

Assessment Cycle 2019-2020

Program: Counseling MA (533)

College: Education and Human Development

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Northwestern Mission. Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution that is committed to the creation, dissemination, and acquisition of knowledge through teaching, research, and service. The University maintains as its highest priority excellence in teaching in graduate and undergraduate programs. Northwestern State University prepares its students to become productive members of society and promotes economic development and improvements in the quality of life of the citizens in its region.

Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development Mission. The Gallaspy Family College of Education and Human Development is committed to working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge to Northwestern students through transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. Through the School of Education and Departments of Health and Human Performance, Military Science, Psychology, and Social Work, the College produces knowledgeable, inspired, and innovative graduates ready for lifelong learning who contribute to the communities in which they reside and professions they serve. Additionally, the GCEHD is dedicated to the communities served by the Marie Shaw Dunn Child Development Center, NSU Elementary Laboratory School, NSU Middle Laboratory School, and the NSU Child and Family Network to assist children and their families related to learning and development.

Counseling (COUN) Program Mission Statement: The mission of the Counseling Program at Northwestern State University is to prepare candidates with the knowledge, skills, and practices to become caring, competent, reflective counselors within a dynamic and multicultural society. A key aim of the program faculty is to approach their pedagogy with intellectual vigor and enhance their students' preparation through quality research, scholarship, and service. The instructional efforts of program faculty are committed to ensuring a seamless integration of theory into practice.

Methodology: The assessment process for the program is as follows:

- (1) Data from assessments provide results on candidate knowledge, skills, and dispositions as appropriate for professional education programs.
- (2) Annually, program faculty and stakeholders review data to make data-driven, curricular decisions. COUN faculty determine what changes will be made.
- (3) The NSU Counseling Program is fully accredited by the Council for Accreditation

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Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) through October 31, 2022. The program was accredited under the 2009 Standards and began implementing the 2016 Standards from the start of the Spring semester. This accreditation is about quality assurance and the promotion of continuous improvement of programs. While there are aspirational elements included in the CACREP Standards, the Standards clearly delineate the program components that must be in place in order for a program to be accredited. The accredited status of our program assures the public that the program has gone through an extensive, multi-level external review process ensuring these critical quality-related components are in place. In addition, as a CACREP accredited program, we are committed to ongoing reporting and continuous and systematic program evaluation to identify strengths and weaknesses and to make data-informed program modifications for improvement over time.

Student Learning Outcomes

SLO 1

Course Map: Core CACREP Courses

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Demonstrate discipline-specific content knowledge (SPA #1)	Demonstrate a knowledge of core CACREP content areas as evidenced by earning an "Acceptable" score or higher on the MC and oral comprehensive exams.

Measure 1.1. (Direct – Knowledge, Skills)

SLO 1 is assessed through a multiple-choice comprehensive exam/oral comprehensive exam in the last semester of the program. The assessment instrument evaluates student knowledge using a 160-question multiple choice exam and a 45-minute oral exam, and the benchmark performance is that 80% of students will score at the Acceptable level (70%) or higher.

Finding: Target was Met

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019, the target was met. In 2018-2019, 100% of students scored Acceptable or Target on the multiple choice and oral comprehensive exams (n=17; 12 Fall grads; 5 Spring grads). Based on the analysis of the results in 2018-19, in 2019-20, the faculty implemented the following actions for Fall 2019 in order to improve student learning: (1) In anticipation of moving to CACREP's 2016 Standards, EPSY 5460 was be redesigned and updated. This included weekly self-assessments which allowed students to monitor their understanding of concepts. Major course assignments were revisited and reworked to incorporate

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best-practice ideas and 2016 CACREP Standards. (2) EPSY 5520 has been a course that was consistently identified as “challenging” by the program’s candidates. The material covered in EPSY 5520 is primarily statistical concepts, there are no prerequisites for the course, and most candidates in Counseling do not enter with mathematical backgrounds. Given the program is already the longest Master’s program on campus (60 hours), it was not reasonable to add additional coursework. However, changes were made to the delivery of the course. This included incorporating WebEx seminars, in which students could directly interact with the instructor in a live, synchronous, online platform, into the online course.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2019-2020 the target was met. In AC 2019-2020, 100% of students scored Acceptable or Target on the multiple choice and oral comprehensive exams (n=11). These results indicate student learning and academic achievement is occurring at *Acceptable* or *Target* levels in the CACREP Core areas. The common core areas represent knowledge areas that are fundamental to the counseling profession. The eight areas of curricular experience required by CACREP to prepare all counselors include: (1) professional counseling orientation and ethical practice, (2) social and cultural diversity, (3) human growth and development, (4) career development, (5) counseling and helping relationships, (6) group counseling and group work, (7) assessment and testing, and (8) research and program evaluation. These changes had a direct impact on the student’s ability to demonstrate discipline-specific content knowledge in the afore mentioned areas of curricular experience.

