

Graduate Counseling Program

2022 Annual Assessment Review

2022 Annual Assessment Review

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

A comprehensive systematic assessment of the CMHC, MFC, and CES (doctoral) programs was conducted for review of the 2022 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. The annual assessment process also includes current students, alumni, site supervisor, employer, faculty, and administrator feedback to inform future suggested program changes.*

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, 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 2022 calendar year per the evaluation of the 2021 report. This report will focus on program changes and future recommendations from the 2022 data to be implemented in 2023.

Master's Program Changes and Progress Made from the 2022 report – summary only

- Syllabi templates were refined including format, use of CACREP standards, rubrics, etc.
- Tevera, which is a practicum/internship placement, and assessment software package was evaluated. The software has been used to better streamline the assessment process, practicum/internship site placement process, as well as practicum/internship evaluation, time

tracking, etc. process. Better methods for using Tevera with the annual assessment process occurred.

- A student dispositions measure was added to Tevera to be used as self and faculty assessment of professionalism; specifically, added to the Helping Relationships course for use as a self-assessment tool.
- The student dispositions description was added to new student orientation and the student handbook.
- Some MFC course names and overall program name changes to better illustrate a professional counselor identity.
- MAT test no longer being offered after November 2023 due to the program closing down. Made adjustments to course names and minor curriculum changes to ensure MFC students are eligible for LPC-MHSP licensure in the state of TN.
- Annual surveys were updated to supervisor, employers, and alumni. Be able to distinguish between CMHC and MFC (related to DSM diagnosis)

Future Recommendations (Master's)

All future recommendations were developed as informed by the data collected throughout 2022.

- Detailed review of applicants that move through the interview process, receive admission, and do not accept. Seems that these applicants have higher scores. (Hopkins and Isenberg, 10/23). Collecting more detailed information about declines will occur.
- New procedures for admissions documentation will be implemented for the fall 2023 semester including accepting MAT as long as the applicant can receive an official copy, require the GRE, waive the GRE for applicants with a previous earned GPA of 3.5 or higher. (Lahey, 10/23)
- Review departmental writing sample and rubric to better assess writing especially for those with a waived standardized test score. The writing sample also can highlight potential disposition concerns during the interview process. (Lahey, 10/23)
- Adjust procedures for student concern form to include if a student receives a rubric rating of 1 or 0, a form should be automatically filled out and discussed with the student. (All faculty)
- Work with full-time faculty and adjunct to ensure rubric data is entered in Tevera at the time grades are submitted. (All faculty)
- Enter Candidacy form in Tevera to track data (Office Manager, 12/23)
- Per site supervisor evaluations, scores are lower in student recordkeeping (still higher scores overall, but a little lower here). (Internship supervisors 8/23)
- Continue to promote active participation in surveys. For 2023, the program director will send them out (Lahey, 12/23).
- Review student evaluation process. Specifically, course evaluations have been on the decline in number. Consider moving to Survey Monkey to then receive full student participation. (Isenberg, 1/24)
- May explore separating site supervisor and employer survey data separately for CMHC and MFC (Kennedy, 1/24)
- Evaluate all research-based student learning outcomes (CACREP standards) in multiple courses to determine best method for evaluation and improvement of student scores (Dr. Kennedy– Date 1/24)

Doctoral Program Changes and Progress Made from the 2022 report – summary only

- An online option started in the fall of 2022. The program submitted required paperwork to CACREP and received accreditation for a hybrid cohort. The program will have one cohort two different delivery methods.
- Partially developed methods to increase employer, site, and alumni survey response rates (will continue in 2024)
- Working to determine best practices for an online option for PhD; Specifically, related to technology and the creation of a Teams classroom and researching offering a fully synchronous classroom.
- 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.

