

COUNSELING PROGRAMS OUTCOMES REPORT FOR 2016-2017

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

CACREP Vital Statistics Data

Program Graduates for the 2016-2017 Academic Year

	Number of Graduates	Program Completion Rate	Licensure /Certification Rate for Graduates	In Field Job Placement for Graduates
<i>Clinical Mental Health Counseling</i>	17	100%	100%	100%
<i>School Counseling</i>	11	100%	100%	100%
<i>Counselor Education and Supervision</i>	1	95%	---	100%

Program Evaluation for the 2016-2017 Academic Year

The following information delineates MSU's counseling programs (Starkville and Meridian Campus) systematic program evaluation activities for 2016-2017. The report identifies the evaluation process implemented, the results, and how they are used for program development and improvement.

1. Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Reporting. The University requires each degree program to identify student learning and program outcomes via a University-wide IE portal- TracDat. The IE assessment cycle works as a continuous cycle with certain points to capture annual reports. See the [PDF version](#) of the 2016-2017 to 2018-2019 timeline. Within the assessment cycle, the Department Head reviews the unit's mission statement, and the coordinators of each concentration identify program outcomes/goals that are associated with the

curriculum and aligned with CACREP standards. CACREP signature assignments, practicum and internship, comprehensive exams, dissertations, graduate student review, dispositions, and university graduate exit survey data at the masters and doctoral levels are assessed. The outcomes are reviewed and approved at the Department and College level. The College of Education's Assistant Dean provides a peer review and feedback of all COE reports. An assessment team outside the COE department, trained and chosen from the university's Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness evaluates and provides critiques (feedback) for unit reports. All annual reports (results) are disseminated to the Department Head, Dean, and Provost through the IE portal. For the 2016-2017 cycle, the Counselor Education 2015-2016 Doctoral IE reports were chosen by the university's Institutional Assessment office as an example to be used by other departments at the university when completing reports. See [-COE Masters Students I.E. Report \(1\) 2016-2017.](#)

2. TaskStream. Since the 2013 CACREP site visit, a major change to the program's assessment practice has been the move to a performance-based assessment system for measuring learning outcomes using the TaskStream Electronic Data Management System and by including signature assignments that are assessed and reviewed annually during the university's Institutional Effectiveness Assessment process. TaskStream has been in use since Spring of 2015. To demonstrate that CACREP standards are indeed being implemented, students, in addition to receiving a grade for a class, are also rated on the learning outcomes linked to CACREP standards that are assessed in a given course. These TaskStream ratings are useful because they allow faculty to track individual student progress over time and to identify areas of weakness in program. For the 2016-2017 academic year, students were once again rated on average and across all standards using a 3 point, 4 point or 5 point scale. Specific standards were embedded into each course. The TaskStream assessment results (80% or better is mastery.) suggest students are meeting the CACREP standards. Please see [CACREP Course Level-Key Assignment](#) and/or [TaskStream Summary Results 15-17.](#)

One problem which became obvious was that a clearer delineation of the specific standard being assessed wasn't evident on some of the assessment rubrics. Performance on the assignment itself was being assessed in some cases, with no delineation of a particular CACREP standard attached to it. Additionally, there were some signature assignments that were different across both campuses.

To address this, beginning Summer 2017, the faculty have been reviewing and updating all masters and departmental doctoral course syllabi to insure the following: (a) each CACREP 2016 standard is included and assessed in its appropriate course; (b) signature assignments and rubrics are updated to align with the relevant CACREP standard; (c) signature assignments are the same across both campuses; (d) all rubrics identify learning outcomes for the course as well as the specific CACREP standards to be addressed; (e) each learning outcome is tested by a single criterion on the rubric; (f) one CACREP standard is tagged to each criterion; (g) each rubric utilizes the same common three points scale for consistency, and that the rubrics use descriptive evaluative terms and clearly distinguish between levels of performance. This review and revision will be completed by early Fall 2017.

