

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## ETSU Counseling Assessment Plan (CAP) Results 2013-2014

The following assessment information was included in this executive summary:

Admissions and Enrollment Data 2013  
Graduation and Job Placement data 2013-2014  
Student Learning Outcome results Fall 2013-Summer 2014  
Counseling Professional Performance Review results Fall 2013-Spring 2014  
Comprehensive Exam Results Spring 2014-Summer 2014  
Exit Surveys Summer 2013, Fall 2013, Spring 2014  
National Counselor Exam Results 2013-2014  
Praxis II School Counselor Exam Results 2013-2014  
Advisor Board Meeting Minutes 2014  
Alumni, Employer and Site Supervisor Survey 3 year evaluation results from Spring 2014

### **Fall 2013 Admissions**

Of the 39 students invited for admission, 33 students began the program; 3 students withdrew for personal reasons. The average GPA for admitted students was 3.45. The average GRE scores were as follows: Verbal – 152.2, Quantitative – 146.3, Written – 3.91.

### **Enrollment, Graduation and Placement Data 2013-2014**

Enrollment for Fall 2013 was 71 students (7 part-time students) with 50 women and 16 men. Concentration enrollment was as follows: Community Agency/Clinical Mental Health – 15; Higher Education /College Counseling/Student Affairs– 9; Marriage and Family Therapy/ Couples and Family – 26; School Counseling – 21

A total of 32 degrees were conferred in 2013-2014 with a 94% completion rate within the expected time frame.

#### *Community Agency*

In 2013-2014, there were 9 graduates from the Community Agency Concentration (admitted 2010, 2011, or 2012) representing a 93% completion rate within the expected time frame. Of graduates responding to our employment survey (4), 75% indicated that they had obtained employment in an occupation for which they were educated within 180 days of graduating.

#### *Higher Education*

In 2013-2014, there were 9 graduates from the Higher Education Concentration (admitted 2011 or 2012) representing a 92% completion rate within the expected time frame. Of graduates responding to our employment survey (4), 100% had obtained employment in an occupation for which they were educated within 180 days of graduating (or chose to study an advanced degree).

### *School Counseling*

In 2013-2014, there were 7 graduates from the School Counseling Concentration (admitted in 2011 or 2012) representing a 100% completion rate within the expected time frame. Of graduates responding to our employment survey (8), 100% had obtained employment in an occupation for which they were educated within 180 days of graduating.

### *Marriage and Family Therapy*

In 2013-2014, there were 7 graduates from the Marriage and Family Therapy Concentration (admitted in 2010, 2011, or 2012) representing a 92% completion rate within the expected time frame. Of graduates responding to our employment survey (5), 80% had obtained employment in an occupation for which they were educated within 180 days of graduating.

### **SLO Results**

- A review of Student Learning Outcome results was conducted for students after the Fall 2013, Spring 2014, and Summer 2014 semesters. Six students were identified as not meeting at least one SLO in Spring 2014 (of these, 3 students were admitted prior to 2013). Two of these students (admitted prior to 2013) did not meet 5/6 SLO's respectively.

### **Counseling Professional Performance Review (CPPR) Results**

- Three students were brought forward for concerns related to the Counseling Program assessment of professional and personal development and ethical practice. One individual did not earn the qualifying grade in COUN 5555 to proceed to COUN 5570 and was told that the course would need to be repeated. Professional and personal development concerns were addressed with one student with a letter indicating that practice would be monitored in COUN 5570 and throughout the program. One student was brought forward for academic misconduct, receiving a failing grade on an exam.

### **Comprehensive Exam Results**

- The Counseling Program began using the CPCE for the comprehensive exam in Spring 2014 (2/28/14). This exam was given for students intending to graduate in May 2014 or August 2014. The summer offering (8/11/14) was given for December 2014 graduates.
- On the first administration 12/15 students scored above the national average and 14/15 scored within 1SD below the national average; the ETSU mean for each content area exceeded the national average.
- On the second administration, 5/5 students scored above the national average; ETSU means for group work were lower than the national average.

