THE FAMILY INSTITUTE
at Northwestern University

Comprehensive Assessment Plan Summary- 2017-2018
The Master of Arts Degree in Counseling
The Family Institute at Northwestern University

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our Comprehensive Assessment Plan (CAP) for academic year 2017-2018 demonstrates our continued ability to meet the standards of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP) 2009. Faculty and staff, as well as clinical training personnel, actively contribute to CAP components including evaluation of current students' academic and professional development and performance in relation to desired learning outcomes. Our evaluation plan also includes our graduates' professional accomplishments since leaving our program.

The results of the CAP for 2017-2018 revealed that while Caucasian students continue to constitute a majority (59%), our online platform has facilitated outreach to non-white and minority populations, increased program diversity across race/ethnicity, sex/gender, sexual orientation and by state. Similarly, our on-campus site has seen increasing interest from international students. Increased diversity enables our Counseling program to diffuse our psychodynamic and integrative education and training model, with an emphasis on reflective practice, to new generations of clinicians while maintaining a high-quality program consistent with accreditation standards.

Measurement of learning objectives through course assignments established student mastery at high levels, typically exceeding the criterion of 90% of students achieving a grade of B or better. The high program pass rate (96%) on the National Counselor Exam as well as student course evaluations and exit interview data, established that our curriculum prepares students to showcase

important core learning outcomes related to effective mental health practice. Occasionally, students were overwhelmed by the full-time experience of rigorous courses and clinical immersion; therefore, the program has begun to offer learning experiences in part-time plans on a case-by-case basis. Program data for our alumni are missing from CAP 2017-2018 report but will be updated for the next academic year.

ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT DATA

Annually, our program attracted a significant number of applicants. In 2017-2018, 592 individuals applied across both sites and 453 (76%) were offered interviews. Total student enrollment, including new and continuing students across both sites, was 472. Students identifying as White/Caucasian made up roughly 60%, while non-white students constituted around 38% of the student body. Students came from 36 states with a majority from Illinois, the home state of the program. In the on-campus site, about 12% percent of the student body came from international locations, including China, Vietnam, Japan, India and Trinidad and Tobago

Table 1: Admissions - Academic Year 2017-2018

Status	Onground	Online	Total
Applied	119	473	592
Interviewed	110	343	453

Table 2: Students Enrolled by Sex and Gender- Academic Year 2017-2018

Students	Onground	Online	Total
Males	9	81	90 (19.5%)
Females	51	332	383 (81.%)
Other	-	2	2 (<1%)
ALL Students	**57**	**415**	**472 (100%)**

**Table 3: Enrolled Student by Race & Ethnicity -**

Academic Year 2017-2018; N=472

Race/Ethnicity	Onground	Online	Total	Percent
White	36	241	277	59%
Black/African American	4	58	62	13%
Latino	7	48	55	12%
Asian	6	31	38	8%
Native American/American Ind.	-	1	1	<1%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	-	2	2	<1%
Multiracial	5	23	28	6%
Not Reported	1	12	12	2%

Figure 1. Enrolled Students by U.S. States

Academic year 2017-2018; N=36 States

Counseling Student Home State Data

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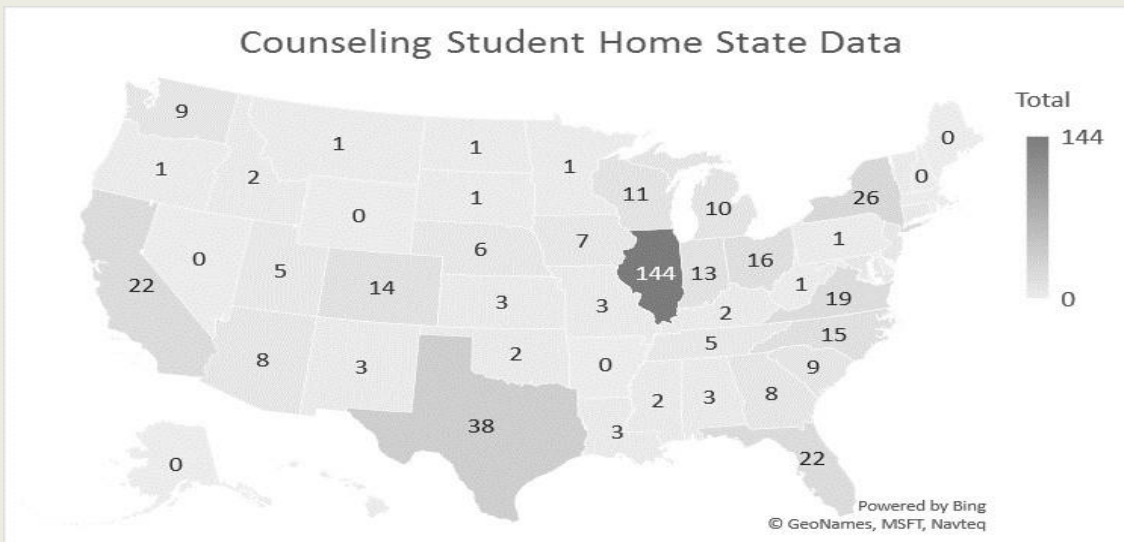
CURRICULA AND ACADEMIC DATA

