



**FAIRLEIGH
DICKINSON
UNIVERSITY**

School of Psychology and Counseling

2023-2024 Clinical Mental Health Counseling (MS)- Annual Program Evaluation Report

Prepared by Alwin E. Wagener, PhD

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Introduction

The Fairleigh Dickinson University (FDU) Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program is committed to maintaining the standards of the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). Towards that end, the FDU CMHC performs yearly programmatic evaluations. This programmatic evaluation covers the 2023-2024 academic year and provides an analysis of all data collected to determine how well the program is accomplishing the Program Objectives and any changes that should be made. The program evaluation first provides information about substantial program changes and student data and demographics. Then, a summary of data findings and program modifications based on the data is provided. Finally, the assessment process is described, and the data is presented, which, this year, includes key performance indicators (KPI) and national counseling test scores. Survey data is collected every three years and will be included again for the 2025-2026 program evaluation.

Description of the Program

The CMHC program at FDU is accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). It is a primarily full-time program that uses a cohort model to support student growth and learning. The curriculum has been developed over many years by faculty in the CMHC program. The mission of the Fairleigh Dickinson University (FDU) Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) Program is to prepare counselors who integrate developmental, cultural, wellness, and diagnostic knowledge with clinical skills in order to enhance the lives of a diverse clientele. To accomplish this mission, the FDU CMHC program established Program Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) to measure success in those objectives, which are detailed below.

Program Objectives

Graduates of the FDU CMHC program will demonstrate:

1. Knowledge of the core curriculum areas required by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and the state of New Jersey Professional Counselor Examiners Committee.

2. Developmentally appropriate counseling skills.
3. Professional dispositions consistent with those necessary for professional counseling.
4. Awareness of inequities that affect clients, along with the ability to advocate for social justice and engage in social justice interventions.
5. A professional counselor identity while working in the continuum of care alongside other behavioral health professionals.

Student Learning Outcomes

Based on CACREP Standards

Students in the FDU CMHC program will be able to demonstrate the knowledge and/or skills necessary to do the following in each category:

- **Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice:** Apply self-care strategies appropriate to the counselor role. (CACREP Standard 2.F.1.l)
- **Social and Cultural Diversity:** Understand and apply multicultural counseling competencies. (CACREP Standard 2.F.2.c)
- **Human Growth and Development:** Understand and apply theories of normal and abnormal personality development. (CACREP Standard 2.F.3.c)
- **Career Development:** Understand and implement approaches for conceptualizing the interrelationships among and between work, mental well-being, relationships, and other life roles and factors. (CACREP Standard 2.F.4.b)
- **Counseling and Helping Relationships:** Understand and conduct the essential interviewing, counseling, and case conceptualization skills. (CACREP Standard 2.F.5.g)
- **Group Counseling and Group Work:** Understand and apply the dynamics associated with group process and development. (CACREP Standard 2.F.6.b)
- **Assessment and Testing :** Understand and demonstrate procedures for assessing risk of aggression or danger to others, self-inflicted harm, or suicide. (CACREP Standard 2.F.7.c)

- **Research and Program Evaluation:** Understand the importance of research in advancing the counseling profession, including how to critique research to inform counseling practice. (CACREP Standard 2.F.8.a)
- **Clinical Mental Health Counseling:** Demonstrate techniques and interventions for the prevention and treatment of a broad range of mental health issues. (CACREP CMHC Standard 5.C.3.b)

Substantial Program Changes Since 2022-2023

Programmatic Change

In the Spring of 2024, the CMHC program received news from CACREP that the program is fully accredited for the remainder of the accreditation cycle, which ends in October, 2027.

Faculty Changes

In the 2023-2024 academic year, there were two significant faculty changes. In the Spring 2024 semester, Dr. Roman Petrocelli was hired as a Visiting Assistant Professor for the Spring and Summer 2024 semesters. Also, in the Spring 2024 semester, a hiring process was completed resulting in the hiring of Yuqing Qiu who began her first semester as an Assistant Professor at the start of the Fall 2024 semester.

