



COLORADO CHRISTIAN  
UNIVERSITY

Master of Arts in Counseling

## 2018 Program Assessment Report

The Master of Arts in Counseling program at Colorado Christian University annually evaluates the program at large using systematic data collection. CACREP, the program's accrediting body, requires the M.A. in Counseling program at CCU to evaluate the program's objectives using the following criteria:

1. a summary of the program evaluation results,
2. subsequent program modifications, and
3. any other substantial program changes.

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## Section 1: Summary of Program Evaluation Results

The College of Adult and Graduate Studies (CAGS) at Colorado Christian University has institutional Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) that are assessed by all academic programs, including the M.A. in Counseling degree. While most PLOs are general in nature, PLO2 uniquely provides the opportunity for the M.A. in Counseling program to assess students' knowledge and clinical skills specific through Core Area Learning Outcomes (CALOs) and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

In 2017-2018, the M.A. in Counseling program prepared a self-study report in preparation for CACREP reaccreditation in 2019. As a result of the self-study, the program became aware of the need to strengthen program assessment. An annual assessment report that reflects the new program assessment plan entirely will be available in 2019-2020. Below, the data collected thus far is reported.

### Institutional Program Learning Outcomes Assessed

Program Learning Outcome 2 (PLO2): Master of Arts in Counseling students demonstrate proficient clinical knowledge and skills.

Program Learning Outcome 6 (PLO6): Students reflect on their Christian educational experience and its influence on their personal and professional life.

### Program Learning Outcome 2

To assess PLO2, the M.A. in Counseling program assesses each of the eight common core areas identified by CACREP. To assess the core common areas, Common Core Learning Outcomes (CALOs) and subsequent Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been developed for each common core area. In 2017-2018, five CALOs, in support of PLO2, were assessed.

1. Within the final two semesters, students in the M.A. in Counseling program must take and pass the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE). The CPCE is comprised of 136 questions, with 17 questions allotted for each of the eight clinical competency areas identified by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The eight competency areas are: Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice; Social and Cultural Diversity; Human Growth and Development; Career Development; Helping Relationships; Group Work; Assessment; and Research and Program Evaluation.

In 2018, the average score by M.A. in Counseling students in each clinical competency area was above the national average score for each corresponding clinical competency area; furthermore, 2018 average scores in each clinical competency increased in comparison to the 2017 average scores.

2. Also within the final two semesters, students in the M.A. in Counseling program have the option of taking the National Counselor Exam (NCE). While this is not required, 62 students took the NCE in the spring and fall of 2018. Of those 62 students, 58 passed the exam on their first attempt. In 2018, the M.A. in Counseling program had a pass rate of 94%, while the national pass rate is 86.70%.
3. In CSL-514 Counseling Practicum and CSL-653 Counseling Internship I, site supervisors complete the Counselor Competency Scale – Revised (CCS-R) on each M.A. in Counseling student. The

CCS-R assesses a student's skill development and professional competencies in relation to CACREP standardized counselor education. Students are expected to receive a rating of 4 (*Meets Expectations*) or higher in two specific competency areas on the CCS-R (2.A and 2.B) that pertain to a student's ethical practice and professional behaviors.

Encouragingly, mean scores for both 2.A and 2.B comfortably fell within the range of *Meets Expectations*. Competency area 2.A was assessed in CSL 653 Counseling Internship I, while 2.B was assessed in CSL 514 Counseling Practicum. Students enrolled in CSL 514 in the fall 2017 semester earned a mean score of 4.48 on competency area 2.B. These same students, once progressing to CSL 653 in the spring semester of 2018, earned mean scores of 4.54 on competency area 2.A.

4. Students take CSL 641 Human Growth and Development during their first or second semester of the M.A. in Counseling program. The final assignment of CSL 641 Human Growth and Development assesses a student's understanding of how their own development has contributed to their current identity.

The CSL 641 sample (n=60) consisted of students enrolled in sections of CSL 641 offered at three campuses: Lakewood, Colorado Springs, and Online. These students were enrolled in CSL-641-LKB7-FA17, CSL-641-LKB72-FA17, CSL-641-SCB7-FA17, CSL-641-SCB72-FA17, CSL-641-ONB7-FA17, CSL-641-ONB72-FA17, CSL-641-ONB73-FA17, CSL-641-ONB74-FA17, and CSL-641-ONB78-FA17.