## Exit Evaluation

Students in their final semester of study are invited to take a qualitative exit survey and provide feedback regarding their experiences in the program. Results below reflect a summary of evaluations from Summer 2013, Fall 2013, and Spring 2014. The evaluations on the exit evaluation were very positive. Themes are expressed below:

- Students believed their education in legal and ethical issues was strong.
- Some students expressed a lack of focus resulting in an unclear understanding of counseling credentialing.
- Students overwhelmingly expressed that their competence was increased due to the focus on diversity throughout the program and particularly in the social and cultural class.
- Some students expressed a “wish” or desire for more interaction with diverse individuals and recognized this area does not offer much diversity.
- Students expressed that there was a focus on development but less of a focus on applying this to work with clients and assisting with developmental tasks
- Students reported a solid foundation in theory and would like more of a focus on integrating with client conceptualization.
- Students reported transformative experiences through the group counseling course and a strong focus on experiential learning, but that there was a less of a focus on group theory, procedures or opportunities to lead a group.
- Student’s perceptions of research and program evaluation were mixed and did not believe the research course (through EDFN) was particularly beneficial.
- Students indicated a strong basis in the integration of skills through supervised experiences.
- Students indicated an acceptable level of learning regarding career development.
- Student responses indicated a lack of confidence and understanding of assessment/appraisal knowledge and skills
- Community Agency and Marriage and Family Therapy Student responses regarding treatment planning and diagnosis were mixed.
- Community Agency students indicated a lack of focus on development knowledge of program evaluation and grant writing.
- Higher Education students indicated a solid understanding of current issues in higher education but mixed experiences in program development and knowledge of influences on college counseling and student affairs practice.
- School Counseling students expressed that the focus on counseling children and program development were strong. Students indicated less of an understanding of educational policies and practices.

## **National Counselor Exam Results**

These results are based on exams given October 2013 (4 individuals) and April 2014 (7 individuals):

- All students successful passed the NCE with total mean scores greater than all comparison groups.
- University results were compared with National, CACREP and Non-CACREP programs for each CACREP area and Counseling Work Behavior Area for themes
  - o Mean scores in each test administration for the *Research & Program Evaluation* section were lower than CACREP and Non-CACREP results
  - o Mean scores in each test administration for the CWB areas of *Diagnostic and Assessment Services* and *Professional Practice* were lower than CACREP and Non-CACREP results

## **PRAXIS II School Counseling Exam Results Testing period 9/1/13 – 8/31/114**

- All students passed and exceeded the qualifying score set by the state of Tennessee.
- The median of ETSU students exceeded the national median by 10 points and the lowest observed score exceeded the national lowest score by 47 points.
- Students exceeded the Average % Correct over the state-wide average and national average in each of the four test categories.

## **Advisory Board Meeting 5/22/14**

- All board members indicated that students are well prepared for employment. One member indicated an increase in competition for site placements from other counseling programs and other degree programs and that the counseling program students stand out as better prepared. One member indicated that the school counseling program is stronger now than when he went through the program and he as happy with his education.
- Many issues and ideas were discussed including partnerships, the provision of workshops by faculty for practitioners, and common concerns seen in the field.
- Recommendations for training, curriculum and field work included:
  - o Classroom lesson planning and presentations for school counselors
  - o Documentation/paper work for clinical mental health and community agency counselors
  - o Developing of the complexity of the mental health system
  - o Increase understanding of diagnosis 1) use of DSM for diagnosis, 2) use of other material to understand the diagnosis and relate to client treatment
  - o Understanding of working with people who self-harm (increased in schools)

## **Alumni, Employer and Site Supervisor Survey occurred in spring 2014.**

24.4% return rate (33/135) Alumni Surveys

18 Employer surveys (increase of 200% in responses over 2011)

40% return rate (12/30) Site Supervisor surveys

### **Employer**

- The majority of employers indicated that they *agreed to strongly agreed* on all items reflecting employee performance tied to counseling program objectives. There was some variance noted on the following items with agree/strongly agree percentages included: *understanding of the selection, administration, and interpretation of appraisal instruments* – 73% and *competence in use of research, stats, and computer skills* – 75%; for Community Agency – “the ability to formulate treatment plans and use the DSM – 64% with the exception of “competence in the use of research, statistics, and computer skills...” reflecting that some employers were “unsure” that their employee’s performance reflected this skill.
- The majority of employers indicated that they agreed to strongly agreed on strongly agree on all Higher Education, School Counselor, and Couples and Families concentration items. There was some variance noted on the following items with agree/strongly agree percentages included: Community Agency, *the ability to formulate treatment plans and use the DSM* – 64% and *knowledge of needs assessments, grant writing, and management practices in public and private agency settings* – 42%. For the Higher Education Concentration, *knowledge of current issues in higher education and the purpose and function of student affairs practices* – 50%.
- All employers indicated they would consider hiring a graduate of the program again and would recommend graduates to other employers.