Future Recommendations (PhD)

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

- A Doctoral teaching standard (specifically related to leadership) was missing from the course. This will be added for summer 2023 including coverage and a means of assessment. (Isenberg, 5/23).
- CSL 7020 Special Topics in Counseling will be updated to better focus on case conceptualization and treatment planning using various counseling theories (Lahey and Christian, 8/23).
- Candidacy status concerns for students; emphasize use of writing center, lunch & learn trainings with Dr. Kennedy, small group meetings as needed. (All faculty, 9/23)
- Obtain a more detailed evaluation of the dissertation phase due to students struggling to complete the process. (Kennedy and Lahey, by 12/23)
- 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 (Lahey, Isenberg, and Kennedy 9/23).
- Ideas for the use of the student dispositions inventory will be examined to help reduce student remediation (Lahey, 9/23).
- Working to determine best practices for an online option for PhD; Specifically, related to technology and the creation of a Teams classroom and researching offering a fully synchronous classroom. (Lahey, 2024).

Admission Ratings

Student Admissions

Of the students that started the program in 2022, mean scores were high on all interview responses, with relatively low variability between items. Item scores ranged from a low of 3.60 (*Writing Sample*) to a high of 4.673 (*Demonstrates appropriate motivation for entering the field*).

The mean overall score for 2022 (M = 4.55; SD = .54) is the lowest of reported means for 2021 (M = 4.67; SD = .40), 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. Scores assigned to applicants have dropped somewhat due to the recalibration of the rating scale.

Students were assessed on a writing sample as a part of the admission process. Scores ranged from 2.0 to 5.0 (M = 3.58; *Mode* = 3.00; *SD* = .62). When included in the students' overall mean score on all admission criteria, the Writing Sample item resulted in a mean score of 4.55 (*SD* = .54).

Anecdotally, we continue to observe overall improvement in candidate quality over the past five years compared to years prior, although this may level 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 *Demonstrates appropriate professional demeanor* (M = 4.74) and *motivation for entering the field* (M = 4.79).

Growth Areas: During the interview process, students were minimally weaker in areas related to *the* writing sample (M = 3.58).

Admission Decisions

Unconditional acceptance was granted to 75.9% of the applicants. In comparison, the rate of unconditional acceptance was 88.6% in 2021, 52.3% in 2020, 77.9% in 2019, 74.1% in 2018, and 87.8% in 2017. 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. Nineteen students (24.1%) were admitted conditionally based on academic concerns in 2022. 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 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. For 2022, 25% of CMHC and 22.9% of MFC applicants were accepted conditionally.

Strength Areas: Overall, we rated unconditionally accepted students highest on interview ratings. Students admitted conditionally scored slightly lower on the assessment portion of the applicant interview.

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 5,651 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, 99.1% of the ratings assigned either *meets expectations* or *exceeds expectations* (N = 5,651). The aggregate mean scores for all ratings assigned was 2.84 (SD = .27). No ratings of *Did Not Meet* were given 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 0.83% 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 three years have improved for students in this area.

Specialty Area Standards (CMHC)

For 2022, 100.0% of ratings assigned from the 2016 CACREP Specialty Standards were rated as either *Meets* or *Exceeds Expectations*. Only one mean score was observed below 2.58 for any standard assessed for 2022. 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 (92.70%).

Specialty Area Standards (MFC)

For 2022, 98.8% of ratings assigned from the 2016 CACREP Specialty Standards were rated as either *Meets* or *Exceeds Expectations*. Only one mean score was observed below 2.58 for any standard assessed for 2022. The overall mean rating for MFT students was slightly higher (M = 2.93) than the mean for CHMC students (M = 2.91). The overwhelming majority of students exceeded expectations on nearly all standards assessed (93.78%).

Strength Areas: Combined, the specialty area standards at 93.96%, students scored higher than with the core standards. The CMHC and MFC 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 Specialty, minimal ratings were under the benchmark, of which the content was research and assessment focused. Likely, the overall rating may be connected to assignments that focus on writing specifically.

Comprehensive Exam Scores (CPCE)

Trevecca overall scores in 2022 were Trevecca total scores were lower in all but two categories (*Social & Cultural Diversity* and *Group Work*) than national scores in Spring, but TNU scores were all higher in all

categories and overall compared to national scores in the Summer and Fall semesters. Trevecca total scores were 2.56% above the national average for 2022.

