

Saybrook University
 MA Counseling Program
 Annual Assessment Report
 Report date: Aug, 2023

The program faculty, in the Counseling program, meet annually to review our program, including our Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) data, and the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Program (CACREP) Key Performance Indicator (KPI) data. During this meeting, we also review survey data of alumni, site supervisors, and current student feedback. This report will describe the data collected and the action steps planned by the program faculty.

Data Collected within the Program

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

The program learning outcomes were directly born out of the department’s core values. These PLOs are measured at two points across the curriculum, and the data is used to help inform any curricular changes needed. In addition to the data collected within the program, PLOs are also measured in our external surveys, however data for external surveys are not collected annually and thus not included in this report.

The following table reports the Fall 2022, Spring 2023, and Summer 2023 PLO assessment data.

Program Learning Outcome 1 (PLO 1)			
Upon completing the program, students will demonstrate an ability to assess, integrate and respond to individual and relational dynamics within a systemic framework.			
	Assessment In	Results	Reflections and Action Steps
Initial Course Assessed	COUN 2010 Structure and Dynamics of the Family	N=52: 0% (n=0) Demonstrating competency, 96% (n=50) Developing Competency, 4% (n=2) Limited Competency	No course updates or changes needed.
Secondary Course Assessed	COUN 2510 Relationship and Family Intervention	N=42: 71% (n=30) Demonstrating competency, 29% (n=12) Developing Competency, 0% (n=0) Limited Competency	Continue offering more optional synchronous meetings. Include more diverse learning videos and resources.
Program Learning Outcome 2 (PLO 2)			
Upon completing the program, students will be able to discern the elements of an effective therapeutic alliance and demonstrate the ability to co-construct and maintain a counseling relationship.			
	Assessment In	Results	Reflections and Action Steps
Initial Course Assessed	COUN 2500 Basic Counseling Skills	N=46: 4% (n=2) Demonstrating competency, 83% (n=38) Developing Competency, 6% (n=13) Limited Competency	No course updates or changes needed. Continue to coordinate faculty, adjunct, and CES PhD team to ensure consistent class experience.
Secondary Course Assessed	COUN 8152 Counseling Practicum	N=27: 93% (n=25) Demonstrating competency, 7%	Further delineate practicum from internship including separate course shells and separate supervision

		(n=2) Developing Competency, 0% (n=0) Limited Competency	groups. Schedule new weekly 1.5 hour supervision sessions to better support students.
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Program Learning Outcome 3 (PLO 3)
Upon completing the program, students will be able to examine and demonstrate an understanding of diverse experiences and the role of privilege, marginalization, and how aspects of power impact individual, familial, group and community experiences.

	Assessment In	Results	Reflections and Action Steps
Initial Course Assessed	COUN 2560 Cultural Humility and Responsiveness	N=25: 64% (n=16) Demonstrating competency, 20% (n=5) Developing Competency, 16% (n=4) Limited Competency	No changes at this time as outcomes are aligned.
Secondary Course Assessed	COUN 2562 Crisis and Trauma Intervention	N=22: 91% (n=20) Demonstrating competency, 9% (n=2) Developing Competency, 0% (n=0) Limited Competency	Continue to revise course materials, assignments, and meetings to reflect changes in field.

Program Learning Outcome 4 (PLO 4)
Upon completing the program, students will have demonstrated the ability to critique and synthesize theory as they integrate this knowledge into their counseling practice.

	Assessment In	Results	Reflections and Action Steps
Initial Course Assessed	COUN 2025 Counseling Theories	N=42: 83% (n=35) Demonstrating competency, 10% (n=4) Developing Competency, 7% (n=3) Limited Competency	No course updates or changes needed.
Secondary Course Assessed	COUN 8154 Internship II	N=22: 73% (n=16) Demonstrating competency, 27% (n=6) Developing Competency, 0% (n=0) Limited Competency	Further delineate practicum from internship including separate course shells and separate supervision groups. Schedule new weekly 1.5 hour supervision sessions to better support students.

Program Learning Outcome 5 (PLO 5)
Upon completing the program, students will illustrate their role in advocating for individual and social change by utilizing effective communication skills across dialogues with peers, clients, supervisors and faculty.

