

LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT (2016-2017)

CRMHC

1. What learning outcome(s) did you assess this year?

Following the review of assessment data, two goals across three objectives encompassing writing competencies and ethical conduct in relation to rehabilitation counseling professional identity (e.g., *What does it mean to be an ethical rehabilitation counseling professional?*) were evaluated.

According to the Student Outcomes Assessment Plan (SOAP) listed on the university website, the goals and objectives were as follows:

Goal 2. Rehabilitation Counseling Students will demonstrate writing that is grammatically correct, concise, clear, organized, comprehensive, and when applicable, meets the APA style and format of writing. Students will:

Objective 2.1. Write consumer reports that contain pertinent client information that are grammatically correct, concise, clear, and comprehensive.

Objective 2.2. Write literature reviews or papers reflective of rehabilitation counseling knowledge that reflects critical thinking and is concise, clear, and comprehensive.

Goal 3. Rehabilitation Counseling Students will demonstrate ethical conduct and professional identity that reflects the rehabilitation counseling profession. Students will:

Objective 3.1. Identify and apply ethical principles to analyze and resolve potential ethical dilemmas.

2. What instruments did you use to assess them?

The program used a variety of instruments including global data from (a) our comprehensive examination, (b) a clinical review assessment form from the Counselor Education Program (Note: Faculty from both the Rehabilitation Counseling Program and the Counselor Education Program have clinically reviewed students enrolled in programs throughout the Department of Counselor Education and Rehabilitation), and (c) SOAP rubrics (i.e., Rehab 268C-Service Delivery Rubric [Fall 2014]; Rehab 239-Internship Student Evaluation Items D1, D2, D3 ; Writing Rubric #2 from Rehab 201, 205, 206, and 211).

3. What did you discover from these data?

Data from Rehab 201, Rehab 205, Rehab 206, and Rehab 211 utilizing Writing Rubric #2 suggests that students are demonstrating enhanced writing competencies. Specifically, in Rehab 201, mean scores for content ($X=3$) and grammar ($X=2.85$) denotes that students ($N=7$) are scoring mostly in the “Accomplished” range. A score 33 of 2 suggests “Capable” range. For this particular course, students were provided with several resources including guidelines, sample papers, and websites that house scholarly resources in order to develop APA style abstracts. In Rehab 205, mean scores for content ($X=2.71$) and grammar ($X=2.42$) suggests that students ($N=7$) are approaching the “Accomplished” range, but are closer to the “Capable” range, demonstrating the need to enhance grammatical skills needed to develop various resumes (e.g., chronological, functional, etc.) for clients.

Relative to Rehab 206, mean scores in content ($X=3$) and grammar/format ($X=3$) denote that students ($N=9$) are scoring in the “Accomplished” range relative to discussing issues of diversity, multiculturalism, and psychosocial issues related to living with a disability. The majority of students asked questions prior to submitting assignments and took advantage of outside writing resources.

In Rehab 211, mean scores in content ($X=2.6$) and grammar/format ($X=2.8$) suggest that students ($N=5$) are demonstrating knowledge and skills more closely in the “Accomplished” range when it comes to writing about ethics and other professional issues in the field. Some students sought out additional support via the Writing Center where they received assistance with the content and

overall structure of their papers. There were some students who did not participate in any outside writing resource assistance or request feedback/direction from the instructor.

In Rehab 268C, mean scores in content ($X=3$) and grammar/format ($X=3$) denote that students ($N=4$) are scoring in the “Accomplished” range relative to resume development content, resume development grammar, job leads content, and linkages content (linking clients to community resources).

In Rehab 239, in the area of case recording and report writing, for item D1 (reports are concise and well-constructed), 81% of students ($N=13$) scored at a level of “5” suggesting performance was above the standard required for a competent student or new employee. For item D2 (reports are easy to comprehend and contain pertinent information), 88% ($N=14$) scored at a level “5.” For item D3 (overall quality of reports), 88% ($N=14$) scored at level “5.” This superior performance is also supported by the fact that 7 students were presented with offers of employment prior to completing their internship experience. One student was accepted into a doctoral program.