Analysis for 2019-2020 reveals the COUN Program is achieving consistency within scores on the multiple choice and oral comprehensive exam. This shows program faculty are covering the designated CACREP standards in a defined and systematic manner that enhances student learning. For three academic years (i.e., 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020) students in the COUN Program have exceeded the target of 80 percent. However, while the analysis indicates students are learning and achieving Acceptable (or Target) scores in the CACREP Core areas, there were two areas in which students achieved lower mean scores in general: (1) Research and (2) Assessment and Testing.

Action - Decision or Recommendation: In 2019-2020, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020 results there is evidence that students are learning and academically achieving Acceptable (or Target) scores in the CACREP Core areas. The areas of noted strengths in the Fall were Counseling/Helping Relationships and Career Counseling. There were two areas in which students had slightly lower mean scores; these were Research and Assessment and Testing.

Based on the analysis of AC 2019-2020 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will complete the following actions: (1) For Research, the instructor of the course (EDUC 5010 - online) will design and conduct a WebEx session on different research methods to enrich students’ understanding, (2) For Assessment and Testing (EPSY 5520 - online) the

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instructor added a number of WebEx sessions/recordings last Fall which received positive feedback from the students. The instructor will continue offering those recordings and add additional synchronous WebEx instruction so students have an opportunity to ask questions and interact in real-time.

These changes will improve the student's ability to demonstrate discipline-specific content knowledge, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

SLO 2

Course Map: Field Experience Courses (COUN 5550, 5560, 5570)

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Apply discipline-specific content knowledge in professional practice (SPA #2)	Complete Practicum (COUN 5550 or 5570) and Internship I & II (COUN 5560) successfully, as evidenced by completing all required hours and by earning a course letter grade of "B" or above.
	Fall 2020 Change: The Individual Counseling Evaluation Form will be used in COUN 5550 and 5570. This aligns with the Key Performance Indicators for the 2016 CACREP standards below. CMHC 3.b. techniques and interventions for prevention and treatment of a broad range of mental health issues SC 3.h. skills to critically examine the connections between social, familial, emotional, and behavior problems and academic achievement

Measure: 2.1. (Direct – Knowledge, Skills)

SLO 2 was assessed through satisfactory performance and completion of field experience hours. For the past three years the assessment instrument evaluated student performance through a calculated final grade, and the benchmark performance was that 80% of students would earn a course letter grade of "B" or above; however, that measure will be replaced by the Individual Counseling Evaluation Form in COUN 5550 and 5570 beginning Fall 2020. This aligns with the program's Key Performance

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Indicators for the 2016 CACREP Standards, which are concentration specific for Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) and School Counseling (SC): (1) CMHC 3.b. techniques and interventions for prevention and treatment of a broad range of mental health issues and (2) SC 3.h. skills to critically examine the connections between social, familial, emotional, and behavior problems and academic achievement.

Finding: Target was Met

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019, the target was met. In 2018-2019 100% of students earned a grade of “B” or above in field experience hours. These results indicated students were engaging in field experience courses in a professional manner and were demonstrating proficiency in counseling skills and content knowledge as measured by the assessment instrument. The findings also indicated the COUN Program was consistent in preparing students for field experience coursework. This was noteworthy because three separate faculty members taught coursework linked to field experiences. Based on analysis of the 2018-2019 results, faculty made the following changes in 2019-2020 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will provide continuity and consistency to maximize student learning and success and as well as to provide a meaningful experience for student counselors and to protect clients. Adherence to field experience requirements and policies were continued.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2019-2020 the target was met. In Fall 2019 100% of students earned a grade of “B” or above in field experience hours (n=22). For Spring 2020 15 students were enrolled in field experience coursework. Seven out of 15 students have an Incomplete in Spring field experience coursework due to inability to accrue hours because of COVID 19 and do not have data available; therefore, only eight students’ data will be reported for Spring 2020 (n=8). The analysis for Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 revealed the COUN Program is achieving continuity and consistency in preparing and training students for field experience coursework. Faculty are applying the designated CACREP standards in a defined and systematic manner that enhances student learning. These changes had a direct impact on the student’s ability to apply techniques and interventions for prevention and treatment of a broad range of mental health issues and to skills to critically examine the connections between social, familial, emotional, and behavior problems and academic achievement.