	Assessment In	Results	Reflections and Action Steps
Initial Course Assessed	COUN 6020 Lifespan Development	N=46: 72% (n=33) Demonstrating competency, 22% (n=10) Developing Competency, 7% (n=3) Limited Competency	Change course primary textbook; integrate Racial Healing Handbook more with overall course objectives/content; clarify assignment directions and rubrics.
Secondary Course Assessed	COUN 2555 Advanced Child and Adolescent Counseling	N=28: 100% (n=28) Demonstrating competency, 0% (n=0) Developing Competency, 0% (n=0) Limited Competency	Change sequence of course to provide earlier in program of study to support integration into clinical practice in practicum and internship.

Program Learning Outcome 6 (PLO 6)			
Upon completing the program, students will be able to apply relevant professional ethical codes to guide their work and ethical decision making.			
	Assessment In	Results	Reflections and Action Steps
Initial Course Assessed	COUN 2650 Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice	N=47: 47% (n=22) Demonstrating competency, 45% (n=21) Developing Competency, 9% (n=4) Limited Competency	No course updates or changes needed.
Secondary Course Assessed	COUN 2531 Group Counseling and Psychotherapy	N=47: 64% (n=30) Demonstrating competency, 32% (n=15) Developing Competency, 6% (n=2) Limited Competency	No course updates or changes needed.
Program Learning Outcome 7 (PLO 7)			
Upon completing the program, students will use professional literature, research and best practices to support individual, familial, group and community change.			
	Assessment In	Results	Reflections and Action Steps
Initial Course Assessed	COUN 1023 Understanding Research and Evaluation	N=50: 80% (n=40) Demonstrating competency, 16% (n=8) Developing Competency, 4% (n=2) Limited Competency	Include more videos and supplemental resources within modules in conjunction with primary text.
Secondary Course Assessed	COUN 2050 Psychopathology and Diagnosis	N=42: 83% (n=35) Demonstrating competency, 12% (n=5) Developing Competency, 5% (n=2) Limited Competency	No course updates or changes needed.
Program Learning Outcome 8 (PLO 8)			
Upon completing the program, students will be able to describe the relationship between their "self" as a therapist, their professional identity as a counselor, and their responsibility to serve clients and the community.			
	Assessment In	Results	Reflections and Action Steps
Initial Course Assessed	COUN 2500 Basic Counseling Skills	N=46: 4% (n=2) Demonstrating competency, 89% (n=41) Developing Competency, 7% (n=3) Limited Competency	No course updates or changes needed. Continue to coordinate faculty, adjunct, and CES PhD team to ensure consistent class experience.
Secondary Course Assessed	8154 Internship II	Data missing from assessment survey.	Reorganize data collection to more accurately capture all PLOs.

Key Performance Indicators

As required in the CACREP standards, the program faculty identified nine Key Performance Indicators, eight in the core standards, and one in the mental health standards, and have assessed these at two different points in time. Each KPI is measured in a specific assignment in the course.

The following table reports the Fall 2022, Spring 2023, and Summer 2023 KPI assessment data.

Key Performance Indicator 1 (KPI 1)				
2.F.1.i - ethical standards of professional counseling organizations and credentialing bodies, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling				
	Assessed In	Assignment	Results	Reflections and Action Steps
Initial Course Assessed	COUN 2650 Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice.	Ethics Forums, Ethical Decision Making Collaborative Presentation	N=47: 47% (n=22) Demonstrating competency, 45% (n=21) Developing Competency, 9% (n=4) Limited Competency	The shift to assessing with an individual assignment vs. group makes our data more clear here. Creation of an ethical decision making template also seems to meet students well developmentally and create more reliability in assessment across sections.
Secondary Course Assessed	COUN 8154 Internship II	Written Case Study	N=22: 73% (n=16) Demonstrating competency, 27% (n=6) Developing Competency, 0% (n=0) Limited Competency	The written case presentation assignment has been updated to have students apply ethical decision making to a current clinical situation and this allows us to better assess application of ethics in practice vs. theoretically. Shift to 1.5 hrs weekly starting in F23 and move meeting date and time away from other synchronous program commitments.
Key Performance Indicator 2 (KPI 2)				
2.F.2.c - multicultural counseling competencies				
	Assessed In	Assignment	Results	Reflections and Action Steps
Initial Course Assessed	COUN 2560 Cultural Humility	Culturally Responsive Counselor	N=25: 64% (n=16) Demonstrating competency, 20%	No changes needed to course at this time.

