most frequently followed by the research methods class.
- ✓ A number of respondents perceived the need for more techniques, skills, licensure and private practice information, and greater variety of relevant electives.

- ✓ When asked how long it took to find employment in the field, 42% reported finding work within three months of graduation, 13% from 4-6 months, and 17% from 7-12 months post-graduation. Four percent reported having a position prior to graduating and 4% indicated it took longer than 12 months to secure gainful employment. Thirteen percent remained in the job they had while in school and 8% indicated that have yet to transition into professional work as a counselor.
- ✓ A significant majority of respondents (80%; $n = 20$) reported taking either the NCE, NCMHCE, or both with 95% reporting they passed the exam and 5% preferring not reporting that information.
- ✓ Data revealed there was no difference between which exam was preferred (NCE 43% vs. NCMHCE 43%; 14% took both exams). Finally, 62% of respondents reported being licensed, with Virginia being the most frequently reported state of licensure.

Marymount University School of Counseling Employer Survey

The employer survey is designed to highlight how employer supervisors assess their perceptions and evaluations of major aspects of the program. The employer survey is conducted biannually. The number of responses ($n= 11$) to the 2021 survey is consistent to previous survey administrations. The survey comprised six questions that asked respondents their perceptions of how well graduates were prepared for professional work, how they rated graduates' content knowledge specific to the CACREP core courses, how well they rated key content areas (i.e., *critical problem-solving skills, clinical judgment, ethical/legal understanding and implementation, individual counseling skills, knowledge of the counseling field, working with diverse clients, collaborative skills, professionalism, and openness to supervision*), and the likelihood of hiring another Marymount counseling graduate.

- ✓ When asked their perceptions of how they would rate graduates in CACREP core domains, **respondents indicated a significant majority of graduates were rated as excellent or very good.**
- ✓ Respondents **rated most graduates as excellent or very good across other content domains.**
- ✓ The survey also asked where programs should devote more effort in training. **The only issue that garnered multiple responses was more training on the licensure process.**
- ✓ All respondents indicated **they would not hesitate to hire a Marymount graduate from the counseling programs.**

Marymount University Student Learning Assessment Report

The University compiles student learning outcome data from all programs as part of their overall accreditation requirement. The School of Counseling evaluates each of the CACREP core domains as it relates to student learning outcomes. This report provides detailed assessment

data of student learning and performance on program area standards, professional identity, and clinical and professional practice. Outcome assessments are evaluated biannually and use various metrics to provide an overall measure of student outcome. All accredited programs at the University are reviewed on two year cycles. In 2018, CACREP core domains multicultural counseling, testing and assessment, and research methods were assessed. In 2020, student learning assessments were completed for advanced developmental and career counseling. The remaining domains (individual skills, group counseling, and professional legal and ethical issues in counseling) will be assessed in 2022. One metric used to measure student learning assessment is the student grade received for a major course assignment. This assignment measures the cumulative knowledge of the course as determined by the faculty member (e.g., research proposal, major paper or presentation, clinical skills recording, testing/assessment report, group counseling proposal, etc.).

- ✓ For CACREP core courses evaluated in the 2018 and 2020 student learning assessment reports, **all indices demonstrated evidence that student learning assessment was achieved.**
- ✓ Data from the NCE/NCMHCE was also used for this report. **Aggregate results revealed students either equal or exceeded overall score compared to students at other CACREP programs and non-CACREP programs.**
- ✓ For the NCE, Marymount students **equaled or exceeded scores across the eight CACREP domains compared to students at other CACREP programs and non-CACREP programs.**
- ✓ Data from the *Marymount University Graduate Student Survey*, an assessment distributed at the time of students' graduation, also demonstrated student's perceptions of their learning experience as it related to each of the CACREP core courses. **Students typically indicated that the level of education gained was very good or excellent.**
- ✓ This report also includes a summary of any program modifications implemented or planned. **Specifically, this report highlights new program electives, a review of common rubrics, updates/modifications regarding technology in counseling labs, and assessment tools.**

