**Interim Report**

**Indiana State University**

**Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program**

**School Counseling Program**

**August 2016**

**Standard marked “Not met”**

**Section I: The Learning Environment: Structure and Evaluation**

**Standard AA.5: Provide evidence that the program is utilizing the results from the full range of systematic program evaluation activities to inform program modifications.**

**Overview**

Programmatic changes are made by reviewing and evaluating a variety of reports and data points. These include: University Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes report submitted annually to the Bayh College of Education and Indiana State University’s (ISU) Assessment Director for accreditation with the Higher Learning Commissions (HLC), Graduate Program Reviews for the Clinical Mental Health and School Counseling Programs submitted to the College of Graduate and Professional Studies (CGPS), National Counselor Exam (NCE) scores, responses from annual student as well as alumni surveys, course assessments, and through discussion and dialogue among faculty.

The University Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes report is submitted each year in June in accordance with the Assessment Office at ISU. The purpose is for faculty to reflect on and discuss the overall quality of the student learning experience and to identify strategies for program improvement. From 2011-2015, this information was submitted through TaskStream, a data warehouse. Reports were submitted throughout the year and included an action plan built through a discussion of the findings, followed by a Status Report on the Action Plan. Student learner outcomes were to be identified and data collected for a minimum of a three year cycle. With a leadership change, the assessment process changed, streamlined, and a new format for SLO reports was created. All reports were reviewed by the department chair, college assessment officer, associate dean, and then university assessment director.

The College of Graduate and Professional Studies conducts program reviews to ensure overall quality and sustainability of programs and student experience. This report also requires programs to align program student learning outcomes to the mission and values of ISU and CGPS student learning outcomes/goals. Both programs completed the Assurance of Learning Matrix, noting alignment with the university and graduate school.

Students in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program (CMHC) are required to take the NCE. Students in the School Counseling program (SC) are encouraged to take the exam. Faculty review scores each spring for areas of strength and improvement.

Each spring/summer current students complete a survey. The survey consists of questions on overall program quality, instructor quality, and self-assessment of specific knowledge and skills required of counselors. This data inform faculty about knowledge and skill level that needs to be addressed during internship. Curriculum in both programs is scoped and sequenced. At the time of the survey, students have not taken all courses. This could lead to lower scores in some knowledge and skill areas.

An alumni survey is posted on ISU Counseling Programs Alumni Facebook page. It is also sent via email to those alumni for whom we have an email address. This feedback is helpful in overall program review as well as specific knowledge and skill areas that need to be further developed.

Core program faculty, department chair, and a selected student representative meet every other week. Student progress, knowledge acquisition, and skill development are discussed regularly. Additionally, we generally have 2-4 working days for agenda items requiring extended time, such as standards crosswalk, re-sequencing programs of study, and scheduling. With a faculty of four, we stay in very close contact about both students and programs and this has led to changes that benefit our students.

**Data Analysis**

*University Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes report: School Counseling*

Action Plan for 2014-2015 describes the steps taken during the 2014-2015 academic year and was submitted in September, 2014. The Assessment Plan 2014 was submitted in October and details the specific objectives and outcomes to be assessed during the academic year. The Status Report 2014 was submitted in December of 2014 and describes progress toward objectives. Assessment Findings 2014-2015 summarize the findings, make recommendations, reflect on the data, and list substantiating evidence. Results indicate that all students were at or above expectation with two exceptions and both students re-wrote work below standard. Recommendations from data analysis were to revise personal process journal rubric in Internship (COUN 739B), utilize more formal assessments, and continue to emphasize multicultural concepts. Students’ ability to interact with diverse population is dependent upon their field placement. Some students are in very diverse settings and others are in very homogeneous settings. To address this, it was recommended to incorporate more vignettes in class to ensure students are fully prepared to work with diverse populations. Faculty are considering moving this from a four-week summer course to a full semester course. All core faculty make a concerted effort to infuse multicultural concepts into coursework.