Using data from the clinical review tool to assess ethical behaviors of master’s level rehabilitation counseling trainees, 100% of students ($N=8$) scored at level “5” relative to “attention to ethical and legal considerations,” under the Professional Behaviors section. As this tool was used in Rehab 238 (e.g., rehabilitation counseling practicum, where the instructor can assess actual behaviors), the program had an opportunity to assess the *application* of knowledge and skills in the ethical realm while students counseled clients from the community.

Using data from the comprehensive examination, during Fall 2014, 16 students took the examination, in which 10 passed resulting in a 63% pass rate. In Spring 2015, 16 students took 34 the examination, in which 16 passed resulting in 100% pass rate. During the Fall and Spring examinations, students were presented with ethical dilemmas that involved diversity issues including but not limited to race, sexuality, religion/spirituality, age, personal/professional values, and education in which they were responsible for writing about the cultural, legal, ethical, and clinical factors associated with the case.

Students are strongly encouraged to meet with their advisors prior to registering for and taking the examination in order to review necessary accommodations that might be needed through Services to Students with Disabilities, assess strengths and weaknesses (e.g., knowledge of content, but being able to succinctly demonstrate knowledge and skills within a specific time frame for the exam), discuss test-taking strategies (e.g., practice engaging in timed writing responses), etc.

For any failed attempt, students must meet with program faculty prior to re-registering for the examination. Students are also provided with a packet of material including scholarly resources, sample questions, and student responses-all identifying information is removed (questions from previous years are not in rotation to appear on the examination; prior student responses are offered, so that students obtain an idea for the type of depth and citing of resources they need to produce in a specific amount of time). Students are strongly encouraged to attend a review session in order to gain familiarity with the structure of the examination and knowledge domains, which aligns with the national certification examination for rehabilitation counselors. The knowledge domains for the national exam can be accessed via the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) website <https://www.crc certification.com/>

4. What changes did you make as a result of the findings?

Full and part-time faculty are working hard to emphasize content and foundational skills (e.g., writing). As a program, we have decided to continue highlighting this emphasis at our program orientation, in our respective advising meetings with students, and in our individual classes. The program has a very active advisory board, which meets twice throughout the academic year. The program presents our comprehensive examination results, and also engages in lively discussion regarding foundational skills (e.g., writing, problem-solving, conflict resolution, oral communication, etc.) and curricular content changes (e.g., Are there gaps in knowledge or skills set that you are seeing among students who are in engaging in practicum, internship, or as new employees?). We have found that we need to keep the conversations between faculty and community partners/prospective employers going as it is beneficial in assessing and further shaping our learning outcomes.

The program is still in the process of revising the comprehensive examination process. Nationally, some rehabilitation counseling programs are offering the national CRC examination as the program's comprehensive examination. This is a direction that is still being discussed for the Rehabilitation Counseling Program at Fresno State. In the interim, the program is seeking to finalize whether students will be offered only an essay portion or essay and multiple-choice sections in alignment with the 10 domains on the national examination. The program is also vetting the idea of moving towards a portfolio comprehensive examination as supplemented with an oral defense.

Many of the instructors (part and full-time) integrate community partners into their class sessions on a regular basis. The program plans to continue these efforts, as community partners (ones who work with practicum/internship students and hire students as new employees) are able to

reinforce content and the importance of possessing and translating foundational skills (i.e., writing, oral communication, case recording/documentation, etc.) in the *real world*.

5. What progress have you made on items from your last program review action plan?

The Rehabilitation Counseling Program at Fresno State received a one-year extension relative to accreditation by the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE). Consequently, the program is fully accredited until August 31, 2018. The program submits annual reports to CORE to determine whether accreditation should continue through 2018. Based on a review of the 2014-2015 Annual Report, CORE “found no reason to add additional conditions to assure continued compliance with the CORE standards for Rehabilitation Counselor Education Programs. Subsequently, in official session on July 18, 2015, the Council on Rehabilitation Education approved continuation of your program's accreditation” (CORE correspondence, 2015).

We are continuing to use pass rates on the comprehensive examination as a key indicator of student learning and closing the loop. The majority of students enrolled in the program choose the examination as their culminating experience. Data from the examination aids the program in highlighting areas of strength and weaknesses (e.g., where are students performing well; where is additional support needed; what are faculty doing well; how can assignments be restructured; do we need to improve relative to student-instructor interaction, content, etc.). The Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) continues to offer the Rehabilitation Counseling Program information relative to program outcomes and overall student learning.

