

**Program Review
Counseling Studies
School Counseling and Clinical Mental Health Counseling
College of Health Sciences
University of Louisiana Monroe**

The Counseling Studies Program is a 60-hour graduate program that contains the Clinical Mental Health Counseling track and the School Counseling track, both accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs (CACREP). Both tracks possess the same mission statement and core requirements, only separated by elective coursework and internship sites.

Mission Alignment

The mission of the Counseling Studies Program is in direct alignment with the mission of the university, as it meets the intellectual, cultural, vocational, social, and personal needs of students through effective online teaching strategies, faculty research endeavors, and internship service. We cultivate a supportive and collaborative learning environment by integrating diversity of thought and background into the classroom, using the most current technology (i.e., Zoom & Moodle) in our online platform. The mission of the Counseling Studies Program aims to train students to be competent, ethical, and culturally aware clinicians that aligns with the university's mission to improve the general quality of life through interaction with the community and world at large. Each student completes an unpaid one-

Due to several required courses being offered in the fall, spring, and summer semesters, the Counseling Studies Program relies on adjuncts to teach courses. We have approximately seven adjunct faculty we utilize, all whom possess doctorates in either Counselor Education and Supervision or Marriage and Family Therapy. All are licensed as LPC's, LMFT's, or both.

CACREP requires a 12:1 FTE faculty to student ratio as part of the 2016 standards. Student enrollment for the Counseling Studies Program is as high as it can be due to the number of full-time and part-time faculty in the program, the spring 2018 FTE ratio was at 11.7. Enrollment levels remain consistent, as the program receives more applications than it takes in during the year. The exact enrollment percentage is unknown at this time.

Students are formally assessed several times as they matriculate through the program. Faculty assess students in three ways. First, CACREP requires each core content area to be assessed by Key Performance Indicators (KPI) two times. These KPI's can be anything, such as an assignment, exam, paper, etc., and must include a rubric for how it is to be graded. Second, faculty evaluate student preparedness using the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam (CPCE), which is standardized test provided by the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC). In the last six years, the program has had a 100% pass rate for the CPCE, with an average score of 91% on the exam. Last, faculty evaluate student preparedness using the National Counselor Examination (NCE), which is standardized test provided by the NBCC. Passing the NCE qualifies the student to receive the National Certified Counselor credential, which is part of the licensure process. Over the last six years, the program has averaged a 96% pass rate for the NCE. The job placement rate for the last six years has been 100% every year except one year when one student was unable to obtain employment. At this time, the Counseling Studies Program does not engage in any active recruitment activities.

Contribution to the General Health and Well-Being of the Region

Each student in the Counseling Studies Program completes 30 credit hours in the community, where they complete one semester of Practicum and two semesters of Internship. Students' clinical practice involves the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of mental and emotional disorders using a variety of treatment approaches and modalities, such as individual therapy, group therapy, couples and family therapy, and psychoeducation sessions. Our students work with people in the community from various cultural backgrounds and ages (i.e., children, adults, older adults). Over the course of their clinical practice, students complete a minimum of 280 direct clinical hours, defined as time involved with a person that is meant to have therapeutic gain. Overall, students complete a total of at least 720 hours during their year-long clinical internship. In the last three years, 42 students have graduated from the program, totaling 30,240 hours of combined direct and indirect clinical hours serving the community, with 11,760 of those hours being direct clinical care.

In addition, the program has a strong commitment to service in the community, with students participating in various volunteer activities and community outreach programs.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Employment Projections Program, employment of clinical mental health counselors is projected to grow from 128,400 jobs in 2012 to 165,100 jobs by 2022, a 29% increase.

Longitudinal Data Analysis and Trends

There are approximately 48 students in the Counseling Studies program, and each year approximately 15 students graduate from the program. Our FTE ratios, as stated above, are mandated by CACREP to remain under a 12 to 1 faculty / student ratio in order to remain compliant. FTE ratios are calculated by taking the sum total of completed student credit hours taken in a semester, dividing it by the averag

Program and Curriculum Improvements

As part of our accreditation through CACREP, the Counseling Studies Program faculty create an assessment plan to continually evaluate the program and make improvements based upon these evaluations. Every year the program disseminates surveys to program alumni, current students, and site supervisors to collect data regarding curriculum, pedagogy, and intern performance. We also compile data on the CPCE and NCE exams to determine how students perform in the core areas of counseling. The faculty meet to analyze the data and discuss ways to make any needed improvements. These surveys and meeting agenda items are shown in our accreditation self-study to prove they are being done. Two minor improvements based upon the program evaluation were to include the CMHC and School concentrations on student transcripts and to adjust the format of the delivery of the summer workshop to meet the needs of the students.

Scholarship Activities

The faculty of the Counseling Studies Program dedicate 20% of their time and efforts to research endeavors that involve conducting empirical studies, publishing books and/or in peer-reviewed journals, and presenting at professional conferences. These activities fall within the expectations of what counseling faculty are trained to do in regard to research and scholarship. Below, I provide tables that depict the number of publications and presentations in which faculty completed in the last three years. The research goals of the counseling faculty are to contribute to the knowledge base of our respective area of counseling and maintain ULM's presence within the counseling profession.

The main source of research support for beginning faculty is the \$10,000 startup funds.

This can go toward funding small research projects that can lead to publication or pay for travel to conferences to present.

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