

Arkansas State University

Ed.S. in Psychology and Counseling- Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Annual Report

As described by CACREP (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs), this annual report includes, by program level, (1) a summary of the program evaluation result, (2) subsequent program modification, and (3) any other substantial program changes. The report is published on the program website in an easily accessible location, and students currently in the program, program faculty, institutional administrators, and personnel in cooperating agencies (e.g. employers, site supervisors) are notified that the report is available.

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program at Arkansas State University is submitting a self-study and application for CACREP accreditation in summer 2018. During the process of molding the CMHC program into a program that fits within the requirements and recommendations of the CACREP 2016 standards, there have been several changes. The summary that follows addresses the data that have been collected from spring 2017 to spring 2018. The CMHC program faculty collect data at numerous points throughout the program on students in the program, the program, the faculty, clinical sites, and site supervisors. Some of the data points have recently been added to the assessment plan while others have been implemented for several years. The specific data that are discussed below are from the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) and graduating student surveys.

Data Summary

In Spring 2017 and Spring 2018, graduating students had an overall 100% pass rate on the CPCE. Since the program began implementing the CPCE as part of the comprehensive exams in Fall 2014, faculty changes have been made when reviewing the results of our student CPCE scores. In spring 2017 and the previous year, the faculty in the program wanted to improve students' results on the career development section of the exam, and have since made a faculty change to focus more on CACREP standards related to this content. Overall, the Clinical Mental Health students performed above the national mean on the CPCE in both Spring 2017 and 2018.

Starting Spring 2017, the faculty started implementing a Pre/Post-Graduation Job Placement and Preparedness Survey to obtain feedback from our graduating students regarding their preparation for the counseling profession and licensure. Graduating students reported a high level of preparedness in all areas except identifying and implementing their counseling practice from a rational theoretical orientation. The feedback suggested an increased integration of theory in practice would be helpful. Based on this feedback standardized syllabi have been created for the practicum and internship course which includes structured discussion and focus on theory.

Program Changes Summary

Over the past few years there have been several changes to the CMHC program to improve areas of need and to adequately address 2016 CACREP standards so that our students are well

prepared counselors. Since Fall 2015 the CMHC program has welcomed three new faculty members. The new faculty have strong training and teaching experiences in CACREP accredited programs. CMHC faculty have seen improvement in student success and their overall satisfaction in the program.

In addition, as previously mentioned, new points of assessment have been implemented including: 1) a formalized dispositions rubric for the purpose of annual reviews and working with students with dispositional or grade issues; 2) new surveys for graduates, alumni, and employers; 3) specified key performance indicators throughout several classes in the program; and 4) a pre-comprehensive exam assessment required prior to entering internship. With these added assessment points, the faculty developed an assessment protocol to demonstrate how they are measuring our students and program. These results will be shared with CACREP and a CMHC advisory board.

The program faculty have been implementing changes to comply with the 2016 CACREP standards and to address the improvements suggested by the students and other stakeholders. As of Spring 2017, a more defined clinical coordinator position was developed and implemented. With this change, the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program now offers a Practicum and Internship Fair every year for students and potential sites and site supervisors to network. Along with the Practicum and Internship Fair, the program faculty offer a continuing education workshop to supervisors to help meet their credential requirements. In addition, the faculty now provide a structured site supervisor training to not only have faculty and supervisors meet but to address site supervisor requirements and expectations, student evaluations, ethics, supervision models, and best practices.

The program faculty have added additional specialties to not only improve recruitment but to strengthen the quality of the program. At this point the faculty offer the Graduate Certificate in Play Therapy program that meets the educational requirements to become a Registered Play Therapist. The faculty have developed and received approval of courses for the undergraduate Certificate in Helping Professions. This undergraduate certificate will help prepare undergrad students who are interested in a graduate counseling program and students entering or currently working in a helping profession (e.g. mental health paraprofessional, occupational therapy assistant, nurse, etc.).