School of Counseling Programs, Curricular Offerings, & Applicants Review

Every year, at the end of spring semester, the School of Counseling conducts a *Current Student Review Survey* to evaluate students' perceptions of current programs and course offerings. This evaluation also asks about course electives and areas where the School should consider developing new programs to meet the changing needs of student professional development. For example, data from the most recent survey indicated that students would like more elective options including more advanced diagnostic content, formal supervision theory and application, psychopharmacology, and private practice considerations. Two courses [CE701 *Advanced Diagnostic Classification of Mental Disorders* and CE725 *Theories and Models of Counseling*

Supervision) are integrated into the Fall 2021 course offerings to accommodate student demands. Further, three electives were transitioned to permanent courses and are offered annually (CE543 *Theory and Practice of Short-term Intensive Psychodynamic Therapy*; CE545 *Positive Psychology in Counseling*, CE546 *Wellness and Self-care*). Another example of how the School responds to student feedback, was the organization of a one-day workshop in Summer 2020 for current students that focused on addressing violence and racism.

In addition, end-of-semester student course evaluations and aggregate data from the fall and spring administration of the NCE and NCMHCE are also reviewed by program faculty to determine what modifications or revisions are needed to core courses. Program faculty also engage in an annual end-of-year program review where the focus is on issues, concerns, and opportunities across the CMHC, PCMHC, and SC programs. The 2020-2021 *End-of-Year Faculty Review* was conducted on April 7, 2021 with all program faculty (*Information from this meeting is summarized below in the Program Modification Process section.*)

During monthly School meetings, program faculty discuss not only curricular, programmatic, or student issues/concerns that are impacting learning outcomes, but also ways of resolving these matters to ensure program compliance and course objectives are met. School faculty also engage in *periodic student progress review* (as outlined in the Student Handbook) a minimum of twice a semester to evaluate any student concerns that may hinder progression in their program or in becoming professional counselors. Related to this process, the School engages in formal program interviews where all applicants are thoroughly vetted for appropriateness to their designated program. During this formal interview process, School faculty uses various methods to evaluate characteristics of program applicants including an official review of their application materials, a formal on-campus interview (during the 2020-2021 interview cycle we used Zoom to accommodate restrictions imposed by COVID-19) that includes both a group and individual interview with program faculty, and any ancillary activities (e.g., writing sample) to ensure applicants are a good fit for the program and it aligns with their career goals.

School of Counseling Program Modification Process

In essence, all School of Counseling assessment measures and data inform the program modification process. Aggregate data from the NCE and NCMHCE is reviewed to determine what deficits exist based on participant test scores relative to other CACREP and non-CACREP programs across the country. Program faculty discuss how these data translate to course objectives, assignments, and course content and instruction and modifications are made where possible. As mentioned, the School also uses data from the Alumni survey. Specifically, we target participants' responses to the questions "*What would have been useful to learn at Marymount?*" "*What was the most useful aspect of your education?*" and "*What was the least useful*

aspect of your education?" Data provide valuable information regarding students' learning outcomes.