Course Changes

Course changes based on recommendations from last year's program evaluation are below. The results of these changes will be observable in the program evaluation for the 2024-2025 annual program review:

- **Multicultural Counseling Course:** The CMHC's new core faculty member, Yuqing (Angie) Qiu, will teach the course.
- **Career Counseling Course:** The instructor, Dr. Elliotte Harrington, developed case studies for the course that use z-codes to better demonstrate the connection between career counseling and mental health counseling.
- **Diagnosis and Treatment Planning Course:** The instructor, Dr. Elliotte Harrington made the exams more difficult, incorporated additional training on z-codes, and discussed the use of assessments for diagnosis.

- Counseling Skills and Relationship Course: The instructor, Dr. Alwin Wagener, included demonstrations and instructions in the use of several assessment tools.
- Practicum and Internship Courses: The instructors will ask students to identify the clinical focus of cases they present including how clients' developmental levels and culture affect their diagnoses and treatment and for relevant z-codes.

Student Assessment Changes

The SLOs and KPIs were updated based on recommendations resulting in the SLOs each being tied to one set of KPIs that addressed the introduction, reinforcement, and mastery of the SLO. The SLOs were further connected to CACREP standards and the Program Objectives to assure their relevance.

Student Demographic Data

As part of evaluating the program, the demographics of the student body are evaluated. Towards that end, the student numbers, race and ethnicity, and gender are documented. In the Fall 2023 semester, 23 students entered the program, not counting one student who withdrew within the first two weeks of the program. 23 students continued in their second year of the program, and 21 students moved into their final semester of the program. In the 2023-2024 academic year, 21 students graduated from the FDU CMHC program following completion of their last semester in the program in the Fall of 2023. Of the 46 students in the first and second year of the CMHC program, one student attended part-time, and the remainder were full-time. The program dismissed three students following the Fall semester and two students following the Spring semester. Additionally, one student took a one year leave of absence after the Spring semester and one took a year leave of absence after the Summer semester. There were also two students who returned to the program in the Fall 2023 semester after having temporarily withdrawn.

Demographics of the program

	Fall 2023
Race/Ethnicity	
Black	6.0% (N = 4)
Asian	4.5% (N = 3)

Hispanic	17.9% (N = 12)
White	58.2% (N = 39)
Multi-Ethnicity	6.0% (N = 4)
Unknown	7.5% (N = 5)
Gender	
Male	16.4% (N = 11)
Female	83.6% (N = 56)
Non-Binary/Other	0% (N = 0)
First Generation	
First Generation	16.4% (N = 11)
Not First Generation	67.2% (N = 45)
Unknown/Not Reported	16.4% (N = 11)
International Student	
International Student	1.5% (N = 1)

Demographics of Fall 2023 Applicants and Admitted Students

There were 92 applicants for the Class of 2026. Of those, 24 full-time students started the program, with one withdrawing from the program within the first month. The table below shows the Race/Ethnicity and Gender for those who applied and those who were admitted.

	Applicants	Class of 2025
Race/Ethnicity		
Black	7.8% (N = 8)	12.5% (N = 3)
Asian	8.8% (N = 9)	0% (N = 0)
Hispanic/Latino	10.8% (N = 11)	0% (N = 0)
White (Non-Hispanic/Latino)	64.7% (N = 66)	54.2% (N = 13)
White and Hispanic/Latino	10.8% (N = 11)	16.7% (N = 4)

Multi-Ethnicity (other than White and Hispanic/Latino)	(N = 3)	12.5% (N = 3)
American Indian/Pacific Islander/Alaskan Native	0% (N = 0)	0% (N = 0)
Unknown	1.0% (N = 1)	1.0% (N = 1)
Gender		
Male	21.6% (N = 22)	29% (N = 7)
Female	78.4% (N = 80)	70.8% (N = 17)
Non-Binary/Other	0% (N = 0)	0% (N = 0)
International Student		
International Student	22.8% (N = 21)	4.2% (N = 1)

Comparing the Demographic Information

The overall make-up of the FDU-Florham campus is 53.6% White, 19.3% Hispanic/Latino, 9.26% Black/African American, 7.08% Asian, 2.44% Two or more races, 0.26% American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 0.0975% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders. The Race/Ethnicity of the Class of 2025 is interesting to view in relation to the Race/Ethnicity of the student body in the Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 semesters. What stands out is that the new cohort has a larger Black/African American percentage, a larger Multi-Ethnicity proportion, and a smaller Non-Latino/Hispanic White percentage and Hispanic/Latino proportion. The genders of students on the Florham campus are 39.5% male and 60.5% female, which is far more even than in the FDU CMHC program. It is common for females to far outnumber males in Clinical Mental Health Counseling programs, and it is a positive development that the percentage of males in the program more than doubled with the cohort that started in the Fall of 2023.