The Action Plan 2015-2016 was submitted in September 2015. The Assessment Plan was submitted in the fall of 2015. The university changed requirements and the status report and assessment plan were no longer required. Instead, the Student Learning Summary For AY 2015-2016SC was submitted in June of 2016 and reflects student learning outcomes for the academic year. Data were collected on the same three student learning outcomes and a fourth was added (A2: understands ethical and legal considerations specifically related to the practice of school counseling). This was in part due to the ever changing educational environment in Indiana. The majority of students met benchmarks that were set. The majority of data collected is from students in the second year of their program of study. This cohort only had six students which skews comparative data analysis from prior years. Recommendations were: updating case presentation rubric to provide more specificity for students, purchasing additional formal assessments for graduate students to use during internship relative to career exploration, changing the format of midterm and final exams in multicultural counseling to short answer essay so students can better evidence what they have learned. Students’ average score on multiple choice/true/false statements were below standard moving to a short essay allowed students to demonstrate mastery of core concepts as opposed to memorizing facts.

Programmatic changes based upon University Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes reports 2014-2016:

* A more detailed expectation for the personal process journal has been incorporated into the COUN 739B, Internship Syllabus.
* Students are required to utilize more formal assessments when working individually with K-12 students. This is also dependent upon their field placement and site supervisor’s approval.
* All core faculty infuse multicultural concepts into all courses they teach.
* The Case Presentation Rubric for Practicum and Internship was updated and an exemplar was attached to it.
* The Midterm and Final Exams are now in essay format in COUN 666, Multicultural Counseling.

*University Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes report: Clinical Mental Health Program*

TaskStream Report Data Clinical Mental Health Counseling 2014 noted the goals, standards, measures, and data collected during the 2014-2015 academic year. All students met expectation on Goal 3: Students will develop appropriate clinical knowledge and skills. Faculty were not surprised by the result given the students are in the Grosjean Clinic under live supervision for two semesters. Goal 1: Students will develop a knowledge base relevant to the program. Some students in COUN 534, Foundations of Mental Health Counseling scored lower than expected on the final exam. Students were encouraged to spend more time studying for future graduate level courses. Student Learning Summary Form AY2015-2016CMHC was submitted in June. Program coordination for the CMHC program changed in 2015 as did the reporting requirements for the university. Program coordinators for both programs worked closely to identify core competencies and student learner outcomes that both programs would review, thereby streamlining data collection and analysis for a variety of constituents. The majority of students met or exceeded expectations. Recommendations were: updating case presentation rubric to provide more specificity for students, purchasing additional assessments relative to career exploration, and changing format of the final exam in Multicultural Counseling.

Programmatic changes based upon University Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes reports 2014-2016:

* The Final written case presentation rubric was updated in COUN740D, Advanced Internship.
* All core faculty infuse multicultural concepts into all courses they teach.
* The Midterm and Final Exams are now in essay format in COUN 666, Multicultural Counseling.

*College of Graduate and Professional Studies Program Review: School Counseling*

As part of this report, programs were provided dashboard data regarding student credit hour generation, student full time equivalency, number of full and part time students, and number of new students. The university is very focused on dashboard metrics and there is a strong push to have specific faculty-to-student ratios. This is challenging given our cohort model and CACREP stipulations in practicum and internship supervision.

Current graduate students were surveyed for program feedback. Data are collected on general aspects of the overall program and for specific knowledge areas and skills. This is on a Likert scale ranging from 1-5. Very Low corresponds to 1, Low corresponds to 2, Neutral is 3, 4 is Good, and 5 is Very Good. Students indicated the following: all students felt comfortable working with diverse populations, and students felt very prepared for individual counseling and noted they were able to incorporate a multicultural perspective into sessions. Students noted the following strengths: compatible for individuals who work, being able to be at all three levels, elementary, middle, and high school, internship, small class sizes, supervision feedback, and case conceptualization. Overall, students scored their skill level 4 out of 5. Program improvement suggestions included: fewer student presentations and more instruction and teaching some courses more in-depth.