- ✓ Since reaccreditation, we have used data from the Alumni and Employer Surveys, course evaluations, and program faculty reviews (both monthly meetings and end-of-year review) to **modify CE536 (Advanced Theories and Techniques) to integrate more focus on student development of their theoretical orientation, application of theory-driven approaches to treatment, integration of strategic eclecticism into theoretical models, application of detailed techniques, and opportunities to practice technique approaches.**
- ✓ Feedback from the Alumni and Employer Surveys and program faculty reviews (especially feedback from faculty who teach practicum and internship) **led to adding more clinically-relevant electives across the CMHC program.** As mentioned, the School has added CE701 and CE725 as electives for Fall 2021. Along with the outcome data, the School added CE725 to meet the need for more counselor supervisors.
- ✓ **Outcome data are used to evaluate changing testing and assessment needs for CE510 (Testing and Assessment).** This process uses student course evaluations, NCE/NCMHCE data, program faculty review, end-of-year review, input from faculty during monthly meetings, and alumni and employer survey data to determine which tests and assessments are currently being used across clinical settings.
- ✓ Program faculty are currently using the aforementioned measures along with enrollment and institutional data to evaluate the feasibility of collapsing CE502 (*Professional, Legal, and Ethical Issues in Counseling*) and CE560 (*Foundations, Ethics, and Professional Issues in School Counseling*); CE530C (*Career Development Counseling*) and CE530S (*Career Development Counseling (School Counseling Section)*); and the two sections of CE522C and S (*Counseling for Individuals*) to minimize the redundancy across both CMHC and SC programs.
- ✓ In response to needs of new faculty to provide consistent supervision and course information, **we have instituted biweekly meetings for CE597C and CE599C.**
- ✓ **We are planning to offer biweekly meetings for course faculty for CE501 (Basis of Psychopathology) and CE522C (Counseling for Individuals) to ensure continuity in course content and delivery.**
- ✓ Survey data helped shape program modifications in other areas. For example, alumni data indicated interest opportunities including study abroad classes, an approved supervisor class, and continuing education offerings through the School of Counseling.
- ✓ We continue to develop our databases that include a faculty generated list of approved supervisors for our graduates needing post-masters supervised hours and a separate alumni-only listserv.
- ✓ As mentioned, as part of our continual program review, we pursue new program electives, review of common rubrics, engage in updates/modifications regarding

technology in counseling labs, and keep abreast of assessment tools relevant to the profession.

Data gathered from the 2020-2021 *End-of-Year Faculty Review* not only reiterated several of the modifications mentioned, but also provided specific program modifications. Below are highlights from this review process.

- ✓ CE510 is identifying new assessment and testing tools that meet student clinical needs
- ✓ CE520 (*Theories in Counseling*) covers *Critical Race Theory* as a major theoretical model. Further, students in this course will receive more detail on DBT, ACT, CBT techniques, and updated information on Cognitive Behavior theory.
- ✓ CE536 has made some modifications to the theory presentation and demonstration rubric.
- ✓ CE597C&S and CE599 C&S rubrics are standardized. Also, information on the recording transcript was added to the rubric to highlight skill competencies.
- ✓ New electives were reviewed and new opportunities discussed.
- ✓ Program improvement suggestions were discussed including adding student workshops to highlight nuanced areas not fully addressed within CACREP core courses.

Examples of the potential workshop offerings include:

- *Case documentation*
- *Psychopharmacology*
- *Overview of telehealth*
- *Practical information on establishing private practice*
- *Licensure processes*
- *Trauma informed care*

Summary

Various measures and sources of data were used as part of the School of Counseling's systemic program evaluation. During this evaluation period, outcome data suggests that the programs are meeting or exceeding students' expectations regarding educational and professional development needs. Further, outcome measures appear to be accurately capturing perceptions of competencies such as critical problem-solving, critical judgment, ethical and legal issues, and skill application. In addition, perceptions of employers, outcome data (e.g., NCE/ NCMHCE), and University outcome reports seem to correlate well regarding student competencies in CACREP core courses and practicum and internship. Along with the formal student and employer surveys, other tools and processes (e.g., program faculty reviews, end-of-year reviews, monthly faculty meetings, and student surveys) provide valuable feedback not only in assisting with program and curriculum development, but also in informing program modifications. This integrative systematic program evaluation process has been instrumental in

adhering to our mission objectives and measuring student learning and professional development.

The report is available on the School of Counseling website (<https://marymount.edu/academics/counseling/>). For further information regarding this report, please contact Dr. William R. Sterner, Associate Director of Counseling (wsterner@marymount.edu).

This report was prepared on April 8, 2021 and submitted by:

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