	and Responsiveness	Identity and Growth Reflection	(n=5) Developing Competency, 16% (n=4) Limited Competency	
Secondary Course Assessed	COUN 2562 Crisis and Trauma Intervention	Trauma Theory & Intervention Case Study Paper	N=22: 95% (n=21) Demonstrating competency, 5% (n=1) Developing Competency, 0% (n=0) Limited Competency	Assignment is well matched to KPI while allowing for student creativity and receives positive response from students. Update case studies for wider variety of client experiences.
Key Performance Indicator 3 (KPI 3)				
2.F.3.f - systemic and environmental factors that affect human development, functioning, and behavior				
	Assessed In	Assignment	Results	Reflections and Action Steps
Initial Course Assessed	COUN 6020 Lifespan Development	Interview 2	Changed assignment originally connected to this KPI so did not assess in Fall 2022	Update assignment and rubric to directly assess KPI in Fall 2023
Secondary Course Assessed	COUN 2555 Advanced Child and Adolescent Counseling	Special Topic Presentation	N=28: 93% (n=26) Demonstrating competency, 7% (n=2) Developing Competency, 0% (n=0) Limited Competency	Clearly identify KPI with case conceptualization and wellness plan assignment in syllabus and assignment rubric.
Key Performance Indicator 4 (KPI 4)				
2.F.4.e - strategies for assessing abilities, interests, values, personality and other factors that contribute to career development				
	Assessed In	Assignment	Results	Reflections and Action Steps
Initial Course Assessed	COUN 2532 Career Development	Career Review/ Interview	N=46: 0% (n=0) Demonstrating competency, 100% (n=46) Developing Competency, 0% (n=0) Limited Competency	No changes needed to course assignment. Designate core faculty as course lead to update and revise course.
Secondary Course Assessed	COUN 2031 Assessment and Testing	Week 6 Paper	N=27: 93% (n=25) Demonstrating competency, 4% (n=1) Developing Competency, 4% (n=1) Limited Competency	No changes needed to course assignment.

Key Performance Indicator 5 (KPI 5)				
2.F.5.g - essential interviewing, counseling, and case conceptualization skills				
	Assessed In	Assignment	Results	Reflections and Action Steps
Initial Course Assessed	COUN 2500 Basic Counseling Skills	Mock Session Self Critique	N=46: 4% (n=2) Demonstrating competency, 85% (n=39) Developing Competency, 11% (n=5) Limited Competency	No changes needed to course assignment.
Secondary Course Assessed	8154 Internship II	Written Case Study	N=22: 77% (n=17) Demonstrating competency, 23% (n=5) Developing Competency, 0% (n=0) Limited Competency	Revise written case presentation guide for F23 to and shift to 1.5 hours weekly starting in F23 and move meeting date and time away from other synchronous program commitments.
Key Performance Indicator 6 (KPI 6)				
2.F.6.d - characteristics and functions of effective group leaders				
	Assessed In	Assignment	Results	Reflections and Action Steps
Initial Course Assessed	COUN 2531 Group Counseling and Psychotherapy	Group Counseling Proposal	N=47: 64% (n=30) Demonstrating competency, 32% (n=15) Developing Competency, 4% (n=2) Limited Competency	No changes needed to course assignment.
Secondary Course Assessed	8154 Internship II	Written Case Study	N=22: 77% (n=17) Demonstrating competency, 23% (n=5) Developing Competency, 0% (n=0) Limited Competency	Revise written case presentation guide for F23 to better assess group conceptualization and shift to 1.5 hours weekly starting in F23 and move meeting date and time away from other synchronous program commitments.
Key Performance Indicator 7 (KPI 7)				
2.F.7.c - procedures for assessing risk of aggression or danger to others, self-inflicted harm, or suicide				
	Assessed In	Assignment	Results	Reflections and Action Steps
Initial Course Assessed	COUN 2500 Basic Counseling Skills	Week 11&12 Discussion	N=46: 4% (n=2) Demonstrating competency, 83% (n=38) Developing Competency, 13%	No changes needed to course assignment.