A recommendation was made that a faculty member who rates a student below expected criteria on any given standard will provide remediation to the student. Areas consistently rated below criteria on CACREP core standards will be discussed at faculty, student review, and yearly assessment meetings.

3. Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE). Another tool used to assess the quality of the program's preparation of counselors is the results obtained from the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE). This national examination is required of all Counselor Education students during their last semester in the program. The purpose of the exam is to assess the student's knowledge of counseling to ensure minimum competence in the field. The means for the core areas scores are compared to the national means and reviewed at the counseling faculty's assessment and review meeting to make curricular modifications as needed. The exam consists of two parts: a CACREP core area and a specialty area. If the student fails the exam, the student is allowed to retake the portion of the exam failed. Faculty will develop a remediation plan for the student. If the student fails the exam a second time, the student will be dismissed from the program.

Archival data indicated that MSU counseling students were performing as well as or above their peers nationally on the CPCE. The counseling program has historically used the 50% cut-off score on the CPCE as a measure of pass/fail for the CACREP core portion of the Master's Comprehensive Exam.

In 2013, the faculty voted to raise the cut off score to 65% because a 50% cut off score on the CPCE did not represent a true mastery of the CACREP core portion of the CPCE. The new score went into effect with the 2016 Fall administration of the exam. Since then, students on both campuses who have taken the CPCE have passed on either their first attempt or on the retake. For the 2016-2017 administration, MSU students scores in each of the eight CACREP core areas were higher than the national mean: Human Growth (11.00 : 10.33), Cultural Foundations (10.4 : 9.84), Helping Relationships (12.2: 11.40), Group Counseling (12.50: 11.74), Research and Program Evaluation (11.66: 10.57), Professional Orientation (12.11:11.23), Appraisal (10.8:9.95) and Career Development (11.00:10.31). Additionally the MSU overall mean was 92.1 compared to the national mean of 85.36. It is evident that MSU students are mastering the CACREP curriculum, and increasing the CPCE score to 65 had no discernible effect on their performance. For 2016-2017 results, see [MSU CPCE Report 2012-2017- MSU and National Means Comparison Data](#).

4. Praxis II –Professional School Counseling Exam. Students from the School Counseling program are required to complete the PRAXIS II, Professional School Counselor Examination, which is required for School Counselor licensure by the Mississippi Department of Education. The exam assesses knowledge of school counseling practices. Since 2015, 23 students on both campuses have taken and passed the exam and scored above the national mean: 2015 (NM=163-MSU=173); 2016 (NM: 160-MSU=177); 2017 (NM: 160- MSU=173). These results indicate that students have been trained effectively in the competencies necessary to be effective school counselors.

5. Graduate Student Review and Evaluation. Academic progress, grades in the masters program gatekeeping courses (COE 8013- Counseling Skills, COE 8023- Counseling Theory, COE 8043-Group Techniques and Procedures, COE 8053/8150-Practicum, and COE 8730/8740-Internship) dispositions, doctoral student academic progress, and potential for professional success are reviewed at the end of each Fall and Spring semester for all students using the [Graduate Student Review and Evaluation Form](#) (GSREF). The ratings are on a scale from 1=unacceptable to 2=acceptable, and 3=target behavior. If a student's grades are unsatisfactory or the student receives less than average evaluations by the faculty, a remediation plan (PDP) is developed. For the student, this plan typically includes behaviors that need to be changed, suggestions and/or requirements for remediation, time limits for expected changes, and consequences if remediation is

not successful. Eighty percent of students must receive a rating of acceptable on all areas evaluated.

