



2014-2015 Annual Report

The Rollins College Graduate Studies in Mental Health Counseling is guided by the program's mission statement:

The Graduate Studies in Counseling Program prepares clinical mental health counselors to engage with clients in cultivating and increasing freedom in their lives. The core guiding principles of our graduate program are academic excellence, transformative education, social justice and advocacy, diversity, ethical practice and leadership. We strive to build an inclusive community of learners who value personal and intellectual growth through collaborative relationships among students, faculty, and staff.

Graduate Studies in Counseling faculty conduct evaluations of various program components as well as student progress—academically, clinically, and professionally—throughout each academic year. The information and feedback acquired from these evaluation points are for the purpose of improving the curriculum, enhancing student development, and improving the overall graduate program and training experience. Assessment points include, but are not limited to, (1) Semi-annual/annual course reviews; (2) Analyses of enrollment and graduation rates; (3) Surveys of graduates, site supervisors, and employers about student/graduate proficiency; (4) Student evaluations of faculty and courses (CIEs), (5) Student attainment of knowledge and skills in core curricular areas of clinical mental health counseling; (6) Annual student progress self-reviews including student feedback to the program/faculty; and (7) Graduate exit reports.

I. Annual Curriculum Review

Course evaluation:

During the 2015-2016 academic year, the faculty reviewed and evaluated one course in the core curriculum: CPY 565 Individual/Group Assessment and Treatment Planning.

The course review material for CPY 565 included the course syllabus, course instructor evaluations, and narrative reports from the faculty teaching this course. Primary findings of this review reveal that the course curriculum, which now includes a greater focus on training in use of the clinical interview for assessment, is meeting the needs of the students. Further refinement of the course will include additional assignments focusing on clinical interviewing, decreasing and refining the number of formal assessments taught during the course with a focus on instruments that can be utilized by master's level practitioners, and, for the final application assignment, directing students to choose one instrument to administer to stranger client as part of the total assessment process and include treatment planning component in this assignment.

Clinical practice training sequence review:

Several years ago, the Graduate Studies in Counseling faculty adjusted the practicum, internship, and field experience components of the program. Several factors led the change, including feedback from previous student and **Alumni Surveys** and changes in the CACREP standards regarding required number of hours for practicum and internship which differ from Florida licensing law pre-degree requirements (Florida requirements are higher). These changes resulted in development of a pre-

practicum course (PSY660) during which students' complete counseling and social justice pre-practica field experiences during the first and second years of the program with completion of PSY 680 and 695 (Clinical Practicum and Internship) during the final year in the program.

During the 2014/15 academic year, faculty completed a two-year review of the new clinical training sequence, with particular attention to the effectiveness of the newly developed PSY 660: Pre-practicum in Mental Health Counseling and Social Justice Advocacy. Based on student feedback, faculty experience, and course instructor evaluations, faculty discerned that this component of the training experience needed more structure and oversight by faculty. Thus, a decision was made to split PSY 660 into two distinct courses and pre-practica experiences. The two courses include:

PSY 660 Pre-practicum in Mental Health Counseling- This pre-practicum course is an introduction to clinical mental health delivery systems, professional counseling roles, and practice settings through service learning in community mental health agencies. Students participate in 100 hours of field work experience during their first year in the program in a field-site agency setting.

PSY 661 Pre-practicum in Social Justice and Advocacy - This pre-practicum course introduces graduate counseling students to professional social justice and advocacy roles through service learning in community organizations and agencies. Students are expected to participate in 100 hours of social justice fieldwork experience during their second year in the program in a community organization advocating for social justice for marginalized identity groups.

As part of this review and due to CACREP requirements, the faculty also identified the need for a position to manage the orientation and placement for all external field sites and to teach the pre-practicum courses. This position (three-quarter time, one year, fixed term), Clinical Practice and Assessment Coordinator, which also includes coordination of program assessment as well as teaching requirements, was approved by the administration to begin August 1, 2015.

II. Constituent Surveys

Two constituency surveys, Employer Survey and Site Supervisor Survey, were conducted over the past year and the results of the surveys indicated concordance in most areas assessed.