### **Site Supervisor**

- Site supervisors indicated that they *agreed to strongly agreed* on all items reflecting intern performance tied to counseling program and concentration objectives with one exception in that one respondent was “unsure” regarding the program’s focus on *understanding of the selection, administration, and interpretation of appraisal instruments*.
- 10/12 respondents indicated they are interested in additional practicum or internship students.
- All respondents indicated they would hire a graduate of the counseling program.
- 11/12 respondents indicated that they would participate in professional development opportunity provided by ETSU with 1 individual indicating “unsure.”
- 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:** One individual recommended inviting practitioners to serve as guest speakers in courses and another indicated the recommendation to offer a wide variety of clinic experiences.

**Specific:** Recommendation for more of a focus on high school development for college counseling/student affairs professionals.

**Support Needs:** 11/12 respondents indicate that they would attend some type of supervision training. One individual indicated that a review of courses taken by the student would be helpful and two indicated that a rubric or expectations chart would be helpful.

### **Alumni**

Respondents represented all four concentrations (please note that some individuals graduate having completed coursework in multiple concentrations): Community Agency (10), Higher Education (7), School Counseling (8), Marriage and Family Therapy (6) (Note: Concentration names were changed in 2013 and are not reflected for these participants). Respondents graduated between the years of 2009-2013.

- In general our alumni were very pleased with the education they received at ETSU with the majority indicating they *agreed* or *strongly 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 Career Development (1 strongly disagree/2 disagree/15 not sure)
  - o Group Counseling (1strongly disagree/1 disagree/8 not sure)
  - o Measurement (2 strongly disagree/ 8 disagree/8 not sure)
  - o Research (7 not sure/9 disagree/ 3 strongly disagree)
  - o CC concentration objective skills necessary to formulate effective treatment plans (1 strongly disagree/2 disagree/4 not sure) out of 17 respondents
- Concentration objectives reflecting wider variance in responses were (note that some answers may be skewed due some respondents answering outside of their concentration):
  - o CC concentration objective (knowledge of needs assessments, grant writing, funding sources) (3 strongly disagree/ 4 disagree/6 not sure) out of 16 respondents.
  - o SC concentration objective related to knowledge and understanding of design, development, etc. of school counseling program (1 strongly disagree/1 disagree/ 3 not sure) out of 13 respondents.
  - o SC concentration objective understanding of historical, philosophical, and societal pressures that shape educational practices (2 strongly disagree/1 disagree/4 not sure) out of 13 respondents
  - o MFT objective knowledge and skills necessary to formulate effective treatment plans (2 disagree/2 not sure) out of 8 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:
  - o Course evaluation process was satisfying
  - o Quality of instruction by faculty in courses other than counseling courses (e.g., research, etc)
  - o Quality of adjunct faculty

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; counseling practical skills; theory.

Areas for improvement

DSM diagnostic skills; clinical documentation; psychopharmacology/psychotropic medication

**PROGRAM RESPONSE to Summary of Findings:**

**Process:**

Based on a review of the process of our Comprehensive Evaluation Plan as well as feedback from the CACREP self-study, we intend to make the following changes to our assessment processes:

- Update the site supervisor and employer surveys to ensure clarity that they are to assess the “program” based on their experience with our students/graduates and other knowledge rather than assessing our “students.”
- In order to attempt to increase response rates for exit surveys, alumni, site supervisor and employers, we will examine putting instruments on-line.
- Based on feedback from our advisory board, alumni, and site supervisors, we continue to examine our field placement process, sites, and supervision training. We are exploring the possibility of a clinical instructor to assist in developing sites, facilitating the placement process, follow-up, and supervisor training.

**Outcomes:**

- Based on feedback from students regarding treatment planning and clinical mental health record keeping as well as the understanding that expectations for effective clinical writing may be site and agency specific, we will examine methods for breaking down the knowledge and skills necessary for each of these tasks and focus on developing these skills and how students may translate these skills to the specific requirements of their employers/agencies. In addition, we will examine professional development opportunities for current students and alumni regarding effective clinical writing.
- Based on feedback regarding research methods and statistical procedures, we are in the process of developing a research course that will specifically service counseling and human service students.
- Based on feedback regarding the assessment course, we will examine our curriculum particularly in COUN 5810 Assessment in Counseling and talk with students and practitioners about ways to strengthen the attainment of learning outcomes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dr. Janna L. Scarborough

DRAFT 1.10.15