



2021 Annual Assessment Review

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Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC)
Marriage and Family Counseling/Therapy (MFC/T)
Clinical Counseling, Teaching and Supervision (CES PhD)

A comprehensive systematic assessment of the CMHC, MFC/T, and CES (doctoral) programs was conducted for review of the 2021 calendar year. Assessment areas included Admissions, Knowledge/Learning Outcomes, Personal and Professional Fit for Counseling, and Skills/Practices. Data sources include admission interview ratings, candidacy assessments, student learning outcomes based on coursework, national and comprehensive exams, evaluations of counseling videos, and internship evaluations. The annual assessment process utilized the 2016 CACREP student learning outcomes for the first time.

Areas of strength for the master's programs include the admission of high-quality candidates at the master's level. Admission ratings were higher compared to previous years. With regard to knowledge/learning outcomes, students excelled. Doctoral students showed strong counseling practicum dispositions and skills.

Areas of growth for the CMHC, MFC/T, and CES program(s) emerged in less favorable scores in research-specific learning outcomes, yet most benchmarks were still met.

The annual assessment review examines multiple data points throughout the program to develop a plan for future recommendations. The review also focuses on changes made during the 2021 calendar year per the evaluation of the 2020 report. This report will focus on program changes and future recommendations from the 2021 data to be implemented in 2022.

Master's Program Changes and Progress Made from the 2020 report – summary only

- All applicants submit a writing sample prior to being scheduled for an interview; the prompt is considered as part of the completed application.
- Syllabi templates were created including format, use of CACREP standards, rubrics, etc.
- Tevera, which is a practicum/internship placement, and assessment software package was evaluated. The software was chosen to better streamline the assessment process, practicum/internship site placement process, as well as practicum/internship evaluation, time tracking, etc. process. Training began fall of 2020. Implementation began January 1, 2021.
- A student dispositions measure was added to Tevera to be used as self and faculty assessment of professionalism.

Future Recommendations (Master's)

All future recommendations were developed as informed by the data collected throughout 2021.

- The required writing sample results provide evidence for a need for improvement, perhaps with the initial prompt, as well as more focus on writing improvement earlier in the program
- Update annual surveys to supervisor, employers, and alumni. Be able to distinguish between CMHC and MFC/T (related to DSM diagnosis)
- May explore separating site supervisor and employer survey data separately for CMHC and MFC/T
- Ideas for the use of the student dispositions inventory will be examined to help reduce student remediation

Doctoral Program Changes and Progress Made from the 2020 report – summary only

- Partially developed methods to increase employer, site, and alumni survey response rates
- Working to determine best practices for an online option for PhD; to be implemented Fall 2022.
- Continued to develop new methods to encourage doctoral student scholarly research, conference presentation, publications, etc. (i.e. More faculty submit at least one proposal with students a year)
- Tevera, which is a practicum/internship placement, and assessment software package was evaluated. The software was chosen to better streamline the assessment process, practicum/internship site placement process, as well as practicum/internship evaluation, time tracking, etc. process. Training began fall of 2020. Implementation began January 1, 2021.

Future Recommendations (PhD)

All future recommendations were developed as informed by the data collected throughout 2021.

- An online option will start in the fall of 2022. The program will submit the required paperwork to the accrediting body to seek accreditation for the program. The program will have one cohort – two different delivery methods
- Research and academic writing-related ratings can continue to improve. Enhanced focus will be placed on improving a) student self-editing skills, b) student self-assessment of the state of the dissertation document, c) and increased student research self-efficacy sooner in the program
- Ideas for the use of the student dispositions inventory will be examined to help reduce student remediation

Student Admissions

Admission Ratings

Of the students that started the program in 2021, mean scores were high on all interview responses, with relatively low variability between items. Item scores (excluding Writing Sample) ranged from a low of 4.64 (*demonstrates adaptability ad flexibility in life and circumstance* and *demonstrates higher order thinking ability*) to a high of 4.73 (*expresses relevant career goals*). 40% had perfect scores of five (excellent) on every item; this is somewhat lower than the 55.8% from 2019; for 2018, 42.5% reported for 2017, and slightly higher than 37.5%, 31%, and 35% reported in 2020, 2016, and 2015 respectively. The overall mean of all items for these students was 4.67 ($SD = .40$), The mean overall score for 2021 (M

= 4.67; $SD = .40$) is similar to reported means of 4.68 ($SD = .50$) in 2020, 4.75 ($SD = .48$) in 2019, 4.78 ($SD = .29$) in 2018, 4.77 ($SD = .36$) in 2017, and 4.73 reported in 2016.