Employer survey:

A survey of employers of Rollins graduates was conducted during the 2014/15 academic year. The results of this survey revealed that overall the program is providing above average to excellent preparation of clinical mental health counselors and that employers rate graduates as "competent." They indicate that they would be "highly likely" to hire a Rollins graduate. Strengths include graduates' knowledge and skills in ethical and legal issues in counseling and commitment to personal and professional growth and development. Suggested areas of increased focus in training include increasing case management skills, application of substance abuse counseling knowledge and skills, and counseling children and adolescents though we note that mean rankings in these areas were all "good."

Modifications in the program as a result of these data include expanded focus on case management and community resource development in PSY 680 and PSY 695 (Clinical Practicum and Internship) and addition of application exercises and assignments in CPY 603 (Addictive Disorders). Faculty are continuing to review curriculum to determine how to increase training opportunities in counseling children and adolescents in addition to increasing offerings of the elective, CPY 562 Counseling Children and Adolescents .

Site supervisor survey:

Additionally, a survey of community site supervisors of 2014/15 Rollins practicum students and interns was also conducted. An analysis of this survey correlated with the results of the employer survey in a

number of areas. Supervisors rated Rollins interns strong in knowledge of counseling theory, ethical and legal issues in counseling, substance abuse counseling, and in commitment to personal and professional growth and development. Interns were assessed as needing increased training in counseling children and adolescents and knowledge of community resources, though again we note that mean rankings in each of these areas were all “good.”

Modifications in the program as a result of this data, as indicated above, include expanded focus on community resource development in PSY 680 and 695 (Clinical Practicum and Internship). Faculty are continuing to review curriculum to determine how to increase training opportunities in counseling children and adolescents in addition to increasing offerings of the elective, CPY 562 Counseling Children and Adolescents.

III. Student Progress Self-Review, First Year Debrief, and Feedback

Returning Graduate Counseling students are required to complete a student progress self-review, which includes a section for feedback to the faculty, during the summer term. Faculty conduct a student progress review on each returning student each fall semester and on each new student in early spring semester of their first year. Based on student progress reviews for the 2014/15 academic year, over 90% of returning students were found to be meeting or exceeding expectations in the three areas assessed: clinical/counseling skills (98%), academic performance (100%), and professional/personal dispositions (94%). Of new students assessed in spring term (2015), 98% of students met or exceeded expectations in all three areas.

In reviewing feedback patterns provided by returning students on their student progress self-review, faculty noted that students were requesting additional structure in the PSY 660 Pre-practicum course. Faculty have responded by splitting the pre-practicum course into two parts as noted in earlier in this report.

Faculty conducted a debriefing with first year students at the end of fall semester to support their integration of learnings, growth, and integration into the program and their cohort. Additionally, feedback was sought from the group and a written survey was conducted. First year students indicated overall satisfaction with their first semester, with a recommendation to find ways to provide more information regarding the demands and requirements of the program prior to the onset of fall semester. Program faculty and staff are reviewing methods for addressing this recommendation.

IV. Additional Program Assessment and Modifications

- a. A review of the Master Therapist series was conducted during spring term of 2015. Faculty made a decision to eliminate the currently required “Master Therapist Series Paper.” The paper will be replaced with a one-hour reflection process and debriefing with interns following each master therapist workshop. The reflection process will focus on key learnings from the workshop and how interns can apply the learning in their counseling.
- b. Faculty approved a proposed College Counseling certificate at the program level. As part of the certificate curriculum, an additional elective course was approved.
- c. Faculty refined and implemented an exit interview for graduating students in order to gain more information about students’ experiences and intern preparation as they enter the job market.
- d. In order to improve and systematize program and student assessment processes, faculty developed a comprehensive assessment model. Student learning outcomes (SLOs) were established for each required course and key performance indicators (KPIs) were identified to measure fulfillment of the Graduate Studies in Counseling Program Objectives.
- e. Based on input from faculty teaching practicum and internship as well as student performance, the “My Theory of Counseling Paper” assignment was revised. This revision also incorporated assessment points based on the anticipated 2016 CACREP standards.