For three academic years (i.e., 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020) students in the COUN Program have met the benchmark of the SLO. This is a significant benchmark and one the faculty rigorously upholds. Because of the nature of counseling and potential harm that may come to clients as a result of incompetent counselors, enrollment in field experience courses is a selective process that requires the student to demonstrate proficiency in prerequisite courses. Students who do not meet these standards are placed on remediation plans, counseled into other programs of interest, or dismissed from the COUN program. Therefore, the COUN faculty believe the processes by which students qualify for field experiences are a necessary and integral

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part of maintaining this benchmark, supporting student learning, and upholding the integrity of the program. These processes are outlined in the Recommendation section below.

Action - Decision or Recommendation: In 2019-2020, the target was met. In AC 2019-2020, 100% of students who completed the course requirements earned a grade of “B” or above in field experience hours. The evidence indicates students are engaging in field experience courses in a professional manner and are demonstrating proficiency in counseling skills and content knowledge.

Acceptance into Practicum (COUN 5550 for Clinical Mental Health or COUN 5570 for School Counseling) and Internship (COUN 5560 for both concentrations) requires a recommendation completed on a formal rating form from the COUN 5000 instructor and must be approved by both the practicum/internship course instructor and the field experiences coordinator for the Counseling Program. Because of the nature of counseling and potential harm that may come to clients as a result of incompetent counselors, enrollment in field experience courses is a selective process that requires the student to demonstrate proficiency in prerequisite courses. Students who do not meet these standards are placed on remediation plans, counseled into other programs of interest, or dismissed from the program. Students who are enrolled in field experience courses and are not meeting the expectations receive immediate feedback with necessary actions outlined. In 2019-2020 there were no students on a remediation plan due to concerns regarding counseling skills (two students were on remediation plans due to unprofessional behavior (i.e., consistently submitting late work or not submitting work at all which resulted in failing grades in non-field experience coursework). Based on the analysis of the results, the Counseling Program faculty believe this Student Learning Outcome is an important and necessary gatekeeping process for the profession and recommended the consistent tracking of this SLO.

Based on the analysis of AC 2019-2020 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will use the Individual Counseling Evaluation Form in COUN 5550 and 5570 beginning Fall 2020. This change will improve the student’s ability to apply techniques and interventions for prevention and treatment of a broad range of mental health issues and to skills to critically examine the connections between social, familial, emotional, and behavior problems and academic achievement, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward. The change will also align with the program’s Key Performance Indicators for the 2016 CACREP Standards, which are concentration specific for Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) and School Counseling (SC): (1) CMHC 3.b. techniques and interventions for prevention and treatment of a broad range of mental health issues and (2) SC 3.h. skills to critically examine the connections between social, familial, emotional, and behavior problems and academic achievement.

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SLO 3

Course Map: COUN 5560 (COUN 6500 beginning Summer 2020)

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Model professional behaviors and characteristics (SPA #3)	Demonstrate the ability to apply and adhere to ethical and legal standards (CMHC B.1; SC B.1).
	Spring 2020 Change: Know ethical standards of professional counseling organizations and credentialing bodies, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling (2016 CACREP Standard 1.i.).

Measure: 3.1. (Direct – Skills, Dispositions)

SLO 3 was previously assessed in Internship I and II (COUN 5560) through case conceptualizations, a videotape presentation evaluation, an intake interview, a personal growth journal, a mental status examination with biopsychosocial history, a case analysis and presentation, as well as a small group intervention. The various assessment instruments were individual assignments evaluated in Clinical Portfolio and are specific to the 2009 CACREP Standards CMHC B.1. and SC B.1. The updated SLO will not have data available until after the course (COUN 6500) is taught Summer 2020. COUN 6500 is only offered once per year and always in the Summer semester.