Programmatic changes based upon the College of Graduate and Professional Studies Program Review:

* Combine sections of COUN 628, Psychological Appraisal in Counseling to more closely align with university metrics.

*College of Graduate and Professional Studies Program Review: Clinical Mental Health Counseling*

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Programmatic changes based upon the College of Graduate and Professional Studies Program Review:

* Moved COUN 738D, Ethics of Professional Practice, back to 3-credit hour single course at the beginning of their program of study.
* Adjusted courses to ensure May graduation (Counseling Area Meeting Notes I & II)
* Combined sections of COUN 628, Psychological Appraisal in Counseling to more closely align with university metric.

*National Counselor Exam (NCE)*

In the spring of 2015, six CMHC students and four SC students took the NCE. All students passed. In the spring of 2016, 12 CMHC students and two SC students took the NCE. Eleven CMHC students and one SC student passed the exam.

School Counseling: All students in 2015 scored above the CACREP mean in all categories except Social and Cultural Diversity (-1.64), Assessment (-.53), and Professional Development, Supervision, and Consultation (-.05). In 2016 disaggregated data were not provided to the university as only two students took the exam.

Programmatic changes based upon the NCE:

* Continue to evaluate cultural competence
* Continue to infuse multicultural concepts throughout curriculum

Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Faculty has focused on the Assessment and Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice areas. In 2015, students scored above the CACREP mean (+.47) in Assessment and Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice was lower than the CACREP mean (-1.68). Social and Cultural Diversity (-.64) was lower than CACREP mean. In 2016, students scored slightly below the CACREP mean in Assessment (-.18) and in Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice (-.96); Social and Cultural Diversity was -.58 below the CACREP mean. (Sample Counseling Area Meeting Discussion)

Programmatic changes based upon the NCE:

* The culminating project in COUN 628, Psychological Appraisal in Counseling has been modified.
* In COUN 738D Ethics and Professional Development, students spent extensive time with the ACA Code of Ethics and a variety of vignettes.
* COUN 738D was re-sequenced in the program of study to ensure students have full understanding of the ACA Ethical Codes.
* Ethics is infused in all courses.
* Continue to evaluate cultural competence
* Continue to infuse multicultural concepts throughout curriculum

*Current Graduate Student Survey*

Current graduate students are surveyed to learn more about their perceptions of counselor preparation at ISU. Students in both programs begin in the summer and all students who have had one year of coursework are invited to participate. Of the participants, 59% were school counseling students and 41% were in the clinical mental health program. The survey was anonymous and results were combined between programs.

Eighty-four percent noted that they had the opportunity to work with diverse populations in either their clinical or field experience. We would like to see this percentage increase. When asked if they possessed the knowledge and skills to incorporate diversity into their teaching/counseling or establish a classroom/school climate/workplace that values diversity, 96% felt confident. This would indicate that the core faculty focus on infusing multicultural concepts into coursework has been successful.

Data were collected on general aspects of the overall program and for specific knowledge areas and skills. These were on a Likert scale ranging from 1-5. Very Low corresponds to 1, Low corresponds to 2, Neutral is 3, 4 is Good, and 5 is Very Good. We expected a wide range of answers as we have students responding who have been in graduate school for two years and students who have been in graduate school for one year. The numbers in parentheses indicate the percentage of individual rated the statement either Very Good or Good. We were pleased that areas for improvement were rated as Very Good or Good by more than 50% of individuals completing the survey.

General aspects of the programs indicated the following areas of strength:

* The program curriculum (89.79%)
* The academic/professional knowledge taught to you (87.76%)
* The duration (i.e., the academic length of the program (87.76%)

General aspects with the lowest scores indicating areas of improvement:

* The accessibility/availability of the program faculty (65.31%)
* The faculty as mentors to you (72.92%)
* The in-program student evaluation procedures (72.91%)

These findings suggest that students are very satisfied with their programs in general, feel they are receiving the necessary knowledge and skills, and like the length of the program. It also indicates that students would like more access to faculty relative to both their coursework and professional careers and that student evaluation procedure, outlined in the Student Handbook, should be reviewed more frequently with students to ensure transparency.