Summary of Program Evaluation Results

The program evaluation results provide evidence of both strengths and areas for growth in the CMHC program. An initial summary based on student data is that the Racial/Ethnic diversity in the CMHC program is slightly less than the

university for the Fall 2023 semester, though the racial/ethnic diversity of the cohort starting in the Fall 2023 cohort is consistent with that of the university. The percentage of females in the CMHC program is far higher than males in the program, though the incoming cohort indicates a positive shift towards more males. Based on the incoming cohort, no modifications are suggested in the admissions process, but it will be important to continue to work to maintain diversity in both gender and racial/ethnic identity in the future.

The results for the CPCE for the Class of 2023 were delivered in the Fall of 2023. For the CPCE, there was a 100% pass rate. The results show that CMHC students performed well above the national mean overall and on all eight sections of the CPCE. This performance indicates that the program is preparing students well across all content areas

The class of 2023 took the NCE in their last semester in the counseling program. The pass rate was 100%, with our CMHC students above the national mean in all content areas and overall.

Finally, analyzing the KPI data in relation to the CPCE and NCE shows that our students are successfully moving through the program. There are a few students who did not meet the standard for specific KPIs in the introduction and reinforcement stages but all succeeded in the mastery stage of KPI assessment. This finding is consistent with the national testing showing our students are well prepared across all areas.

Program Modifications Based on Program Evaluation

As a result of the data captured and analyzed in the 2023-2024 program evaluation process, it appears that students are performing well and there are no significant modifications needed at this time. However, there is advising, monitoring, and planning needed to assure ongoing improvement.

Since this was the first year using newly developed SLOs and KPIs, the program will continue to monitor the ability of those KPIs to track student performance in meeting the Program Objectives and SLOs. It will be important to assure that students reach mastery, and the program will monitor if there are any changes that need to be addressed to assure all students succeed in the introductory SLO stage. The program will also advise or modify supervisors to assure the reviews are consistent with the stated expectation that students will be evaluated based

on their experience level, which addresses the reason all students did not succeed in the reinforcement stage of three KPIs.

The 2022-2023 academic year was one of significant change with the hiring of a new core faculty member who started in the Fall of 2024. The addition of the new faculty member will allow courses to have the same instructor over multiple years, allowing for greater consistency in course content and monitoring of student performance.

For recruitment of new CMHC students, the CMHC program will continue its strategies for recruiting a culturally diverse student body based on its successes. The program will also review those strategies and formulate additional approaches for increasing racial/ethnic diversity and increasing the number of male and non-binary/other gendered students in the program.

Assessment Process

The FDU CMHC program uses data from multiple sources in its assessment process. The process begins with collecting the data, which involves compiling scores from KPIs, collecting CPCE and NCE testing data, and, every three years, administering surveys to alumni, sites that host our interns, and organizations that hire our graduates. Once the data is gathered, it is organized into tables showing passing rates for testing scores related to national averages, KPIs and survey results. Then, the data is examined by the core faculty in the CMHC program. When examining the data, the faculty are looking for evidence of strengths and weaknesses in the program along with how well the assessment process is generating data that is useful for program evaluation. Following a faculty review of the data, they generate the final list of program modifications based on the results of the program evaluation.

Student Assessment Data

The goal of the assessment process is to collect data on the performance of students, the curriculum, and the program. The process seeks to identify assignments and evaluations that are particularly indicative of students' progress in learning. Therefore, this section will be divided into the following sections, 1. Student Learning Outcomes and Key Performance Indicators, 2. Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam, and 3. National Counselor Exam.

Student Learning Outcomes and Key Performance Indicators

The FDU CMHC program recently identified nine Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) that were linked with key performance indicators (KPIs) gathered at multiple points of time during the program. Target scores were set for each KPI based on requirements in the CMHC program. For the course assignments, passing scores were set at 80% or above based on the passing score for courses in the CMHC program and scores on the supervisor evaluations are set at 2 or above, corresponding with a satisfactory or better rating. For the CPCE exam, the passing score for our program is at or above one standard deviation below the mean (z-score of -1). For the NCE, the passing score is set by the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC) who create the test and deliver the scores. Below are KPI passing rates Introduction, Reinforcement, and Mastery of an SLO followed by the scores on the CPCE and NCE.