Our CACREP-based curriculum includes educational, training, and enrichment activities designed to help students to: 1) Possess an in-depth knowledge of Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) from psychodynamic and integrative perspectives; 2) Demonstrate intermediate and advanced skills in CMHC by immersion in clinical work; 3) Demonstrate multicultural proficiency in CMHC; 4) Express a professional counselor identity; and 5) Exhibit skills of

reflective practice. Our data indicate students' mean scores and achievement on evaluative assignments, related to program objectives. Across sites students' mean scores ranged from 89.5 (A-) to 99.0 (A+). On another measure of CMHC proficiency, on first attempt, 96% of students passed the National Counselor Exam (NCE) with individual category scores well above the national average. Table 4 also shows that 95% of enrolled students graduated (on time) and that 80% of graduates received were employed six months post-graduation.

Table 4: Other Program Data: Academic Year 2017-2018

	Onground	Online	Total
Graduation Rate	28	74	102
Pass Rate on the National Counselor Exam (NCE)	100%	89%	96%
Completion Rate of Students Enrolled	97%	92%	94.5%
Job Placement Rate 6 Months Post-Graduation	80%	80%	80%

CLINICAL TRAINING DATA

The depth and quality of clinical training continue to be a clear strength in our program. Students are required to complete at least 50 direct face to face hours with clients, integrated with additional hours documenting experiences related to personal growth, training and recordkeeping. Students trained at over 214 unique sites across the U.S and was supervised by a total of 264 unique mental health practitioners. Clinical training targets included knowledge and skills related to professional Counseling, openness to Learning, professional demeanor and cultural proficiency. Supervisor evaluation of students showed average ratings of at least 4.5/5.0 in the practicum year and 4.6/5.0 during the internship year as Table 5 indicates. In all categories students' knowledge and skills improved moving from practicum to internship. Student evaluation of clinical training suggested a capacity to build alliances with clients, to demonstrate cultural sensitivity, and to apply theoretical principles in professional counseling. Struggles included a desire for case management expertise, paperwork demands, ending with clients and managing relationships with supervisors.

Table 5: Supervisor Evaluation of Practicum and Internship students – Academic Year

2017-2018; N= 214 sites; N=264 supervisors

Supervisor Evaluation of Practicum Student Knowledge & Skills				
		Mean Score On ground	**Mean Score Online**	**Mean Score Program**
1	Professional Skills	4.5	4.5	4.50
2	Approach to Learning	4.6	4.7	4.65
3	Professional Demeanor	4.7	4.6	4.65
4	Cultural Competency	4.4	4.6	4.50
Supervisor Evaluation of Intern Knowledge and Skills				
		Mean Score Onground	**Mean Score Online**	**Mean Score Program**
1	Professional Skills	4.7	4.6	4.65
2	Approach to Learning	4.8	4.7	4.75
3	Professional Demeanor	4.8	4.7	4.75
4	Cultural Competency	4.7	4.7	4.70

Table 6: Student Feedback on Clinical Training. Academic Year 2017-2018

Strengths	
Onground	**Online**

Onground	Online
- Ability to form positive therapeutic alliances - Increased ability to tolerate ambiguity - Ability to apply theory to clients' context - Transition from wanting to "fix" the client to just "being" with the client - Became more adept at writing valuable progress notes - Increased ability to provide culturally sensitive counseling - Ability to connect with clients and establish rapport - Better able to observe and explore the dynamics of the clinical relationship - Sound clinical judgment and skills - Sense of professionalism - Direct and open communication, better use of supervision and more open to feedback, less defensive - Good self-awareness and continued self-assessment	- Supervisor availability including regularity and consistency of weekly site supervision - In addition, provision of ad hoc supervision. - High satisfaction about clinical experiences when supervisors provide consistent, regular, and dependable supervision. - Supervisors supportive programs self- reflective model. - Learning about self (transference, countertransference, parallel process) within clinical work. - Awareness of the state's licensure process and ability to receive professional mentorship through that process.

