

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Results and Program Responses to 3-year Counseling Program Evaluation by Pending Graduates, Alumni, Employers and Site Supervisors Spring 2011

Mailing occurred in spring 2011.

19.5% return rate (31/159) Alumni Surveys

Employer surveys were mailed along with alumni surveys – 6 were returned

20% return rate (12/60) Site Supervisor surveys

Pending graduate exit evaluations from Spring and Fall 2010 are also addressed (11 respondents).

Advisory Council Meeting was held June 1, 2011 and their suggestions are incorporated.

Employer

- Employers averaged *strongly agree to agree* on all items reflecting employee performance tied to counseling program objectives in general and for concentration specific objectives.
- All employers indicated they would consider hiring a graduate of the program again and would recommend graduates to other employers.
- Due to the low return – it would be helpful if we could find another way to reach employers of our graduates.

Site Supervisor

- Site supervisors averaged agree to strongly agree on all items reflecting intern performance tied to counseling program objectives in general. Regarding the Community Agency concentration, one individual disagreed that treatment planning and use of DSM were sufficient, half of the respondents believed that understanding the growth and scope of community agency settings, etc. was sufficiently emphasized. The higher education supervisor responses reflected primary agreement with concentration objectives however 2 individuals indicated “not sure” on items. The school counseling supervisor responses averaged in the strongly agree to agree range. For the MFT concentration, one individual disagreed that students had adequate training in treatment planning and DSM use as well as comprehension of current models for understanding couple and family dynamics. In all instances, the majority of responses were in the agree to strongly agree range.
- All respondents indicated they are interested in additional practicum or internship students.
- All respondents indicated they would hire a graduate of the counseling program.

- All respondents indicated that they would participate in professional development opportunity provided by ETSU.
- Due to lower than expected return rate, we will examine ways to gather feedback from our site supervisors regarding program objectives on a more consistent basis.

Suggestions:

General: Suggestions include attention to developing the “person of the therapist” in addition to skills and theories. Some suggestions were made regarding the training or experiences recommended for interns prior to their internship experience and additionally broadened requirements for interns so they have diverse experiences (i.e., more explicit internship requirements/expectations). Contact with the internship or practicum instructor (and potential visit from instructor) was considered valuable.

Qualified: Comments indicate that interns have been well-trained, mature, and professional.

Support Needs: All respondents indicate that they would attend some type of supervision training. One individual indicated that a rubric or expectations chart would be helpful and another called for more collaboration between the internship instructor and site supervisor.

Our advisory council echoed many comments of the site supervisors and supported the idea of a supervisor workshop.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

- The faculty has committed to offering a professional development workshop for our practicum and internship site supervisors in the Fall 2011 to be repeated yearly.
- The program intends to develop and offer a counseling process/skills course
- We will examine ways to gather supervisor feedback regarding the placement and evaluation processes as well as general impressions of our training and students.

Alumni

Respondents represented all four programs (please note that some individuals graduate having completed coursework in multiple concentrations). Respondents graduated between the years of 2004-2010 with 61% between 2008-2010.

- In general our alumni were very pleased with the education they received at ETSU with the majority indicating they strongly agreed to agreed that their knowledge and skills were facilitated in each general program objectives as well as concentration specific objectives.
- General objectives reflecting wider variance in responses were:
 - o Human development across lifespan (2 disagree)
 - o Career Development (4 disagree/2 strongly disagree)
 - o Group Counseling (2 disagree)
 - o Measurement (6 unsure/4 disagree/3 strongly disagree)
 - o Research (11 unsure/2 disagree/ 3 strongly disagree)
 - o CC concentration objective (knowledge of needs assessments, grant writing, funding sources) (6 unsure/3 disagree) out of 14 respondents.

- SC objectives related to knowledge and understanding of design, development, etc. of school counseling program and understanding of historical, philosophical, and societal pressures that shape educational practices each had one “strongly disagree” and 2/4 “unsure” respectively out of 12 respondents.
- MFT objectives related to treatment plans and DSM and comprehend a variety of individual and systemic models each had 2 “disagree” out of 14 respondents.
- With regard to quality of instruction, the majority of alumni were very satisfied to satisfied in all areas.
- Items that had a varied response were:
 - Course evaluation process was satisfying
 - Quality of instruction by non-counseling faculty and adjuncts
 - Availability of academic advisor

Comments related to quality of instruction

Supervision: Mixed reviews of experiences with adjuncts – some very positive, and others negative.

Site Placement: Students generally appreciated multiple site placements for practicum and internship (rather than just being in our counseling clinic). Two comments made about the desire for more help in finding internship sites.

Course Content: Some concern expressed over narrow models of theories taught, more instruction on sexuality and sexual health issues, as well as DSM utilization. Some respondents expressed desire for more electives. One respondent indicated a desire for a sole focus on school counseling.

Comments on Strengths of program:

Respondents listed many strengths of the program. Below are the consistent themes: Ethical and legal issues; social and cultural concerns and working with diverse clients; individual, group and family counseling practical skills; theory; creating a comprehensive school counseling program

Areas for improvement

Community Agency: Some weaknesses cited specific to the community agency track include marketing and other business aspects of private practice and experience with case notes and treatment note

School: The need for emphasis on school climate theory and interventions, classroom instructions, working with students with disabilities

Marriage and Family: An understanding of human sexuality was cited as a weakness pertaining to the MFT track as well as DSM 4 diagnostic skills

General: DSM 4 diagnostic skills; psychopharmacology/psychotropic medication

Classes: Previous students indicated the career and assessment courses as weak. With regard to the exit evaluations of pending graduates, the career standards were efficiently met however there was mixed reviews regarding assessment. The research course (objectives) had a more negative evaluation with pending graduates expressing a desire for the course to be more practical and related to counseling.

Pending Graduate Evaluation: Overall the evaluations on the exit evaluation were very positive and supported much of what was said by alumni, employers, and site supervisors.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

- Within the 3 years changes have been made to the internship placement process for concentrations so that students are made aware of sites, responsibilities, and processes.
- Changes have been made to the career counseling courses within the past 2 years. Current students are finding this course more beneficial.
- The faculty will examine the content and teaching of the assessment course.
- The faculty intend to develop and offer a counseling process/skills course
- The school counseling coursework has been updated and now includes experiences in classroom lesson development and implementation and school climate. We are in the process of working to add an additional school counseling course.
- Human Sexuality has become an additional focus in the Counseling with Couples course.
- Acknowledgment that writing case notes and treatment planning is covered in several courses within the community agency concentration and MFT concentrations (although moderately scored on the evaluations). We continue to examine this process as it relates to standards and practice.
- Incorporate information on grant writing into the Counseling in Community Agency course and identify practitioners who may be able to speak about grant writing
- We are in the process of converting all programs to 60 credit hours and will take this feedback into consideration as we develop and redesign courses.

We appreciate all evaluations in that they give us information from different perspectives (there is a difference in the viewpoints of students when they are just completing the program and when they have had a few years of experience) not to mention the views of employers and site supervisors.

We are in the midst of an extensive program update process as we move our concentrations to 60 hours and prepare for CACREP and NCATE accreditation. All of this information will be incorporated as well as information we gather over the next few years. Our next comprehensive evaluation cycle will be 2013-2014 at the latest.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Counseling Program Coordinator

August, 2011