Five professors, Dr. Rebecca Taylor, Dr. Deborah Fenton-Nichols, Dr. Steve Cappa, Dr. Jeffrey White, and Dr. Cheryl Mark, were assigned to assess these papers utilizing the Human Growth and Development Evaluation Rubric. The rubric uses a four-tiered competence proficiency scale: Advanced; Proficient; Developing; and Limited. Each tier was assigned a corresponding score. Respectively, the tiers were scored as 4, 3, 2, or 1. This CALO sought an average score of 3 (Proficient) or higher for M.A. in Counseling students.

The sample received an average score of 3.3, falling well within the Proficient tier of the rubric.

5. Students take CSL 672 Research and Evaluation in their fifth semester. The final assignment for CSL 672 Research and Evaluation was used to assess M.A. in Counseling students' understanding of how research methods inform evidence-based clinical practices. This assignment requires students to understand, critique, and apply research to the counseling process.

The CSL 672 sample (n=55) consisted of students enrolled in sections of CSL 672 offered at three campuses: Lakewood, Colorado Springs, and Online. These students were enrolled in CSL-672-LKDS2-SP18, CSL-672-LKDS2-SP18, CSL-672-SCDS-SP18, CSL-672-SCDS2-SP18, CSL-672-ONDS-SP18, CSL-672-ONDS2-SP18, CSL-672-ONDS3-SP18, CSL-672-ONDS4-SP18, CSL-672-ONDS5-SP18.

Nine professors, Dr. Colby Rogers, Dr. Andrew Wichterman, Dr. Kristy Hardwick, Dr. Jennifer Park, Dr. Selin Philip, Dr. Trigg Even, Dr. Pamela Cassellius, Dr. Sarah Jarvie, and Dr. Mark Knox,

were assigned to assess these papers utilizing the Research and Evaluation Rubric. The rubric uses a four-tiered competence proficiency scale: Advanced; Proficient; Developing; and Limited. Each tier was assigned a corresponding score. Respectively, the tiers were scored as 4, 3, 2, or 1. This CALO sought an average score of 3 (Proficient) or higher for M.A. in Counseling students.

The mean score of the rubric was of 3.2, falling within the competency tier of Proficient, demonstrating competency.

6. Students take CSL 653 Counseling Internship I in their fifth semester. Each student completes a case conceptualization on a client they are currently providing clinical services to. This assignment requires students to demonstrate their ability to efficiently and effectively conceptualize a client and develop a treatment plan.

The CSL 653 sample ( $n=55$ ) consisted of students enrolled in sections of CSL 653 offered at three campuses: Lakewood, Colorado Springs, and Online. These students were enrolled in CSL-653-LKDS-SP18, CSL-653-LKDS2-SP18, CSL-653-LKDS3-SP18, CSL-653-SCDS-SP18, CSL-653-SCDS2-SP18, CSL-653-SCDS3-SP18, CSL-653-ONDS-SP18, CSL-653-ONDS2-SP18, CSL-653-ONDS3-SP18, CSL-653-ONDS4-SP18, CSL-653-ONDS5-SP18, CSL-653-ONDS6-SP18, CSL-653-ONDS7-SP18.

Five professors, Dr. Cheryl Mark, Dr. Jeffrey White, Dr. Steve Cappa, Dr. Rebecca Taylor, and Dr. Deborah Fenton-Nichols were assigned to assess these papers utilizing the Case Conceptualization rubric. The rubric uses a four-tiered competence proficiency scale: Advanced; Proficient; Developing; and Limited. Each tier was assigned a corresponding score. Respectively, the tiers were scored as 4, 3, 2, or 1. This CALO sought an average score of 3 (Proficient) or higher for M.A. in Counseling students.

The mean score of the rubric was of 3.6, falling within the competency tier of Proficient, demonstrating competency.

7. In August of 2018, the M.A. in Counseling program polled 162 site supervisors across the United States through an online survey. These site supervisors provided clinical supervision to in-seat and online students during their Professional Practice Experience between August 2017 and May 2018. While at these sites, students provided diverse clinical services to various populations with mental health needs.

