Longwood University
Counselor Education
Program Evaluation Report
2017-2018

Program Evaluation Method and Results

1. Rubrics for Key Performance Indicator Assignments filled out by instructors at the end of each semester. The semester’s KPIA rubrics are reviewed by program faculty and discussed in regular program faculty meetings. KPIA assignments typically must receive a grade of 80% or better to pass the assignment and the course. If a trend is seen (2 semesters of student difficulty passing KPIAs), faculty work to revise the course. Specifically, what is reviewed includes which course is identified as having student challenges, how many students needed remediation to pass a KPIA, who the instructor was (core faculty, program faculty, adjunct faculty), what the assignment was, and what the pedagogical method was. Revision to the course may include changing from an adjunct instructor to a program faculty instructor, revising the KPIA, and/or revising the instructional methods.

In Fall 2017, KPIA rubrics for COUN 503 Introduction to the Profession of Counseling showed a number of students needing remediation to successfully complete the counselor interview and shadowing assignment. This was due to a combination of students interviewing non-counselor helpers and/or not gathering all the information for the assignment. Faculty believe this assignment is critical to the development of counselor identity. This KPIA will remain as is but instructions will be further reviewed in the course next year to reinforce the requirements of the assignment. In COUN 505 Theories of Counseling, exams were included in the KPIAs for this course. Using exams as a KPIA became challenging when students needed remediation. As a result of this semester’s experience, faculty decided to change the KPIA in this course to the Counseling Theory Case Conceptualization Project and Presentation. In COUN 692 Internship in Mental Health Counseling, one KPIA is a skills presentation assessed through a taped client session. During the semester, two sites did not allow interns to tape. Faculty addressed this by processing this with both sites and coming to agreements about live supervision of current and future interns at these sites.

Faculty had identified a trend of students needing writing and APA style support and so in Fall 2017 we partnered with the Writing Center on a project to provide support to our students in online and in-person meetings using undergraduate student mentors who were juniors or seniors since the age gap between Writing Center mentors and some of our students could be a potential challenge. In COUN 507 Lifespan Development, the KPIA is a research paper covering developmental standards and students were required to take a draft to a Writing Center appointment to get feedback and help. This helped but did not eliminate the need for some students to do further revisions to meet the standard.

In Spring 2018, no significant KPIA concerns were identified. In Summer 2018, a significant number of students needed to revise the KPIA for COUN 601 Multicultural Counseling. This KPIA requires students to apply the recent Multicultural and Social Justice
Counseling Competencies (MSJCC) to a client case study. The MSJCC document has been confusing for students and had been revised by the instructor based on the difficulty in the course in 2017. The KPIA will be further refined for clarity before the next time the course is taught which will be Spring 2019. No other KPIA concerns were identified in Summer 2018.

In part because of our students’ needs and experiences with Writing Center tutors, the College of Graduate and Professional Studies hired Longwood University Professor Dr. Chene Heady to be the graduate student tutor for the Writing Center beginning in Summer 2018. The summer COUN 505 students were required to meet with Dr. Heady as part of their KPIA paper and his tutelage helped raise the number of students meeting the standard without needing remediation.

2. The Comprehensive Examination scores allow faculty a second measure of mastery of core material, allowing for comparison with KPIA information. Trends in scores of students taking the CPCE (Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination) as the Comprehensive Exam also give program faculty potential insight into areas needing pedagogical development.

In Fall 2017, students taking the comprehensive examination could elect to take either the CPCE or the previous essay version of the exam. Nine students took COUN 699 Comprehensive Examination in Counselor Education and eight of these took the CPCE. The student who took the older essay exam passed the exam. Of the students taking the CPCE, three students passed the exam and five needed to retake one or two sections and passed at that time. In spring of 2018, eight students took COUN 699 Comprehensive Examination in Counselor Education. Six passed the exam and two needed to retake one or two sections. Those students both passed after the retakes. For 2017-2018, the initial pass rate was 60% (37.5% in fall, 75% in spring) and the pass rate after retakes was 100%.

The subscale that was the most challenging in both Fall 2017 and Spring 2018 was Assessment and Testing. The COUN 555 Testing and Assessment in Counseling course has generally been taught by adjunct professors and there has not been consistency in who the instructors have been. The program had two very well qualified adjunct professors scheduled to teach the two sections of this course in Fall 2018. Faculty decided that beginning in Fall 2019 (the following time the course is offered), Dr. Jennifer Apperson (full-time program faculty member) will teach the course.