For 2016-2017, five masters students received a grade of C for unsatisfactory performance in gatekeeping courses (three in COE 8023-Counseling Theory, and two in COE 8053-Practicum). Remediation plans were developed for these students which included repeating the course per departmental stipulation (Any student who earns grade of C or below in a gatekeeping course must repeat that course and earn a grade of B or better before enrolling in the next clinical course in sequence.). The two students who received C's in Practicum have successfully retaken the course and remedied the areas of concern. Of the three students who received C's in Counseling Theory, two are currently enrolled in the course, and one is no longer at MSU. The results of the Graduate Student Review is also linked to the I.E. reports. See [2016-2017 GSRE Results](#).

6. Comprehensive Dispositional Review. Professional dispositions are used to assess professional identity and professional behaviors expected of all counseling students. These dispositions are assessed by faculty through class and field experiences in each sequential masters gatekeeping course (COE 8013- Counseling Skills, COE 8023-Counseling Theory, COE 8043-Group Techniques and Procedures, COE 8053/8150 Practicum, and COE 8730/8740- Internship), and in doctoral Practicum and Internship. The dispositions are rated on a scale from 1=unacceptable to 2=acceptable, and 3=target behavior. Students must receive a rating of acceptable on all dispositions being assessed. These behaviors are assessed via TaskStream after student completion of each gatekeeping course.

Eighty percent of students must receive a rating of acceptable on their comprehensive dispositional review. Because progress is expected to improve across time on the dispositions being assessed, the Internship assessment criteria is that 90% of the students in Internship must receive a rating of acceptable on all disposition areas assessed. If a student receives less than average evaluations by the department faculty or the student is not in compliance with the Counseling Programs Dispositions Statement, the faculty advisor meets with the student to discuss the evaluation and to draft a [Professional Development Plan \(PDP\)](#) for the student. This plan typically includes behaviors that need to be changed, suggestions and/or requirements for remediation, time limits for expected changes, and consequences if remediation is not successful.

For 2016-2017, 80% of the students reviewed did meet the criteria; however, five students received a rating of unacceptable in areas such as responsibilities, punctuality, completing assignments in a timely manner, communication, professionalism, and self-management and interpersonal skills. One doctoral student was rated unsatisfactory on dispositions. Remediation plans were developed for these students, some of which have already been completed. Dispositions are also assessed in the I.E. report. For the 2016-2017 results, see [Fall 2016 -Spring 2017 Comprehensive Dispositions](#).

7. Field Experience. Student performance in Practicum and Internship is reviewed by faculty throughout the semester and as part of the end of the semester student review or assessment meetings. Students who are experiencing difficulty or receive grades lower than B in any field experience course, are placed on a remediation plan developed by the faculty supervisor and student and submitted to the student's instructor.

For 2016-2017, faculty visited clinical sites at least twice per semester and have established excellent communication avenues with site supervisors to address any issues that might arise. Site supervisors also formally evaluate supervisees twice per semester.

Evaluations of students by site supervisors for 2016-2017 have been extremely positive with site supervisors reporting that students are excellent in Practicum and Internship, have strong counseling skills, high standards of professional and personal behavior, a continued willingness to learn, and a commitment to the counseling profession. Site supervisors also indicated that several items on the Site Supervisor Evaluation Form were not applicable or relevant to the students' field experiences. A recommendation was made that before the survey is sent out Fall 2017, the items must be aligned with the 2016 CACREP practice standards and reflect tasks students are required to complete. See [School Counseling Students Site Supervisors Results](#) and [Clinical Mental Health Counseling Students Site Supervisors Results](#).

8. Alumni, Employer and Supervisor Surveys. These surveys, sent to programs stakeholders including graduates of the program, employers, and clinical supervisors, are designed to get feedback on perceptions of the quality of the program and the training of counseling students. These surveys provide invaluable information that faculty use for program assessment, evaluation, and modification. The surveys are scheduled to be disseminated during Summer of every year;

however, because previous responses have been extremely sparse, not enough data has been available. The department has moved to an electronic system and survey items have been updated to align with the 2016 CACREP standards. This has caused some delay, but the revised surveys will be disseminated Fall 2017. To see the new surveys click [Mississippi State University Counseling Programs Surveys](#).