Strength Areas: Notably, Trevecca total scores were 2.2% above the national average and our 2022 score of 91.0 and were highest in all areas in the summer.

Growth Areas: None of the content areas show major deficits in comparison to national averages. On average for 2022, the lowest scores were noted in Research & Program Evaluation and Assessment.

Specialty Comprehensive Examinations

Through the use of a software program, the exam is generated each testing cycle by drawing randomly from a pool of approved questions. Each course in the specialty area has a pool of 15-20 questions per course. This software program randomly pulls 10-15 questions per course in the chosen specialty area. The CMHC and MFC students will each have different exams that contain specified questions from each specialty area course.

Students continue to do well on the specialty exams for each program. Both programs use exams with 90 questions, and students are required to answer 58 questions correctly to receive a passing score (64%). Students in the CMHC program scored higher (M = 68.34) overall than the MFC program students (M = 63.99) for Spring, Summer, and Fall of 2022. For the next assessment cycle (2023), data on exam versions will be collected and analyzed to compare student performance on the three versions of each of the specialty exams.

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 2022. During 2022, all 60 students who applied for candidacy were recommended for continuation in the program as a result of successfully completing the candidacy process.

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.

For students assessed in the MFC program during the 2022 academic year, 89.72% ratings were assigned a rating of *Exceeds Expectations*, 10.03% were rated as *Meets Expectations*, and only .25% were rated as *Near Expectations*. No ratings were assigned in the *Below Expectations* category. The highest scoring areas were *Respect & Compassion* (M = 5.00), and *Empathy & Caring* (M = 5.00). The lowest ratings for students in the MFC/T program were *Multicultural Competence* (M = 4.45), *Professional & Personal Boundaries* (M = 4.45), and *Congruence & Genuineness* (M = 4.45). Students' overall average ratings were consistent (M = 4.79; SD = .20) with previous cohorts.

For students assessed in the CMHC program during the 2022 academic year, 76.86% ratings were assigned a rating of *Exceeds Expectations*, and 22.89% were rated as *Meets Expectations*. Two ratings were assigned *Near Expectations*, and no ratings were assigned in the *Below Expectations* category. The highest scoring areas were *Empathy & Caring (M* = 4.98), *Respect & Compassion (M* = 4.98), and *Nonverbal Skills (M* = 4.89). The lowest ratings for students in the CMHC program were *Record Keeping & Task Completion (M* = 3.50). Students' overall average ratings comparable to previous academic years (*M* = 4.44; SD = .45).

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

Growth Areas: The lowest ratings for students in the MFC program were *Multicultural Competence* (M = 4.45), *Congruence & Genuineness* (M = 4.45), and *Personal & Professional Boundaries* (M = 4.45). The lowest rating for students in the CMHC program was *Record Keeping & Task Completion* (M = 3.50).

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. Students were rated on items assessing disposition and behavior using the CCS-R at the end of their third and final Internship experience.

For students assessed in the CMHC and the MFC programs during the 2022 academic year, 67.50% ratings were assigned a rating of *Exceeds Expectations*, 29.0% were rated as *Meets Expectations*. Six ratings of Near Expectations were assigned. No ratings were assigned in the Below Expectations category. Students seemed to excel in *Motivated to Learn/Grow* (M = 4.85) and *Openness to Feedback* (M = 4.82). The lowest ratings observed was *Record Keeping & Task Completion* (M = 4.56).

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)

In addition to ratings of students completing internship, we ask supervisors to rate the quality of internship students and their preparation for clinical work. Of the 35 responses, 26 supervisors reported they supervised CMHC students, 16 reported supervising MFC students, and nine reporting having students from both programs. Item scores ranged from 4.03 to 4.65. The average student rating was 4.26 out of 5 compared to 4.48 in 2021.