Another area of achievement is the pass rate on the national examination. During the 2013-2014 academic year, students enrolled in the program experienced 57% pass rate on the first attempt. While, the examination entity has changed its practices, and the program now has to rely on students relaying information of whether they passed or did not pass with supplemental documentation, the program's in-house data collection system reflects that the pass rate has increased by 3%. Preparation sessions being conducted by a faculty member, and the joint emphasis on professional identity by all faculty members is leading to an increase in pass rates.

More students are also being invited to work on manuscripts being submitted for publication, grants being submitted for funding, and involvement in student leadership and community-based activities, which the program thinks is buttressing efforts in the classroom, and impacting student knowledge and foundational learning outcomes.

MFCC

What Learning Outcome(s) did you assess this year?

Following the review of assessment data, one goal across two objectives encompassing preparing professional counselors to practice effectively in a collaborative and interdisciplinary environment (Were counselors able to conduct effective counseling and apply it under direct supervision) were evaluated.

According to the Student Outcomes Assessment Plan (SOAP) listed on the university website, the goals and objectives were as follows:

1. PLO (Goal): Prepare professional counselors to practice effectively in collaborative and interdisciplinary environments.
 - SLO 2.3: Apply professional counseling expertise under direct supervision
 - SLO 2.5: Conduct effective counseling

What assignment or survey did you use to assess the outcome(s) and what method (criteria or rubric) did you use to evaluate the assignment?

SLO 2.3, 2.5. Counselors-in-training underwent evaluation of clinical skills in multiple courses, most notably COUN 200: Counseling Techniques, COUN 208: Practicum in Counseling, and COUN 238: Advanced Practicum. Skills rubrics were developed to assess student progress and development. In addition, feedback was sought from community stakeholders (i.e. site supervisors and employers) through interviews and meetings as well as written feedback regarding counselor-in- training progress in COUN 239: Field Placement in Counseling. Finally, all students in the program underwent a Clinical Review in COUN 208: Practicum in Counseling in which a dispositional assessment of professional fit is conducted.

For all degrees and options, the program used the Clinical Review assessment form as part of the department's Ethic's Policy and the Comprehensive Exam to assessment for clinical skills/appropriateness for the counseling profession and to assess learning outcomes. Clinical Review is used to assess clinical skills and personal and professional dispositions. For the MS in Clinical Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling program, students are assessed during their Rehab 201 and Rehab 238 (practicum). For all Counselor Education programs, students are assessed during their Coun208 practicum course with a skills and disposition assessment (Clinical Review and Professional Dispositions assessment forms) and then again in their

internship courses (Supervisor assessment forms). It should be noted that any faculty member at any time could refer students for a Clinical Review for concerns in skills, behaviors, disposition etc. Those students who do not meet program standards on skills, behaviors, and disposition will meet with the Clinical Review Committee to provide resolutions and resources.

The Comprehensive Exam was used to assess students' knowledge, clinical skills, and personal and professional dispositions in working with diverse populations. Students typically take the Comprehensive Exam one or two semesters before they graduate. The multiple-choice section of the exam assesses the students' knowledge of content areas in all courses, including the practicum courses. The Vignette section assesses for the students' ability to apply their knowledge in ethics, multicultural counseling, diagnostic/case conceptualization, legal and ethical issues, treatment planning and intervention.

What did you discover from the data and What Changes did you make as a result of the data?

In Fall and Spring, 1.5% of all counseling students were referred to the Clinical Review Committee to provide guidance and intervention (6 out of 401 students). All other students met departmental standards in ethics, disposition, skills and professional behaviors. Due to this finding, the program faculty considered ways to improve individual mentoring and advising, improve documentation of an MOU for enhancing/remediating student performance, and the development of a more thorough orientation of our instructors in order to enhance student access and early identification of problems.

From Fall 2016 to spring 2017, all students enrolled in the COUN 208 Individual Counseling Practicum course were evaluated by the Counselor Education Programs' Clinical Review Committee. On the whole, most students' progress was developmentally on target in all areas. Six students required more intensive mentoring to improve and one student did not pass Clinical Review due to dispositional concerns and was counseled out of the program. Programmatic weakness is most evident in students' ability to articulate and apply counseling theories. This was evident in practice, in feedback from faculty, and in communication with stakeholders. As a result, the program will provide students enrolled in the practicum coursework with more intensive theoretical preparation.