The survey assessed M.A. in Counseling students in 14 clinical competencies. These students were Practicum or Internship students between August 2017 and May 2018. They were asked to rate each student on a weighted Likert Scale (0=Harmful, 1= Deficient, 2= Proficient, 3= Superior) in each clinical competency. Of the 162 site supervisors polled, 94 site supervisors completed the survey (response rate=58%).

The CCU Counseling program found the survey responses very encouraging. Each clinical competency area assessed put M.A. in Counseling students practicing above a Proficient (score of 2) level. These data suggest that M.A. in Counseling students are able to utilize CACREP

standardized clinical knowledge, clinical skill sets, and ACA codes of ethics in ways distinct from the general counseling student population.

8. The M.A. in Counseling program surveys alumni six months after program completion. In December 2017 and May 2018, 114 students completed the CCU M.A. in Counseling program. Accordingly, these 114 alumni were asked to complete an online survey. Of the 114 alumni polled, 32 responded (response rate=28%). Of those who responded and were looking for employment in the mental health profession, 81% found employment within six months of program completion. Furthermore, 90% of those alumni would recommend the program to others seeking clinical mental health training and 38% plan to pursue Doctoral level education. 100% of respondents felt as though they were prepared to enter the mental health profession after graduation, as though they were prepared to practice ethically, and that they felt willing to enter into a therapeutic relationship with anyone regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital/partnership status, language preference, socioeconomic status, or immigration status.

#### Program Learning Outcome 6

PLO6 assesses a student's Christian educational experience and its influence on their personal and professional life while enrolled in the M.A. in Counseling program.

1. The final assignment for CSL 680 Integrative Seminar was used to assess M.A. in Counseling students' critical reflection on their Christian educational experience and its influence on their personal and professional life. This assignment requires students to reflect on how their Christian educational experience and their beliefs have informed their clinical practice, clinical identity, theoretical orientation, and personal experience.

The CSL 680 sample (n=20) consisted of students enrolled in sections of CSL 680 offered at two onsite campuses: Lakewood and Colorado Springs. These students were enrolled in CSL-680-LKB7-FA17 or CSL-680-SCB7-FA17. No online students were utilized in this assessment as CSL 680 is not included in the standard online course progression. CSL 681 Counseling Residency III supplements CSL 680 for online students. CSL 681 is designed to be a multi-day synchronous experience for online students where they reflect on their Christian educational experience and its influence on their personal and professional life. Given the experiential nature of CSL 681, there is no assignment that corresponds to the final assignment in CSL 680.

Two professors, Dr. Deborah Fenton-Nichols and Dr. Steve Cappa, were assigned to assess these papers utilizing the Christian Educational Rubric. The rubric assesses three core areas related to PLO6: Christian Education Experience; Impact on Personal and Professional Life; and Critical Self-Reflection. Each core area was assessed using a four-tiered competence proficiency scale: Advanced; Proficient; Developing; and Limited. Each tier was assigned a corresponding score. Respectively, the tiers were scored as 4, 3, 2, or 1. This CALO sought an average score of 3 (Proficient) or higher in each core area and an average total score of 9 (Proficient in each core area).

The Christian Education Experience core area received an average score of 2.9, the Impact of

Personal and Professional Life and the Critical Self-Reflection core areas both received an average score of 3.4. In total, the average score for all three core areas was 9.6.

2. In the Site Supervisor Survey (see above), site supervisors are asked to identify if their site provides faith-based clinical services. Of the 94 site supervisors who responded, 39 indicated their site does offer faith-based clinical services. These supervisors were asked to rate each M.A. in Counseling student they supervise on how well they integrated the Christian faith into their clinical services. 94.87% rated students as either Proficient (51.28%) or Superior (43.59%). 92.11% of site supervisors reported they believe that CCU M.A. in Counseling students are contributing to the restorative mission of Christ.
3. In the Alumni Survey, (see above), 90.91% of the alumni who responded report believing their clinical work, regardless of the setting in which they practice, contributes to the restorative mission of Christ and that their faith has informed their clinical identity. 86.21% report having grown in their faith while a M.A. in Counseling student, and 89.65% report having found benefit in the integration of faith into course content.