Students were assessed on a writing sample a part of the admission process. Scores ranged from 3.0 to 5.0 ($M = 3.66$; $Mode = 4.00$; $SD = .48$). When included in the students' overall mean score on all admission criteria, the Writing Sample item resulted in a mean score of 4.56 ($SD = .37$).

Anecdotally, we continue to observe overall improvement in candidate quality over the past five years compared to years prior, although this may be leveling off in the past year or so. Although the lack of improved scores does not reflect this, during this time we have sought to better differentiate between interviewees. Focusing on the differences between the exemplary candidate (on one end) and the unqualified candidate (on the other), we continue to do a better job distinguishing between the qualifications of more and less qualified applicants.

Strength Areas: During the interview process, students were strong in areas related to *career Goals* ($M = 4.73$) and *motivation for entering the field* ($M = 4.72$).

Growth Areas: During the interview process, students were minimally weaker in areas related to *the writing sample* ($M = 3.66$).

Admission Decisions

Unconditional acceptance was granted to 88.6% of the applicants. In comparison, the rate of unconditional acceptance was 52.3% in 2020, 77.9% in 2019, 74.1% in 2018, 87.8% in 2017, and 63.5% in 2016. Students about whom we have general academic concerns (based on GRE, MAT, and/or undergraduate GPA), writing concerns (based on a writing assessment), or both academic/ writing concerns, are accepted on a conditional basis. Only eight students (11.4%) were admitted conditionally based on academic concerns in 2021. An unusually large number of students who started the program in 2020 were accepted "conditionally" ($n = 42$, or 47.7%) into the CMHC or MFC/T programs. The only factor tracked requiring conditional admission status was the inability for applicants to complete either the MAT or the GRE exams due to testing centers closing because of COVID-19.

Strength Areas: Overall, we rated unconditionally accepted students highest on interview ratings ($M = 4.74$). Students admitted conditionally scored slightly lower on the assessment portion of the applicant interview ($M = 4.62$). One applicant with both academic and writing concerns was an outlier with a score of 4.88.

Knowledge / Learning Outcomes

Summary of Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Results

The TNU Graduate Counseling Programs began using Tevera to collect assessment data and track student practicum and internship activities. The 2016 CACREP standards were assigned to the respective courses where each would be covered, and a master course map was used as in previous years to document where each standard would be located in the curriculum. All of the 2016 CACREP Core and Specialty standards were included in course specific evaluation rubrics and the data were collected using forms in Tevera. In reviewing the aggregated data from Tevera, a total of 4,361 ratings were given on

the 2016 CACREP Section 2.F standards across the eight common core areas representing foundational knowledge expected of all graduate counseling students.

For the common core standards, 97.73% of the ratings assigned were either *meets expectations* or *exceeds expectations* ($N = 4,262$). The aggregate mean scores for all ratings assigned was 2.82 ($SD = .25$). The five ratings of *Did Not Meet* were all given to a student in a single course.

Instructors in every master's level course assess students on multiple standards. The minimum benchmark for all course standards (i.e., meeting expectations) is a score of 2.2 out of 3.0. A score of 2.55 or greater, which represents 85% of the highest possible score, represents the ideal benchmark (i.e., *exceeds expectations*).

Strength Areas: Only 2.16% of the ratings were *Below Expectations*. Trevecca students continue to receive ratings almost exclusively at *Meets* or *Exceeds Expectations*, which is consistent with data collected on 2009 CACREP standards since 2013.

Growth Areas: The lowest scores were almost exclusively found in *Research and Program Evaluation*. Though, the CPCE scores over the last two years have improved for students in this area.