In the Fall 2016 semester, 40 of 43 Counselor Education students passed the comprehensive examination (93%). In the Spring 2017 semester, 48 of 56 Counselor Education students passed the comprehensive examination (86%). For both Fall 2016 and Spring 2017, 9 of 9 (100%) Clinical Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling students passed the comprehensive exam. Thus, for the year, 93% of students in the CER Department passed the comprehensive

exam. This shows a remarkably high pass rate indicating that our previous assessment changes in curriculum are beginning to bear fruit.

There appears to be more consistency between key performance indicators and performance on the multiple-choice section comprehensive examination. Students are demonstrating competence of knowledge gained from courses in the multiple-choice section of the comprehensive examination. One area of concern however is in the written clinical/application of knowledge during the vignette portion of the comprehensive examination. Although the majority of students passed both the multiple-choice and vignette sections of the exam, a greater number of students passed with lower scores on the clinical application vignette portion of the exam than in previous years. The CER department will focus on increasing critical writing skills across program options and increase applied knowledge of counseling theory through the use of clinical vignettes. Upon review of the multiple-choice portion of the exam, students struggled with concepts pertaining to research and statistics/assessment. While our students demonstrate strong performance in academic counseling, they struggle with the more rigorous portions pertaining to research methods, critical writing skills, and statistics/assessment. In regards to the Clinical Rehabilitation and Mental Health Comprehensive Exam results, areas that may need strengthening included assessment, appraisal and vocational evaluation, social and cultural issues, disability management, and critical writing skills. The CER department have discussed these areas of concern and are exploring curricular changes and/or adjustments focused on the ERE: Research Methods course and COUN 203: Assessment in Counseling.

A review of Employer/Supervisor surveys during the internship course found high reported satisfaction with the program's training of Marriage, Family, and Child Counseling (MFCC) student counselors. A rating of 3.5 on the Employer's Evaluation Forms in educational training and clinical expertise is the program's benchmark. Employers/Supervisors rated the MFCC program's educational training and clinical preparation with an overall mean of 4.37 on a 5-point scale (n=52). Most comments on the program were extremely positive. Several suggested improvements included greater preparation that emphasizes the integration of theoretical and clinical learning throughout the program, improved treatment planning and clinical paperwork used in the field. The results from the Comprehensive Exam and feedback from employers/supervisors indicated that students were able to demonstrate a firm grasp of theoretical knowledge associated with counseling and also demonstrated excellent counseling skills but could benefit from integrating this knowledge in a global way into clinical practice. Program modifications will include increased emphasis on treatment planning/clinical paperwork during COUN 232: Psychopathology and during COUN 238: Advanced Practicum. In addition, a training model for clinical paperwork has been developed and included in COUN 238 student orientation. Finally, as the COUN 232 and COUN 238 classes are taught by different faculty, instructors will meet to assure consistency of content delivery.

A review of Alumni Surveys revealed high satisfaction with the preparation provided by the program. Areas of concern mirrored the results of the comprehensive examination where

graduates felt under-prepared in the area of research and assessment. In addition, career and occupational knowledge as it applies to working with clients in the field, was a concern. The program is adopting a new text for the COUN 220: Career Development course that more clearly highlights the implication and application of career and vocational issues with working with clinical populations.

Based on the assessments, the program faculty is improving individual mentoring and advising, documenting student progress, making changes to the curriculum or communicating to all instructors on areas that need to be included in each course. The department is increasing support to new faculty by connecting them to seasoned instructors and providing an orientation. Increasing students' knowledge in and application of theory is an ongoing discussion in the department. A committee has been set to examine our curriculum and identify courses where we could include theories and application of theories beyond what we already offered. Finally, CER department is enhancing communication with part-time instructors and site supervisors (both internship and practicum) about theory implication, is discussing ways to develop critical thinking skills and be able to evaluate different worldviews, perspectives, and theoretical orientations, and to be aware of different levels of cognitive & intellectual development among students and support them to integrate theories into practice. Finally, After reviewing Employer/Supervisor Surveys, student Practicum and Field-Placement evaluations, and discussions with community supervisors, faculty and students, the MFCC program added coursework in Couples Counseling. Since the fall of 2016, a 3-unit course in couples counseling was added to the degree requirements for all MFCC students