Knowledge area and skills indicated the following areas of strength:

* Multicultural Counseling (97.56%)
* Consultation (94.74%)
* Theories of counseling (or student development) (93.33%)

Knowledge area and skills indicating area of improvement:

* Research and Statistics (58.83%)
* Counseling persons with special needs (60.33%)
* Standardized (i.e., group) testing (61.11%)

These findings indicate, as noted above, that students feel confident in their ability to work with diverse populations. It is at the same time disconcerting that students do not appear to recognize individuals with special needs as part of the larger picture of diversity. The lack of confidence relative to research and statistics was not surprising. Students are often apprehensive about the course, assuming it will be mathematically based. To confound the issue, we have not had consistency in course instruction and therefore the content and focus have changed frequently. We are moving to a core faculty teaching this course to ensure students are adequately prepared as master’s level students in the counseling field.

Overall program strengths noted were clearly the cohort model and field/clinical experiences. Students noted faculty competency and available resources as strengths as well. Areas for improvement were not as consistent. Noteworthy were having supervisors on the same page. (We have multiple supervisors in the Grosjean Clinic each night). In general, more thorough instructions on technical aspects of Practicum and more instruction on crisis planning, interventions, and action plans in the schools in addition to master schedule building.

Programmatic changes based upon Current Graduate Student Survey:

* COUN 620, Foundations of Research Design will be taught by a core faculty member in the spring of 2017. This course will combine the CMHC and SC students in a weekly hybrid course.
* Additional readings will be added to COUN 666, Multicultural Counseling, to strengthen student knowledge about individuals with special needs.
* A unit on standardized testing will be added to COUN 731, Organization and Administration of Guidance Programs.

Faculty will post office hours so students will have access on a regular basis each semester.

*Alumni Survey*

An alumni survey was posted on our ISU Counseling Alumni Facebook page. Although we currently have only Clinical Mental Health Counseling and School Counseling programs, we have Facebook friends from a variety of our previously opened programs. Of the respondents, 70% were from the school counseling program, 24% from the clinical mental health program, and 6% from our Counselor Educator Ph.D. program. It is not surprising that more school counselors responded as we can access a database at the Indiana Department of Education for all counselors in the state. This survey is very similar to our current graduate student survey so we are able to compare areas of strength and improvement. The numbers in parentheses indicate the percentage of individual rated the statement either Very Good or Good.

We have been focused on cultural competence for several years. We were interested in questions relative to diverse populations. The majority of alumni, 81% indicated that they worked with diverse populations and 94% reported they have the knowledge and skills to incorporate diversity into their professional role.

General aspects of the programs indicated the following areas of strength:

* The program curriculum (94.02%)
* The academic/professional knowledge taught to you (94.02%)
* The professional skills taught to you (93.97%)
* The supervised, field based experiences (i.e., practicum and internship) (89.75%)
* The accessibility/availability of program faculty (89.75%)

General aspects with the lowest scores indicating areas of improvement:

* The in-program student evaluation procedures (79.82%)
* The faculty as mentors to you (85.47%)
* The facilities and resources available for the program (85.47%)

These findings closely mirror current graduate students’ responses; strengths in curriculum, knowledge and skills with the addition of field experiences. Alumni also noted the availability of faculty. This was different from current students and could be reflective of graduate student stress or an appreciation of faculty supervision given today’s professional settings. Very few school counselors have access to supervision. Student evaluations were mentioned again and it is clear change needs to occur. Facilities and resources were a surprise as we are housed in a newly renovated building with abundant technology and a highly integrated clinic. Some alumni may have graduated from the program when they were housed in a previous facility.