Specialty Area Standards

For 2021, 9.30% of ratings assigned from the 2016 CACREP Specialty Standards were rated as either *Meets* or *Exceeds Expectations* (see Table 6). No mean scores were observed below 2.58 for any standard assessed for 2021. The overall mean rating for MFT/C students was slightly higher ($M = 2.95$) than the mean for CHMC students ($M = 2.91$). The overwhelming majority of students exceeded expectations on nearly all standards assessed (93.96%).

Strength Areas: Combined, the specialty area standards at 93.96%, students scored higher than with the core standards. The CMHC and MFC/T specialty courses, based on the scores from the course rubrics, are an overall areas of strength for the program.

Growth Areas: With regard to CMHC and MFC/T Specialty, minimal ratings were under the benchmark, of which the content was research focused. Likely, the overall rating may be connected to assignments that focus on writing specifically.

Comprehensive Exam Scores (CPCE)

Trevecca overall scores in 2021 were significantly higher than national scores in fall but lower than national scores in the spring, and summer semesters. In the spring, Trevecca scores were highest in two out of eight areas (Helping Relationships and Assessment). In the summer, Trevecca scores were higher

in five of the eight areas (all except Human Growth & Development, Social & Cultural Diversity, and Assessment).

Strength Areas: Notably, Trevecca total scores were nearly 3% above the national average and our 2020 score of 83.4 and were highest in all areas in the fall.

Growth Areas: None of the content areas show major deficits in comparison to national averages. On average for 2021, the lowest scores were noted in Human Growth and Development and Assessment.

Assessment of Skills/Practice

Evaluation of Counseling and Therapy Videos (Skills Assessment)

The data collected was slightly different in 2021 than in previous years, though the majority of the data was the same. In 2019, the overall mean rating of 7.02 was virtually identical to 2018's rating of 7.04. However, variability of scores increased with a standard deviation of .90. In 2019, Acceptance was rated highest followed by Questions and Warmth (see Table 4), while Advanced Reflection and Confrontation were rated the lowest.

Strength Areas: Overall, students performed above 96% of the benchmark in all areas. Faculty and site supervisors rate students highly on most areas.

Growth Areas: The lowest ratings for students in the MMFC/T program were *Multicultural Competence* ($M = 4.30$), *Advance Reflection-Meaning* ($M = 4.39$), and *Record Keeping & Task Completion* ($M = 4.40$). CMHC tend to perform better in record keeping than MFC/T students.

Personal and Professional Fit for Counseling

Candidacy

The candidacy process involves assessment of (1) student academic progress and advancement toward completion of degree requirements, (2) knowledge of self (insight/awareness of assumptions, personal values, and biases that may affect beliefs about and interactions with others), (3) career motivation and aptitude (strengths/growth areas), (4) appropriateness of future career plans, and (5) progress toward securing a practicum/internship site. Students must complete a four-page candidacy paper addressing the last four areas. A candidacy form is used to rate students in these areas, and each student receives a decision from core faculty.

All future recommendations were developed as informed by the data collected throughout 2021.

Internship Evaluation

Beginning in 2021 with the adoption of Tevera, the third semester Internship evaluation changed to the use of part of the CCS-R (10 of the 23 items). Students were rated on items assessing disposition and behavior at the end of their third and final Internship experience.

For students assessed in both the CMHC and the MMFC/T programs during the 2021 academic year, 79.9% ratings were assigned a rating of Exceeds Expectations, 17.9% were rated as Meets Expectations. Eight ratings of Near Expectations were assigned. No ratings were assigned in the Below Expectations

category. Students seemed to excel in Openness to Feedback ($M = 4.88$) and in Congruence & Genuineness ($M = 4.86$) and Emotional Stability & Self-Control ($M = 4.86$). The lowest ratings observed were Multicultural Competence ($M = 4.57$) and Record Keeping & Task Completion ($M = 4.63$). These areas are assessed using an 8-point scale.

Strength Areas:

Of the 62 students with completed evaluations, 79.9% exceeded expectations (or demonstrated competencies) with scores of 7 or higher.

Growth Areas: The ratings indicated the lowest scores aligned with *record keeping & task completion*. Of note, the overall scores still exceed expectations.