Finding: Target Met

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019, the target was met. Evidence for 2018-2019 indicates the COUN Program is achieving consistency within scores on the designated assessments. This demonstrates program faculty are covering the designated CACREP standards in a defined and systematic manner that enhances student learning. For three academic years (i.e., 2016-2017, 2017-2018, 2018-2019) students in the COUN Program have met the SLO. While scores indicate students have applied and adhered to legal and ethical standards, counseling faculty recognize the diverse and ever-changing landscape for mental health issues. Based on analysis of the 2018-2019 results, faculty made the following change in 2019-2020 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty introduced additional professional development regarding current ethical issues throughout program coursework.

While scores indicate students can apply and adhere to legal and ethical standards, counseling faculty recognize the landscape for mental health issues is diverse and ever-changing. In response to the changing landscape, faculty introduced additional professional development regarding current ethical issues throughout program

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coursework in the 2019-20 academic year including (1) Suicide prevention and ethical obligations, (2) ethics and counselor boundary issues, and (3) ethical considerations in dealing with physically aggressive clients.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2019-2020 the target was met. In Fall of 2019 100% of students earned a score of 80% or above on identified assessments in the Clinical Portfolio. These results indicate student learning and achievement is taking place at Acceptable or Target scores in one of the designated CACREP Core areas. The common core areas represent knowledge areas that are fundamental to the counseling profession. The core areas of curricular experience required by CACREP to prepare all counselors include professional counseling orientation and legal/ethical practice. These changes had a direct impact on the student's ability to know ethical standards of professional counseling organizations and credentialing bodies, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling.

Action - Decision or Recommendation: In 2019-2020, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2019-2020 results, the COUN Program is achieving consistency within scores on the designated assessments.

Based on the analysis of AC 2019-2020 data, faculty will implement the following change in AC 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will implement the Counseling 6500 Research Paper where students will be given a case study and must submit a research paper of an ethical dilemma in counseling. The report includes a description of the ethical dilemma, a conceptualization of counseling client(s), developmental and counseling intervention strategies, processes involved in resolving this dilemma, a description of the model of ethical-decision making utilized, personal insight gained, references to the literature, and all relevant materials related to the case. As described in the AC 2018-2019 report, the COUN Program transitioned to the 2016 CACREP Standards beginning Spring 2020. One of the key differences between the 2009 and 2016 CACREP Standards is the way in which assessment occurs and this has resulted in a change of assignments within our program. While the ability to apply and adhere to ethical and legal standards is an integral part of teaching, now the department is guided by Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) required by the accrediting body, CACREP. In 2020-2021, faculty will collect data for this KPI using the Counseling 6500 Research Paper each Summer beginning AC 2020-2021.

This will be a multi-year process because faculty will be examining low numbers. For example, COUN 6500 is only offered once per year and averages around 10 students for each offering, so longitudinal trend analysis will be implemented in monitoring and advancing the cycle of improvement over time. These changes will improve the student's ability to know ethical standards of professional counseling organizations and credentialing bodies, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

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SLO 4

Course Map: COUN 5560 (COUN 5000 and 5610 beginning Spring, 2020)

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Exhibit creative thinking that yields engaging ideas, processes, materials, and experiences appropriate for the discipline (SPA #3)	Fall 2019: Demonstrate appropriate use of culturally responsive individual, couple, family, group, and systems modalities for initiating, maintaining, and terminating counseling (2009 CMHC D.5; SC F.1).
	Spring 2020 Change: Demonstrate appropriate essential interviewing, counseling, and case conceptualization skills (2016 CACREP 5.g.).
Exhibit creative thinking that yields engaging ideas, processes, materials, and experiences appropriate for the discipline (SPA #3)	Fall 2019: Demonstrate the ability to modify counseling systems, theories, techniques, and interventions to make them culturally appropriate for diverse populations (2009 CMHC F.3; SC D.1).
	Spring 2020 Change: Articulate the impact of heritage, attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences on an individual's views of others (2016 CACREP 2.d.).