Knowledge area and skills indicated the following areas of strength:

* Theories of counseling (or student development) (90.27%)
* Ethical and legal issues in your profession (88.59%)
* Case conceptualization (86.49%)
* Consultation (84.78%)

Knowledge area and skill indicating areas of improvement:

* Standardized (i.e., group) testing (54.45%)
* Counseling persons with special needs (62.16%)
* Psychological (i.e., clinical) diagnosis (66.67%)
* Research and Statistics (68.42%)

These data are similar to our current graduate survey data. Areas of strength are theories of counseling, consultation, and case conceptualization. Alumni also noted preparation for ethical and legal issues. This may be due to course sequencing with many graduate student participants not having taken their ethics course. Similarly, areas for improvement note standardized testing, counseling individuals with special needs, and research and statistics. Standardized testing in Indiana is ever changing and very political. Current Indiana school counselors can be responsible for up to 10 different standardized tests. It is not surprising that psychological diagnosis was rated low as the majority of survey participants were school counselors who are not trained in clinical diagnosis.

Overall program strengths were similar to current graduate students and included the cohort model, extensive field and clinical experiences, experiential learning, small class sizes, gained a lot of experience during graduate school, quality of staff, flexibility, quality of supervision, and a strong collegial sense of community/supportive learning environment. Overall areas for improvement included more focus on administrative duties required in schools, quicker field placements, needed more diversity in teaching staff, more emphasis on building a master schedule, and more time allotted for group projects.

Programmatic changes based upon Alumni Survey:

* COUN 620, Foundations of Research Design, will be taught by a core faculty member in the spring of 2017. This course will combine the CMHC and SC students in a weekly hybrid course.
* Additional readings will be added to COUN 666, Multicultural Counseling, to strengthen student knowledge about individuals with special needs.
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*Program Modifications based upon multiple data points:*

Data collection and reports are required throughout the year for accreditation. Mulitple reporting points are required at the university level for the HLC, graduate program reviews for the CGPS, and for CACREP. Both alumni and current students provided feedback via electronic surveys. Three themes emerged from the data review that cut across both programs: a continued focus on multicultural competencies, refining rubrics, and combining sections to increase faculty-to-student ratios.

Multicultural concepts were identified as an area for improvement in the University Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes report and the NCE. Cohort membership varies and at times there is little diversity, specifically in terms of life experiences and exposure to different cultures and racial and ethnic cohort members. Faculty value the Multicultural Counseling course but realize that these concepts must be infused throughout the curriculum to ensure students are competent to work with diverse populations. There will be an additional focus on working with individuals with special needs in the both the multicultural course and internship for both programs. The midterm and final exams have been modified to more accurately assess knowledge acquisition.

Rubrics have been modified in Internship and Advanced Internship to provide a more detailed explanation of expectations. Final case presentations constitute a significant portion of students’ grades and serves as an indicator of program success. Students are expected to provide a comprehensive psychosocial history, a developmental and theoretical case conceptualization, progress in counseling, goals and treatment planning, assessments utilized and the rationale for the assessment, ask supervisory questions, and provide a video clip of a session. It is a strong indicator of students’ knowledge and skill. Providing a detailed rubric and exemplar will help student prepare their written and oral presentations. Personal process journals keep ISU supervisors apprised of how a student is progressing each week in the SC program. This was revised as well to ensure students were aware of expectations. The Student Handbook will be reviewed on a more consistent basis to ensure students are fully aware of evaluation procedures.

The university is very focused on dashboard metrics and there is a strong push to have specific faculty-to-student ratios. Faculty fiercely protect faculty-to-student ratios in Practicum, Internship, and Advanced Internship. In order to accommodate university mandates, other courses must have larger numbers. To that end, we have combined the Psychological Appraisal in Counseling course for the CMHC and SC cohorts. This has proven effective the last two years. This was noted in the CGPS Program Reviews for both programs. In the spring of 2017, core faculty will teach Foundation of Research Design in a similar format.