Survey Information

Site Supervisor and Employer Survey Information (Master's)

Item scores ranged from 3.58 to 4.43. The average student rating was 4.18 out of 5 compared to 4.13 in 2020.

All ratings from supervisors for the current year improved from ratings provided in 2020. In 2021, the highest rated areas were *My supervisee is prepared to work with supervisors, other counselors, and clients* ($M = 4.43$), *My supervisee understands their strengths and limitations* ($M = 4.43$). Other strengths included *Applying ethical standards* ($M = 4.39$) and *Maintaining appropriate professional boundaries in counseling* ($M = 4.39$). Areas of growth based on 2021 data include *Using the DSM to make accurate diagnoses* ($M = 3.58$) and *Conducting and understanding assessments and Understands research methods, assessment standards, and program evaluation*, each with mean scores of 4.00.

Employer Evaluations of Graduates (Master's)

Employer evaluations of master's level graduates was a new reporting area for 2018. Seven students were rated by employers in 2021, and most ratings (90% - 100% of scores) were 4s and 5s (on a scale from 1 to 5). The lowest average score was for, *"My supervisee can use the current DSM to make accurate diagnoses"* ($M = 4.00$). Results are presented in Table 13. Students' ratings provided by employers were higher ($M = 4.52$; $SD = .62$) compared to ratings provided by supervisors to students still enrolled in their respective programs ($M = 4.18$; $SD = .79$) rated on the same areas.

Program Evaluation/Exit Information/Alumni (Master's)

The students are given an exit survey near the end of the program when taking the specialty comprehensive exam. Overall, students rate the program above a $M = 4.2$ except for satisfaction with advising.

Strength Areas: Students rated the *registration process* the highest with a $M = 4.8$ for the year. Also, *preparation for professional work* was $M = 4.4$ for the year.

Growth Areas: Students rated satisfaction with *academic advising* at $M = 4.2$. On employer and site supervisor evaluations, though all scores met or exceeded expectations, ratings of the student or alumni's ability to *make current DSM diagnoses* was somewhat lower.

Doctoral Program in Counselor Education and Supervision (Ph.D.)

Student Admissions

Of the doctoral students who were admitted and accepted admission in 2021, their mean interview ratings were acceptable ($M = 3.00$) for research experience to excellent ($M = 4.75$) in multiple areas including clear career goals and commitment to the field. The mean of all items for the admitted students were slightly lower than those for the 2020 cohort ($M = 4.19$).

Strength Areas: During the interview, students rated high in *shows an appropriate commitment to the field of counselor education and supervision* ($M = 4.75$) and *demonstrates adaptability and flexibility in life and circumstances* ($M = 4.75$).

Growth Areas: During the interview, students rated lower in *Has research experience* ($M = 3.00$) and *has leadership experience* ($M = 4.00$).

Personal and Professional Dispositions

Doctoral Candidacy

Candidacy in the doctoral program involves an annual team assessment by all doctoral faculty members. The current cumulative GPA, number of courses with Cs or lower, student concern forms, writing assessment, and progression toward completion of dissertation is used as means of assessment. Based on these criteria, students may be (1) approved for continuance in the program, (2) continuance with remediation for (a) behavioral issues or (b) academic issues, or (c) writing issues, or (3) denied continuance. Students receive notice of these decisions by email.

The continuing increase of students in remediation, therefore, is in large part due to several students nearing the time-out phase of the program in which dissertations need to be completed.

Growth Areas: 35.9% of the students were indicated for *timing out concerns*, and 12.8% had *academic concerns* including of the 35.9% noted above, 3 students beyond limit. Good progress was being made through 2019 and 2020 with helping students finish that had timed out concerns, but the pandemic seemed to slow the progress for students.

Doctoral Practicum (Dispositions and Skills)

During the doctoral practicum within the CSL 7104 Specialized Systemic Family Therapy course, students are evaluated twice by the site supervisor—once at the semester midterm and once at the end of the semester. The students are evaluated across a variety of areas including professional

dispositions and behaviors, as well as skills and interventions. A new evaluation Likert-type rating was used between 1-4, which is different from previous years.