Measure: 4.1. (Direct – Knowledge, Skills)

SLO 4 (CMHC D.5; SC F.1) is assessed in Internship I and II (COUN 5560) through case conceptualizations, a videotape presentation evaluation, an intake interview, a personal growth journal, a mental status examination with biopsychosocial history, a case analysis and presentation, guidance curriculum, a parent/teacher education program, a post-secondary planning lesson and small group intervention. The various assessment instruments were individual assignments evaluated in Clinical Portfolio and were specific to the standard listed, and the benchmark performance is that 80% of students will score at the Acceptable level or higher.

SLO 4 (CMHC F.3; SC D.1) is assessed in Internship I and II (COUN 5560) through a videotape presentation evaluation, data disaggregation, and policy review project, as well as a case analysis & presentation, peer helping program, and small group intervention. The various assessment instruments were individual assignments evaluated in Clinical Portfolio and were specific to the standard listed, and the benchmark performance is that 80% of students will score at the Acceptable level or higher.

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Finding: Target was Met

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019, the target was met. Results from 2018-19 showed the COUN Program is achieving consistency within scores on these designated assessments. While the CACREP Standards indicated above are being met, the faculty identified an additional area of focus for the 2019-20 year: to help students thoroughly ground technique in their theory of counseling. Based on analysis of the 2018-2019 results, faculty made the following change in 2019-2020 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty incorporated specific activities such as guided questioning, technique demonstration and theory conceptualization into field experience courses that enhanced student learning and prompted students to reflect on the integration of theory and practice.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2019-2020 the target was met. In AC 2019-2020, 100% of students earned a score of 80% or above on identified assessments. In response to the AC 2018-2019 analysis, the areas of focus were addressed in the following ways: (1) in depth case-conceptualizations, including how their techniques were congruent with their theory of choice (2) peer feedback on their video, specific to implementation of their techniques, (3) journal reflection relating their self-awareness to their theory of choice, and (4) a research article on client issues relevant to their case-conceptualization in order to drive future theory-based interventions in working with the client. In terms of CACREP Standard 2.d, 100% of students in COUN 5610 earned a designation of Target or Acceptable on the Class Journal/Portfolio. While the required content was submitted, there was a great deal of variance in the way in which the individual students put the assignment together and made it more difficult to assess.

Updated SLO 4 (2016 CACREP 2.d.) was assessed in COUN 5610 through the Class Journal/Portfolio, also a KPI assignment for the program under the 2016 CACREP Standards. This assignment is a compilation of the students' work throughout the semester regarding specific prompts designed for students to reflect in-depth on their attitudes, beliefs, experiences and then to articulate how that impacts their work with clients. The benchmark performance is that 80% of students will score at the Acceptable level or higher. This standard was met in the Spring. Eleven students were enrolled in COUN 5610. Of the 11, one student currently has an Incomplete in the course and has not submitted the Class Journal/Portfolio; therefore, data for 10 students was available for reporting and analysis (n=10). Of the 10 students, 100% earned a designation of Acceptable or Target on the Class Journal/Portfolio. Data for this SLO will be collected for COUN students each Spring semester, beginning Spring 2020.

These changes impacted/made/had a direct impact on the student's ability to articulate the impact of heritage, attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences on an individual's views of others.

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Action - Decision or Recommendation: In 2019-2020, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the results for AC 2019-2020, the COUN Program achieved consistency within scores on the designated assessments correlated with 2009 CACREP Standards.

Based on the analysis of AC 2019-2020 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will seek further improvement in the quality of instruction and student work in COUN 5610: (1) a template will be provided, (2) each entry will be aligned with the requisite CACREP Standards, and (3) a more descriptive rubric will be created. Faculty will assess SLO 4 in COUN 5000 through a 45-minute counseling session that students will facilitate in the role of the counselor, which is also a KPI assignment for the program under the 2016 CACREP Standards. A session transcription identifying skills used, case conceptualization, and an essential skills rating form will be completed as part of the assignment as well. The benchmark performance will be that 80% of students will score at the Acceptable level or higher. Data for this SLO will be collected for COUN students each Fall semester, beginning Fall 2020.

As discussed in last year's report, the Counseling Program has transitioned to the 2016 CACREP Standards as of Spring of 2020. At this time, the SLOs as well as the assignments have changed, but the focus of the standards remains on developing candidate skills so they can provide quality counseling experiences for clients, including those from social, economic, and cultural backgrounds that differ from the social, economic, and cultural backgrounds of counseling students.