			(n=6) Limited Competency	
Secondary Course Assessed	COUN 2562 Crisis and Trauma Intervention	Crisis Intervention Role Play	N=22: 91% (n=20) Demonstrating competency, 9% (n=1) Developing Competency, 0% (n=0) Limited Competency	Assignment is well received by students and connects to KPI. Update assignment to have students develop client case study for role play to better prepare for role play.
Key Performance Indicator 8 (KPI 8)				
2.F.8.a - the importance of research in advancing the counseling profession, including how to critique research to inform counseling practice				
	Assessed In	Assignment	Results	Reflections and Action Steps
Initial Course Assessed	COUN 1023 Understanding Research and Evaluation	Scholar-Practitioner Paper	Changed assignment in course redesign and did not directly assess	Update assignment and rubric to include assessment of KPI.
Secondary Course Assessed	COUN 2950 Psychopathology and Diagnosis	Case Study Paper	N=42: 83% (n=35) Demonstrating competency, 12% (n=5) Developing Competency, 5% (n=2) Limited Competency	No changes needed to course assignment.
Key Performance Indicator 9 (KPI 9)				
5.C.3.a - intake interview, mental status evaluation, biopsychosocial history, mental health history, and psychological assessment for treatment planning and caseload management				
	Assessed In	Assignment	Results	Reflections and Action Steps
Initial Course Assessed	COUN 2050 Psychopathology and Diagnosis	Case Study Paper	N=42: 83% (n=35) Demonstrating competency, 12% (n=5) Developing Competency, 5% (n=2) Limited Competency	No changes needed to course assignment.
Secondary Course Assessed	8154 Internship II	Written Case Study	N=22: 82% (n=18) Demonstrating competency, 18% (n=4) Developing Competency, 0% (n=0) Limited Competency	Include questions specifically on this KPI in verbal interview guide for end of semester site visits as additional way to standardize checking on this across instructors and PhD Teaching fellows.

Overall Findings

Beginning in 2020, we began a process of redeveloping our assessment strategy to include two distinct points of assessment for each PLO and KPI; one in the first half of the program and one in the latter half. The new assessment process was implemented across all courses for the earlier assessment time period (AY 21-22). We've continued to implement this process and can identify clear gains over time in most courses with a more distinct spread in PLO and KPI assessment data. Several courses are missing data due to course revisions resulting in lack of alignment between new assignments and KPIs. This oversight has been reviewed and corrected for the AY 23-24. As the department grows, we've added more faculty and administrative positions to dedicate more time to better tracking and developing the assessment process to capture KPI and PLOs along with any course revisions.

In AY 22-23, the MA program continued to grow, and we now have multiple sections across all courses. We've developed a better system for adjunct faculty to report assessment data resulting in more complete data collection across all sections of courses compared to AY 21-22. However, we still have inconsistent ratings of student competency between core and adjunct faculty. In the coming year (AY 23-24), we are developing a process to better support adjunct faculty in teaching assignments and in understanding our assessment process and expectations. This is anticipated to yield more even ratings of student assessment when comparing core faculty and adjunct faculty student assessment data.

The department is preparing to embark on a self-study review for the upcoming CACREP reaccreditation. All courses and the assessment process will be reviewed for alignment with the 2024 standards. Several courses have been revised recently and all courses will be reviewed and scheduled for revision under the new standards. During this revision process we will review all PLO and KPI alignment in the creation of new course assignments and learning outcomes. Additionally, in the coming AY 23-24, a new Associate Department Chair position has been created which will allow more time to be dedicated to monitoring program assessment.

External Survey Data

In addition to the internal data that is collected, the program faculty survey graduates of the program, as well as their site supervisors. The surveys align with our program objectives and CACREP assessment areas were launched in Spring 2016. Given the geographic diversity of our student population, sites are infrequently reused. We send out our graduate and alumni surveys biannually in the summer, with the hope of an increase in response rate, but the most recent attempt to survey both groups yielded little to no data. Our return rate was too low for any meaningful results. Data will be aggregated and included biannually in even years.