3. As an additional program measure, students in COUN 505 Theories of Counseling take an in-program designed exam that is aligned with the CPCE exam. This serves as a pretest measure of the CPCE content areas. The aggregate data from these pretests will allow us to compare that to the record of students’ success on the Comprehensive Examination, which is the CPCE exam. Using the CPCE/our version of a pretest began in Fall of 2016. When that group of students takes the CPCE as the Comprehensive Examination, the aggregate pre-and post-test scores will be compared.

4. Alumni Survey – In spring 2018, we sent out a survey invitation and link to all alumni we were able to contact. Forty-three alumni responded from graduates from 1994-2017 so these
responses cover a long time in the program history before the substantive changes that went into effect in 2016. Feedback included:

- 73% - primary employment is counseling
- 15% - secondary employment is counseling
- In terms of core courses preparing students for work, the lowest “program well prepared me” rates (range = 47-88%) were for Testing and Assessment (47%) and Research Methods (53%).
- Satisfaction was reported as “well satisfied” for advising (72%), full-time faculty (81%), adjuncts (60%) field supervisors (73%) classrooms (74%), library (69%), faculty support (80%), and faculty access (83%).

5. Employer Survey – in spring 2018, we sent out a survey invitation and link to all employers we were able to identify. Seven employers responded. Feedback included:

- 7/7 were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with graduates of our program and with graduates overall readiness to assume their work duties
- 7/7 strongly agreed that our graduates are highly ethical workers
- 7/7 agreed or strongly agreed that their satisfaction with our graduates made them very likely to hire future graduates.
- Strengths listed included passion, willingness to learn. Knowledge of current practices, treatment planning, being enthusiastic and reliable
- Areas of improvement included clinical assessment and treatment planning, being able to work with all age groups, and having confidence

Faculty discussed these results in program meetings over Summer 2018. Integrating the Testing and Assessment feedback from alumni with the comprehensive examination results confirmed the decision to have Dr. Apperson take over the COUN 555 Testing and Assessment class in Fall of 2019. Because COUN 510 Research Methods and Design has also recently been taught by adjuncts, and because it was noted as rated lower by alumni, faculty made the decision to have Dr. Quentin Alexander continue teaching COUN 510 which he first taught in Spring 2018. We expect that having full time faculty teach both these courses will provide consistency and greater oversight for both.

6. Program Progressions – In summer/fall of 2017 we implemented full time program progressions for all three tracks. We anticipate that this will make it easier for students to anticipate when classes are. They also allow program resources to be used more effectively. Advising is now closely connected to the course progressions and how to help students plan for when courses will be offered.

Additional Program Information

- In Spring 2018, Dr. Lauren Wynne left the Counselor Education program. In Summer 2018, a search committee was formed, the tenure-track position was advertised, and candidates were interviewed by the search committee. We are happy to report that Ms. Marsha Rutledge joined our faculty in Fall 2018. Ms. Rutledge has extensive experience in school counseling and is finishing her Ph. D. program at Virginia Commonwealth
University. Ms. Rutledge will primarily teach school counseling track specialty courses but will also teach in the core classes when possible.

- In June 2018, we submitted our program’s self-study for accreditation to the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). In August 2018 we received a letter asking for some more specific information. We will write an addendum document in the Fall of 2018.

- Dr. Jennifer Apperson continues to serve as our Field Placement Coordinator for the Counselor Education Program. We currently have Memoranda of Understanding for 33 field placement sites.

- We have revised and submitted our application to the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) to become a stand-alone major in Counselor Education rather than the current Concentration in Counselor Education. We expect to get a ruling on this in Fall 2018.

- Student development and recognition in 2017-2018:
  - VCA/VSCA conferences
    - VCA - Eight current students attended the 2017 VCA conference. One student co-presented two presentations with two faculty members. One recent graduate presented with one faculty member. The Longwood University Counselor Education Reception at the VCA conference continues to draw current students and alumni together each year to celebrate and network. In Fall 2017, 15-20 students and alumni attended the reception.
    - VSCA – Six current students and several recent graduates attended the 2017 VSCA conference.
  - VCA/VSCA Legislative Days
    - A recent graduate and a current student helped coordinate several counselor education students attending VCA Legislative Day in January 2018
    - Two current students attended VSCA Legislative Day in January 2018
  - Pete Warren Fellowship – one student was picked as a Pete Warren Fellow for 2018 and attended the VCA Leadership Academy in July 2018 as part of this.
  - Phi Chapter of CSI – 15 new members were inducted
  - Graduation – in 2017-2018, 31 individuals graduated from the program