This will be a multi-year process because faculty will be examining low numbers. For example, COUN 5000 is only offered once per year and averages around 10 students for each offering, so longitudinal trend analysis will be implemented in monitoring and advancing the cycle of improvement over time. These changes will improve the student's ability to articulate the impact of heritage, attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences on an individual's views of others.

SLO 5

Course Map: COUN 5560 (also EDUC 5510 beginning Spring, 2020)

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Make responsible decisions and problem- solve, using data to inform actions when appropriate (SPA #5)	Fall 2019: Demonstrate the ability to recognize his/her own limitations as a counselor and to seek supervision or refer clients when appropriate (2009 CMHC D.9; SC D.5).

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	Spring 2020 Change: Demonstrate appropriate essential interviewing, counseling, and case conceptualization skills (2016 CACREP 5.g.).
Make responsible decisions and problem- solve, using data to inform actions when appropriate (SPA #5)	Fall 2019: Apply relevant research findings to inform the practice of counseling (2009 CMHC J.1; SC J.1).
	Spring 2020 Change: Know the importance of research in advancing the counseling profession, including how to critique research to inform counseling practice (2016 CACREP 8.a.)

Measure: 5.1. (Direct – Knowledge, Skills)

SLO 5 (2009 CMHC D.9; SC D.5) is assessed in Internship I and II (COUN 5560) through case conceptualizations, a personal growth journal, a case analysis and presentation, and small group intervention. The assessment instruments were individual assignments evaluated in Clinical Portfolio and were specific to the standard listed, and the benchmark performance is that 80% of students will score at the Acceptable level or higher.

SLO 5 (2009 CMHC J.1; SC J.1) is assessed in Internship I and II (COUN 5560) through case conceptualizations, data disaggregation and a policy review project, as well as case analysis and presentation, guidance curriculum, a post- secondary planning lesson and small group intervention. The assessment instruments were individual assignments evaluated in Clinical Portfolio and were specific to the standard listed, and the benchmark performance is that 80% of students will score at the Acceptable level or higher.

Finding: Target was Met

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019, the target was met. In 2018-2019, 100% of students earned a score of 80% or above on identified assessments. These results indicate student learning and achievement is taking place at Acceptable or Target scores.

Based on analysis of the 2018-2019 results, faculty made the following change in 2019-2020 to drive the cycle of improvement. The faculty recommended alignment of the student learning outcomes to the CACREP Standards and worked to crosswalk the 2009 standards to the 2016 Standards under which the next accreditation visit will occur. Additionally, as part of this process, the faculty reviewed the

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capstone/comprehensive project for the program and determined different assignments would be a more natural fit for assessing these standards and SLOs/student learning.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2019-2020 the target was met. In AC 2019-2020, 100% of students earned a score of 80% or above on identified assessments aligned to the 2009 standards. These results indicate student learning and achievement is taking place at Acceptable or Target scores. This demonstrates program faculty are covering the designated CACREP standards in a defined and systematic manner that enhances student learning. For three academic years (i.e., 2016-2017, 2017-2018, 2018-2019, Fall 2019) students in the COUN Program have met the SLO.

Faculty assessed SLO 5 (2016 CACREP 7.e.) in COUN 5560 through the Case Conceptualization Presentation, a KPI assignment for the program under the 2016 Standards. In this assignment students (1) Identified the presenting problem, (2) Assessed and interpreted client's strengths and needs, recognizing uniqueness in cultures, languages, values, backgrounds, and abilities, (3) Detailed appropriate comprehensive assessment interventions to assist in diagnosis and treatment planning, with an awareness of cultural bias, (4) Detailed treatment plan that includes a behavioral definition, 5-axis diagnosis, goals, objectives, past interventions used, theoretical approach used, multicultural considerations, and family systems considerations; differentiate between diagnosis and developmental appropriate reactions during trauma-causing events, (5) Included progress notes, (6) Documented consultation with collaborating professionals to discuss the differential diagnosis, (7) Videotaped session and summarize intervention. Intervention must be based upon documented research findings. Sources must be cited. If applicable, provide appropriate counseling strategies when working with clients with addiction and co-occurring disorders; if not detail appropriate strategies that could be used, (8) Summarized future plans based upon research findings. Sources must be cited. (9) Identified appropriate referrals and/or community resources and the procedures utilized for making those referrals. For the Personal Reflection Component students were asked to (1) Discuss personal limitations in working with the client and the nature of the supervision received, (2) Discuss the legal and ethical issues related to the work with the client, (3) Discuss personal awareness of the issues presented related to diversity and how multicultural competencies were met. Data for this SLO is collected for COUN students each Spring and Fall semesters, beginning Spring 2020.