Strength Areas: During doctoral practicum in 2021, a score of less than 4 was given minimally in some areas. Individual student scores were excellent with means ranging from 3.67-4.00. Disposition scores were all at 4 except for 2 areas.

Growth Areas: During doctoral practicum, students were weaker regarding *sensitivity to diversity issues, identity and present the root problems of a client, and establishes and maintains appropriate boundaries with clients.*

Doctoral Internship (Dispositions and Skills)

In 2021, the rating system changed. Now students receive scores ranging from 1 to 4 (see note above for note about new rating). In 2021, all students rated at midterm and at the end of the internship were given scores of 4 by their supervisors.

Knowledge/Learning

Summary of Student Learning Outcome (SLO) Results

In the doctoral CES program, data were collected on 35 of 50 of the doctoral student learning outcomes in 2021. Student ratings in 2021 met or exceeded expectations (73.6%). The greatest growth area continues to be in Research focused areas.

* A score of 2.55 or greater, which represents 85% of the highest possible score, represents the ideal benchmark (i.e., *Exceeds Expectations*). Table 16 contains standards with mean scores of 2.5 or below.

Written Comprehensive Exams

In 2021, 50% of the students who took the Research, Counseling Cognate, and Supervision & Teaching comprehensive exams passed in the first sitting. The remaining students passed on the second attempt. The Theory exam had a 100% pass rate for the four students who took the exam.

Doctoral Graduate/Alumni Survey

PhD Graduate Survey

Three graduates responded to the exit survey for 2021. The survey asked graduates to rate their PhD experience at Trevecca in X areas: *Academic advising, program climate, campus support services, instructional effectiveness, practicum/internship experience, and learning outcomes.* A final question

solicited responses to how the PhD program contributed to the student in 10 areas. Several questions asked graduates for open-ended feedback on how the program could be improved.

Strength Area: All responses were either Meets or Exceeds Expectations with a strong focus on *Program Climate and Learning Outcomes*.

Growth Area: Respondents seemed to answer in agreement on all questions as evidenced by low standard deviations on all questions other than two: *The dissertation experience prepared me for a successful defense* ($SD = .00$ or $.58$) and *If I was interested, the Ph.D. Clinical Counseling program offered me opportunities to conduct independent research* ($SD = 1.73$).

Employer and Site Supervisor Survey Information (PhD)

Employers were asked to rate PhD students in the work force. The survey covers *Supervision and Counseling Skills* and *Teaching and Research Skills*. In 2021, four employers rated former doctoral students who are current working as counselor educators. Of note, all ratings meet or exceeded expectations.

Strength Area: PhD Graduates received the highest average ratings ($M = 4.50$ and 4.75) in multiple areas including *my employee is prepared to work with supervisors, other counselors, and clients and my employee can maintain appropriate professional boundaries in individual and group counseling settings*.

Growth Area: PhD graduates received the lowest average ratings ($M = 4.00$) regarding their *ability to integrate spirituality in a manner consistent with ethical standards and site policies, demonstrate competency in the application of cultural strategies to group work, and to demonstrate adequate understanding of research methods, assessment standards, and program evaluation*.

PhD Site Supervisor Survey

In 2021, site supervisor surveys were distributed with four site supervisors completing the survey concerning a PhD-level employee. Item scores ranged from 3.00 to 5.00. The average student rating was 4.29, down from a rating of 4.80 ($N = 6$) in 2020. Students were rated highest in *Maintaining boundaries* ($M = 4.75$). The two lowest rated items, *My employee knows (knew) how to conduct and understand assessments of individuals*, and *My employee can (could) apply different techniques to assist various types of clients*, received scores of 3.75.

Strength Area: PhD Interns received the highest average ratings ($M = 4.50$ and 4.75) in multiple areas including *my supervisee is prepared to work with supervisors, other counselors, and clients and my supervisee can maintain appropriate professional boundaries in individual and group counseling settings*.

Growth Area: PhD Interns received the lowest average ratings ($M = 3.75$) regarding *how to conduct and understand assessments of individuals*. Of note, some PhD interns are licensed while other are working toward licensure. The level of experience can influence ratings from supervisors.