### [Remediation](#)

In 2018, less than .005% of the M.A. in Counseling student population was engaged in a remedatory process. The M.A. in Counseling program is encouraged by this, as procedures were implemented to quickly identify and engage students in need of support before it rose to a remediation level.

In 2018, one M.A. in Counseling student was removed from the program, one student was placed on remediation and successfully completed the process, and one student was placed on remediation and is still currently being supported by that process at the time of this report.

### [Demographics](#)

#### [Current Students](#)

(2018 Fall Semester)

Female - 82%; Male - 18%

White - 73%; Unknown - 2%; 2 or more races - 4%; Hispanic - 11%; Black - 9%; Asian - 1%

#### [2018 Graduates](#)

Female - 89%; Male - 11%

White - 74%; Unknown - 2%; 2 or more races - 5%; Hispanic - 7%; Black - 11%; Asian - 1%

#### [2019 Cohort Applicants](#)

(as of Spring 2019)

Female - 80%; Male - 20%

White - 69%; Unknown - 2%; 2 or more races - 3%; Hispanic - 11%; Black - 11%; Asian - 3%; Native American/Alaskan Native - 1%

### [Alumni Survey](#)

Please see appendix 1 at the end of this document.

### [Site Supervisor Survey](#)

Please see appendix 2 at the end of this document.

### [Employer Survey](#)

Please see appendix 3 at the end of this document.

## **Section 2: Subsequent Program Modifications**

After reviewing PLO2 and PLO 6, the M.A. in Counseling program determined there were courses within the program's sequence that needed redevelopment to better meet the program learning outcomes.

The courses needing major redevelopments were CSL 621 Theories of Personality and Counseling, CSL 653 Counseling Internship I, and CSL 672 Research and Evaluation. These courses were redeveloped by the master teacher with input from the M.A. in Counseling program's Curriculum Development Committee. After development by the master teacher and Curriculum Development Committee, the new courses was sent to the University's Curriculum Development department for editing, rubric implementation, and ADA compliance check. These new courses began running in Spring 2019, Fall 2018, and Spring 2019, respectively.

The courses needing a moderate redevelopment were CSL 641 Human Growth and Development and CSL 613 Empathy Training. CSL 641 was redeveloped to include an updated version of the textbook, as well as two separate course shells. One shell is specifically developed for the inseat course and the other shell is specifically developed for the online course. While course content remains the same across both shells, instructors are given alternative options for presenting course material to the students. CSL 613, Empathy Training, needed an update to include new, formative assignments.

Two new courses were added to the program's sequence. These classes were CSL 654 Counseling Internship II and CSL 655 Counseling Internship III. In the past, students enrolled in CSL 653 for all credits of Counseling Internship needed for graduation. These two new internship classes now include different content and build upon the knowledge that is introduced in CSL 653 Counseling Internship I.

Finally, in 2017, the program began redeveloping its rubrics to better measure program learning outcomes. New rubrics were specifically designed for the program to evaluate and measure student progress in reflection papers, written communications/final papers, asynchronous and synchronous discussions, and the students' faith informed clinical identity and practice (FICIP) responses. The new rubrics were deployed in Spring of 2019.

## Section 3: Other Substantial Program Changes

### Faculty Changes

In 2018, the program hired eight new affiliate faculty members: Dr. Sharon Allen, Dr. Theresa Allen, Dr. Rebecca Barns-Welsh, Dr. Berry Bishop, Dr. Jamie Clark, Dr. Jeff Cline, Dr. Constance DelGiudice, and Dr. Vasti Holstun.

Also, the M.A. in Counseling program, which is housed in the School of Behavioral and Social Sciences, welcomed Dr. Barry Vann as the new Dean. Dr. Vann joined CCU from the University of the Cumberlands after Dr. Debra Hudson, the former Dean, retired in June of 2018.

### Changes to the Professional Practice Experience

The M.A. in Counseling program began using a web-based program that supports curriculum requirements and assessment of the Professional Practice Experience. Time2Track is used to record a student's clinical training hours and is accessible to the student after they graduate to track licensing hours as well.

The program also began providing professional level Zoom accounts (a web-based video conferencing software) to all full-time and affiliate faculty members who provide clinical supervision during the professional practice experience.

### Reaccreditation Cycle

The M.A. in Counseling program began its reaccreditation cycle with the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) in 2018.