

**Program Evaluation Outcomes Report 2020  
for the Counseling Graduate Program  
University of Holy Cross  
New Orleans, Louisiana**

September, 2020

All of the counseling graduate programs offered at the University of Holy Cross are accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, <https://www.cacrep.org>). The University of Holy Cross offers a master's degree in counseling with the following three specializations: Community Mental Health Counseling; Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling; and School Counseling. A PhD program in Counselor Education and Supervision also is offered.

CACREP accreditation requires that counseling graduate programs continually evaluate programs and, based on the results of evaluations, modify programs to prepare counselors to meet contemporary challenges for those practicing in the counseling profession. Programs must prepare and distribute an annual Program Evaluation Outcomes Report. This report (along with a summary of 2019-2020 number of graduates, completion rate of students in the program, licensure examination pass rate, and job placement rate of graduates) is posted on the following counseling graduate program websites that describe the master's degree programs and the PhD program:

<http://uhcno.edu/academics/calendars-catalogs-and-schedules/master-of-arts-counseling.html>

[http://uhcno.edu/academics/calendars-catalogs-and-schedules/graduate/phd\\_counseling.html](http://uhcno.edu/academics/calendars-catalogs-and-schedules/graduate/phd_counseling.html)

At the end of each academic term (fall semester, spring semester, and summer term), the following data are collected:

1. Students evaluate each academic course they completed that term;
2. Students completing practicum or internship evaluate the sites where they were placed;
3. Students completing practicum or internship evaluate individually all of the supervisors they had during the term including their on-site supervisor, their individual supervisor, and their group supervisor;
4. On-site practicum and internship supervisors evaluate the performance of graduate students in their field experience;
5. Individual and group practicum and internship supervisors evaluate the performance of graduate students in their field experience;
6. Master's graduates complete a survey form that evaluates their entire MA degree program experience; and
7. Doctoral graduates complete a survey form that evaluates their entire PhD degree program experience.

Every four years, alumni of the program and known employers of program graduates are surveyed.

Summaries of each evaluation are reviewed by the department chair as the summaries are created. The department faculty meet monthly and the chair summarizes the results of any evaluations that have been completed and brings any concerns to the attention of the faculty members. In addition, each summer term, the department chair reviews the results of all the evaluations that have been completed during the academic year and at the first faculty meeting each fall semester, provides a summary report to department faculty members and brings any concerns to the attention of the faculty members.

While there may be occasional negative evaluations, overall surveys completed by students, graduates, supervisors, alumni, and employers indicate that practicum and internship students in the counseling graduate program are well-prepared for their field experiences, and that graduates have received a high quality and appropriate education.

Confirmation of  
The Additional Required Counseling Skills Course  
That Was Added to All Master's Degree Programs One Year Ago

After reviewing feedback received from practicum student supervisors, internship site supervisors, university supervisors, and practicum and internship students themselves, the faculty determined that an additional counseling skills course needed to be added to curriculum. This course replaced one of the elective courses in the master's degree programs. The second counseling skills course was required for master's degree students entering the program in fall semester, 2018.

In the past, master's students completed a counseling skills course the semester prior to beginning practicum. Requiring counseling skills instruction just prior to practicum was based on the need for students entering practicum to have recently developed and practiced counseling skills prior to beginning practicum. To adequately prepare students to perform at high level in practicum, the faculty determined that two counseling skills courses were needed in the curriculum.

The first counseling skills course for the first time last year was completed early in the students' master's degree programs and the second, more advanced counseling skills course was completed the semester prior to students beginning practicum. The content of the first skills course and the content of the advanced counseling skills course are coordinated so that the second skills course builds upon skills students learned in the first course.

After the first year of implementing the second counseling skills course (which was implemented in the 2018-2019 academic year), graduate students, the instructors of the courses, other faculty members, and program administrators agreed that the added course was a success. Students reported feeling more prepared for practicum and practicum supervisors

reported that student counseling skills were more advanced as they entered practicum than they had been before the second skills course was required.

#### More PhD Students Are Continuing to Serve as Teaching Assistants

Some current doctoral students and recent doctoral graduates indicated that they desired and needed more experience teaching during their doctoral degree programs. All students must complete a doctoral-level teaching course. PhD degree program students are preparing to assume positions either as counselor educators or leaders in counseling organizations. All doctoral graduates will teach in some fashion as full-time university faculty members, part-time adjunct faculty members, in-service workshop leaders, or professional conference workshop leaders.

As a result of the teaching experience need that was expressed by doctoral students and graduates, during the 2018-2019 academic year, doctoral students were encouraged to volunteer to help full-time and adjunct faculty members teach doctoral, master's, and undergraduate courses in the department, and faculty members were encouraged to be receptive to welcoming doctoral students teaching assistants in their assigned classes. In fall semester 2019, doctoral students served as teaching assistants in 14 courses, in spring semester 2020, doctoral students served as teaching assistants in 15 courses, and in summer 2020, doctoral students served as teaching assistants in 5 courses.

All of the doctoral students who served as teaching assistants reported that the experience was worthwhile and that they felt more prepared to teach courses on their own in the future than they had prior to serving as teaching assistants. All faculty members who had teaching assistants reported that students performed well in their roles.

As a result of the successful implementation of using more doctoral students as teaching assistants, the faculty determined that they would continue to encourage doctoral students to serve as teaching assistants and would encourage faculty to utilize doctoral students as teaching assistants.

#### Change in Sequence of Two Doctoral Courses

After reviewing the performance of doctoral students in research courses and after considering input provided by doctoral students and by faculty members who teach doctoral courses, the department chair and the coordinator of the counseling PhD program decided to switch the offering sequence of two courses, COU 833: Current Counseling Research and COU 825: Counselor Supervision. In the future, entering full-time doctoral students will take COU 833 in the fall and COU 825 in the spring, reversing the sequence those courses were offered in the past.

Switching the sequence of offering these two courses will provide incoming doctoral students with more information regarding both qualitative and quantitative research designs so that they can better choose an appropriate design for their intended dissertation project by the end of their first semester in the doctoral degree program. Usually doctoral students do not begin supervising counselors until after their first year as doctoral students, so completing COU 825 in the spring semester will be appropriate.

After evaluating requests for online options to our graduate programs in counseling, the department requested the addition of an online option for all of the graduate programs in counseling. The request was approved by the administration of the university and we moved forward with filing a substantive change with our accrediting agency, CACREP. The Board of Directors for CACREP approved our request at their July 2020 meeting adding the online options to our current accreditation cycle. In the fall semester of 2020, we began registering students in the online classes.

The University of Holy Cross has not changed the curricula for the MA and PhD degree programs since they were approved by CACREP during the last program review. All of the required CACREP content areas continue to be offered in core required courses. The university publishes two handbooks for degree-seeking students, one for students in the three MA degree programs and another one for students in the PhD degree program. The handbook is the same for all MA degree-seeking students whether they have chosen the traditional option or the online option. For documentation, see the Counseling Master's Degree Handbook for Traditional & Online Degree Options 2020-2021. Similarly, the handbook is the same for all PhD degree-seeking students whether they have chosen the traditional option or the online option. For documentation, see the Counseling PhD Program Handbook for Traditional & Online Degree Options 2020-2021. All courses in the online degree program are equivalent to the traditional courses that are offered in the degree programs. The content of all traditional and online courses is identical. The online course offerings do not constitute different degree programs, but instead give students the option of completing the degree programs by completing online courses and residencies. Traditional and online courses are taught by the same core faculty and adjunct faculty members.