2023-2024 Key Performance Indicators

Below is information on the percent of students who met the standard for each KPI at the stages of Introduction, Reinforcement, and Mastery. The students all met the requirement for mastery, though there were several students rated below the expected level at introduction and reinforcement. The students who did not meet the required reinforcement performance were both evaluated by the same supervisor who rated them based on professional instead of student competence. The performance of students in the introduction stage showed that a few performed worse than their peers, though it is expected that as with previous cohorts, they will improve and reach success in the mastery of the content area.

1. PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING ORIENTATION AND ETHICAL PRACTICE

Introduction	Reinforcement	Mastery
100%	100%	100%

2. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Introduction	Reinforcement	Mastery
100%	100%	100%

3. HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Introduction	Reinforcement	Mastery

91%	100%	100%
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4. CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Introduction	Reinforcement	Mastery
100%	95%	100%

5. COUNSELING AND HELPING RELATIONSHIPS

Introduction	Reinforcement	Mastery
100%	90%	100%

6. GROUP COUNSELING AND GROUP WORK

Introduction	Reinforcement	Mastery
96%	100%	100%

7. ASSESSMENT AND TESTING

Introduction	Reinforcement	Mastery
83%	100%	100%

8. RESEARCH AND PROGRAM EVALUATION

Introduction	Reinforcement	Mastery
100%	100%	100%

9. CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Introduction	Reinforcement	Mastery
87%	89%	100%

Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam

The Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam (CPCE) serves as the comprehensive exam for the program and is taken in the summer semester after students' second year and before their final semester in the program. Since it is a national exam designed by the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC), Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE), it is a good measure of how students compare with the national average for those taking the exam. The results are provided below for the 2023 graduating classes in total and for each of the eight sections, 1. Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice, 2. Social and Cultural Diversity, 3. Human Growth and Development, 4. Career Development, 5. Counseling and Helping Relationships, 6. Group Counseling and Group Work, 7. Assessment and Testing, 8. Research and Program Evaluation. For each of those

categories, the scores have been converted into a z-Score, such that the score of 0 is equivalent to the National Average and 1 point is indicative of one standard deviation. The CMHC mean scores were above the national mean overall and in all eight subcategories. Additionally, the CMHC average scores were over a half standard deviation above the mean on the total score and five subcategories.

Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam	Graduates in 2023
CPCE Total	0.66
CPCE Section 1: Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice	0.59
CPCE Section 2: Social and Cultural Diversity	0.44
CPCE Section 3: Human Growth and Development	0.63
CPCE Section 4: Career Development	0.39
CPCE Section 5: Counseling and Helping Relationships	0.23
CPCE Section 6: Group Counseling and Group Work	0.50
CPCE Section 7: Assessment and Testing	0.52
CPCE Section 8: Research and Program Evaluation	0.74

National Counselor Exam

The NCE score report from Spring 2024 (of Graduates of 2023) shows that 21 students from the Counseling Program were tested and pass rate was 100%. The CMHC mean scores were above the national average overall and in all 14 subcategories.

CACREP Content Areas				
National Counselor Exam	CMHC		National	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice	8.4	1.3	8.1	1.8
Social and Cultural Diversity	6.0	0.5	5.8	1.0
Human Growth and Development	10.3	1.5	9.8	2.0
Career Development	9.9	1.8	8.9	2.0
Counseling and Helping Relationships	48.1	3.5	43.8	6.9
Group Counseling and Group Work	15.6	1.9	14.0	3.1

Assessment and Testing	20.6	2.9	18.5	3.6
Research and Program Evaluation	2.4	1.2	2.2	1.2
TOTAL SCORE	121.3	7.3	111.1	16.5

Work Behaviors and Domains				
National Counselor Exam	CMHC		National	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Professional Practice and Ethics	11.4	2.9	10.6	3.1
Intake, Assessment and Diagnosis	14.9	1.6	13.4	2.5
Areas of Clinical Focus	35.3	2.8	32.6	4.7
Treatment Planning	12.7	1.0	11.6	1.9
Counseling Skills and Interventions	35.8	3.5	32.8	6.1
Core Counseling Attributes	11.2	1.3	10.0	1.9
TOTAL	121.3	7.3	111.1	16.5