9. The Counselor Education Graduate Exit Survey. This is used to evaluate student feedback about their MSU student experience including strengths and weaknesses of the Counseling department and program. Masters students complete this assessment when they take their comprehensive exam. During 2016-2017, 19 masters students completed the survey. Salient strengths of the department included satisfaction with faculty availability, faculty advisement, grading, quality of instruction, and engaging in real life clinical experiences. Areas for improvement included more focus on research skills and psychological testing, avenues for current job advancement, and more understanding of professionalism and professional societies. Additional weaknesses included limited preparation for national exams, lack of faculty diversity, and lack of communication between faculty and students. While the counseling program can address the curricular deficiencies, there are some things which must be addressed by the university administration. For 2016-2017 results, see [Graduate Exit Survey 2016-2017](#).

10. University Online Graduate Exit Survey. This survey is completed by all degree candidates. Thirty masters and two doctoral students completed this survey. Responses indicated that students were satisfied with faculty accessibility, faculty advising, faculty mentoring, and the quality of instruction. They were less satisfied with financial aid assistance and classroom facilities/technology. Overall, 90% would choose MSU for graduate study again, 70 % would recommend enrolling in the counseling program, and 84% would recommend considering MSU to a friend. Surveys are stored on the College of Education website located at <http://www.educ.msstate.edu/accreditation/exitsurvey/>

11. Assessment of Curricular Offerings. The faculty continuously assesses its curricular offerings to insure compliance with CACREP standards and to remain current with the professional developments in the field. This is done in the following ways: (a) analysis and evaluation of curricular data at faculty meetings, faculty retreats, and the end of the semester student evaluation meetings and program assessment meetings; (b) reviewing of courses based on feedback from faculty, students, results from comprehensive examinations, and current developments in the field ; (c) utilization of the CACREP curriculum map/matrix to ascertain that all standards are being addressed in the respective courses and

there is no duplication of efforts; (d) feedback from student evaluations; (e) requests from students to include specific topics into the curriculum, to teach a special topics course, or to add a new course to the curriculum.

Program Modifications and Improvement

The following is a list of modifications/improvements which occurred during 2016-1017 as a result of program assessment and evaluation activities.

- The majority of students enrolled in the masters and doctoral counseling programs are meeting curricular mastery (80% or above) as stipulated by CACREP and program standards. Students who do not meet the criteria are provided opportunities to remediate. If such efforts are unsuccessful, the student's program is terminated.
- The 60 hour School Counseling program is in effect (Fall 2017). This has resulted in increased student enrollment in courses such as Principles of Clinical Mental Health Counseling, Family Counseling Theory, and Crisis Intervention Counseling. A variety of perspectives is extremely beneficial for all counseling students.
- A newly created doctoral course, COE 9063: Leadership and Advocacy in Counseling, has been proposed to address the 2016 CACREP standards for leadership and advocacy in Counselor Education. The course will be submitted to the appropriate university committees for final approval by Fall 2018. Until that process has been completed, the course is scheduled to be taught as a special topic either Spring or Summer 2018.
- Students indicated a need for more training in research skills and psychological testing. Even though students scored above the mean in these areas on their CPCE, this information will be shared with faculty who teach these courses.
- Faculty are considering developing a workshop or module on the CPCE.
- Faculty are revising the Site Supervisor Evaluation Form based on recommendations by site supervisors.
- Faculty will complete updating of all the curriculum maps, signature assignments, rubrics and syllabi by Fall 2017.
- Faculty will complete an inter-rater reliability on all rubrics.
- Faculty will develop a rubric to measure levels of expectations of students across all assessments (TaskStream, CPCE Exam Results, Praxis II, Field Experiences, Dispositions, Graduate Student Reviews, Exit Surveys, NCE Exam Results, Stakeholder Surveys).