Challenges	
Onground	**Online**
- Managing negative emotions in the room - Translating clinical insight into intervention - Taking on too much responsibility for client - A sense of self-motivation and a self- advocacy - Taking in feedback without feeling or acting in a defensive manner - Needing to feel more comfortable	- Supervisor availability. When supervisors are not present or provide irregular/unpredictable supervision. This weakness speaks to the importance of consistent, regular, and dependable supervision. - Quality of supervision. Site supervisor may provide self- reflective supervision. - Dissatisfaction of site supervision incongruent with program

with using his/her therapeutic voice— more comfortable and confident in role as clinician • Not curious enough about client's context • Completing paperwork correctly and on time (biggest concern) • Understanding community resources and the need to incorporate case management into treatment as necessary • Creating an environment for seamless termination and navigating smoothly through the process	instruction and expectations of the supervision experience. • Site unpreparedness to host students. Despite a rigorous qualification process, sites may be unprepared to provide the needed and expected clinical training experiences. • With good intentions, site supervisors have expected students to "market" themselves to recruit clients, have made faulty client recommendations, etc.

STUDENT FEEDBACK ON EXIT INTERVIEW

Each graduating student completes an exit interview with one or more faculty members. Themes from exit interviews with students, graduating in June 2018, are summarized. The most valuable experiences for students included the group dynamics programming (Tavistock and Group Immersion Experience), strong clinical training, and the "self-of-the-practitioner" emphasis of the program. Students reported the key contributors to their success to be interpersonal relationships with peers, faculty, and community. Students reported feeling prepared to move into professional careers or doctoral programs upon graduation. Program growth edges, as reported by students, include managing school/life balance and selfcare and wanting greater support in the internship placement process.

Table 7: Exit Interview- Qualitative Themes Academic Year 2017-2018

Qualitative Theme	On-Ground Site	Online Site
Most Valuable Experience(s)		

Opportunities for Growth/Reflection	The preceptorship made the most difference in my personal and professional growth.	This program didn't just teach me to be a Counselor, it changed my life. It saved me.
Group Dynamics Intensive	Tavistock changed the way I look at everything.	Group Dynamics Immersion was so powerful…made me go deeper than I ever thought I could.
Clinical Experience	The clinical training is the best; I feel so prepared to go to work.	I would like to be a [supervisor] or even teach here one day.
Supported Success		
Core Faculty	It's a wonderful small program with excellent professors.	I knew I could reach out to any Core Faculty member at any time even weekends and nights and get answers even though we are online
Connection to Peers	We were friends uplifting each other through a rigorous program.	We had a really close-knit cohort and helped each other. We texted and met outside of class regularly
Community Building	…this program also does a good job of connecting to the Chicago community and allowing students to interact with professionals in the field…	Presenting...with Dr. X was amazing. Seeing faculty at conferences and having coffee with them was cool.
Professional Next Steps		
Clinical Practice	[The] reputation of the program and Northwestern/TFI brand names [were] helpful in getting a job in the Chicago area.	I got two offers, one from my placement, but I liked the other one better, so I took it.

CES Doctoral Program	I am going on for my PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision	I want to teach and see clients. So, I got accepted to [University of] X.
Program Growth Edges		
School/Life Balance	Rigorous...especially given how short quarters are.	The full-time track is so intense, I couldn't do anything else.
Clinical Placement	I did not feel supported in the internship selection process.	I wanted a placement working with children and instead I got a placement working with adults

CONCLUSIONS

We derive several important conclusions from our CAP 2017-2018 information.

1) Enrollment in our online site has increased and is consistent with our projections (as described in documents submitted for accreditation). Further, our online site is helping us to achieve the goal of a diverse student body.

2) The program's national reach is also increasing. Students come from over 36 states and 6 international locations, train in over 264 agencies and institutions, across the US, under 214 unique supervisors.

3) Our program, across both sites, continues to achieve a high standard of education and training consistent with our program goals. Notably, we are achieving our core curricular and CMHC goals, as documented by the criterion of an average of 90% achieving a grade B or better on targeted assignments measuring service learning objectives. Our NCE pass rate is 96% on the first attempt which also confirms student achievement of sound clinical mental health education and training.

4) On-campus and online sites maintain a high degree of concordance in educational and clinical training targets as documented by the small to moderate differences in mean scores in supervisory evaluations across all students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Some differences in onground and online student achievement on curricular assignments documented suggest a need to take a closer look at pedagogy and other instructional dynamics across sites including, syllabi components, course

expectations and grading and this will be examined by our curriculum committee. As we transition to CACREP 2016 standards a key deliverable will be forging close synergy in Key Performance Indicators across both platforms.

2) Student feedback on clinical training indicates that a need for more attention to site selection and student-supervisor matching to better match student expectations and to maintain standards of the program

3) Student feedback also suggest that the program must help students to manage the intensity of education and training demands, and we have begun to offer series of part-time options on a case-by-case basis (especially in the online site) to meet student needs.

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