All ratings from supervisors for the current year improved from ratings provided in 2021 except for three categories. In 2022, the highest rated area was *My supervisee is competent to provide group approaches in counseling in a multicultural society* (M = 4.65). Areas of growth based on 2022 data include *My supervisee knows how to conduct and understand individual assessments* (M = 4.03).

Employer Evaluations of Graduates (Master's)

Employer evaluations of master's level graduates was a new reporting area for 2018. Three employers provided ratings in 2022. The lowest average score was for *my employee understands career development and the impact of related life factors on career development* (M = 3.00). Results are presented in Table 20. Students' ratings provided by employers (M = 3.99; SD = .88) were considerably lower compared to ratings provided by supervisors to students still enrolled in their respective programs (M = 4.26; SD = .82) rated on the same areas. It should be noted that the small sample size precludes making any overarching assumptions of the comparison.

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 2022, their mean interview ratings were acceptable (M = 3.33) for research experience to excellent (M = 4.83) demonstrates adaptability & flexibility in life and circumstance. The mean of all items for the admitted students were slightly lower than those for the 2021 cohort (M = 4.65).

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.

Strength Areas: 37.50% of all doctoral students were to continue in the program without remediation.

Growth Areas: 37.50% of the students were indicated for *timing out concerns*, and *18.75%* had *academic concerns* including 37.50% noted above, 3 students beyond limit. Good progress was being made through 2021 and 2022 with helping students finish that had timed out concerns, but the dissertation phase continues to be a slowing point for students.

Doctoral Practicum (Dispositions and Skills)

During the doctoral practicum within the CSL 7104 Specialized Systemic Family Therapy course (the course name was changed to CSL 7100 Specialized Systemic Counseling in the summer of 2023),

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 2022, 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 3.83-4 except for 3 areas.

Growth Areas: During doctoral practicum, students were weaker regarding *confronts clients effectively* when necessary, manages emergent events professionally, and knowledgeable of referral procedures and requirements.

Doctoral Internship (Dispositions and Skills)

In 2022, all students rated at midterm and at the end of the internship were given scores of 3.50-4 by their supervisors.

Strength Areas:

Some of the higher scores with 3.88 were in *facilitates establishment of realistic client goals and shows initiative and willing to be involved.*

Growth Areas:

Some of the lower scores with 3.50 were in *confronts clients effectively when necessary and manages transference and countertransference issues.*

Knowledge/Learning

Summary of Student Learning Outcome (SLO) Results

In the doctoral CES program, 244 ratings of students for 49 of 50 standards were collected in 2022 and 82.79% were assigned ratings of *Meets* or *Exceeds Expectation*.

* A score of 2.55 or greater, which represents 85% of the highest possible score, represents the ideal benchmark (i.e., *Exceeds Expectations*). The standards with mean scores of 2.5 or below are in areas 6.B. 3, 4, and 5 related to research and design. The leadership standards were not assessed properly.

Written Comprehensive Exams

In 2022, 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

Only one graduate responded to the exit survey for 2022 (out of 6); so, data from 2021 and 2022 were combined to assess. 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 openended 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.*

Growth Area: Respondents seemed to note 4.33 in areas of *advising satisfaction and dissertation feedback in a timely manner.*: *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 currently working as counselor educators. Of note, all ratings meet or exceeded expectations. (No new data for 2022).

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 2022, site supervisor surveys were distributed with only two site supervisors completing the survey concerning a PhD-level supervisee. Item scores ranged from 4.00 to 5.00 (see Table 31). The average student rating was 4.86, up from a rating of 4.80 (N = 6) in 2021. Suggestions will be proposed in the Annual Assessment Review meeting to increase the response rate for the survey for 2023.

Strength Area: PhD Interns received the highest average ratings (M = 4.5.00) 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 = 4.50) regarding managing personal anxiety, understanding own limitations and strengths, understands career development and impact of related life factors on career development. Of note, some PhD interns are licensed while others are working toward licensure. The level of experience can influence ratings from supervisors.