Twelve students were enrolled in COUN 5560 in AC 2019-2020; 100% of students earned a score of 80% or higher.

Faculty assessed SLO 5 (2016 CACREP 8.a.) in EDUC 5010 through the Article Screening, a Key Performance Indicator assignment for the program under the 2016 Standards. For this assignment students were asked to critique a set of articles using specific guidelines. They also discussed the importance of research in advancing the counseling profession. Data for this SLO is collected for COUN Students each Spring and Fall, beginning Spring 2020.

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Three COUN students were enrolled in COUN 5010 in AC 2019-2020 and each attained a designation of Acceptable on their Article Screening. While this certainly provides valuable baseline data, it is hard to make generalizations with such low participant numbers. However, in reflection on instruction and in answering student questions, the instructor has determined additional instructional content, such as a supplementary handout with content regarding what to look for in articles, would improve the quality of instruction and student work.

Action - Decision or Recommendation: In 2019-2020, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the Fall 2019 results, program faculty are covering the designated CACREP standards in a defined and systematic manner that enhances student learning and leads to program improvement over time. The evidence demonstrates students are able to implement and articulate the standards identified above. AC 2019-2020 data collection for the 2016 Standards indicate students are meeting the standards; however, our participant numbers are low, and more information will be needed before any major changes are made.

Based on the analysis of AC 2019-2020 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will monitor these SLOs and collect and analyze data prior to making any substantial changes. Faculty will add supplemental instructional content to improve the quality of instruction and student work on the Article Screening assessment in EDUC 5010.

Comprehensive Summary of Key Evidence of Improvements Based on Analysis of Results:

The NSU Counseling Program is fully accredited by the Council for Accreditation Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) through October 31, 2022. The program was accredited under the 2009 Standards and must begin implementing the 2016 Standards from the start of the Spring semester. Therefore, this time is a natural fit for reassessing all components of the program, including the identified SLOs.

In accordance with CACREP Accreditation Standards, the Counseling Program has engaged in continuous and systematic efforts to track each student's progress throughout the program by examining student learning in relation to a combination of knowledge and skills. The assessment process includes the following: (1) identification of key performance indicators of student learning in each of the eight core areas and in each student's respective specialty area, (2) measurement of student learning conducted via multiple measures and over multiple points in time, and (3) review or analysis of data.

The Counseling Program's commitment to excellence incorporates self-assessment (along with external review by CACREP) to determine if and how program standards are being met. The counselor education program faculty has a systematic process in

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place for the use of individual student assessment data in relation to retention, remediation, and dismissal.

Fall 2019 completed the Counseling Program's final accreditation cycle under the 2009 Standards. Moving forward, a major goal of the program will be to monitor compliance with 2016 standards and to achieve the same consistency we previously had with 2009 Standards. Collecting multiple series of baseline data under the 2016 Standards will be an important process for the program because of program enrollment (n=8-17 per year) and course offerings and scheduling (courses typically offered once per academic year).

For 2019-2020, the program faculty took the following actions.

- SLO #1: The faculty implemented the following actions for Fall 2019 in order to improve student learning: (1) In anticipation of moving to CACREP's 2016 Standards, EPSY 5460 was redesigned and updated (this was identified a previous focus area). This included weekly self-assessments which allowed students to monitor their grasp of concepts. Major course assignments were revisited and reworked in order to incorporate best-practice ideas and 2016 CACREP Standards. (2) EPSY 5520 was a course that has been consistently labeled as "challenging" by the program's candidates. Changes were made to the delivery of the course. This included incorporating WebEx seminars, in which students directly interacted with the instructor in a live, synchronous, online platform, into the online course.
- SLO #2: The COUN faculty believe the processes by which students qualify for field experiences are a necessary and integral part of maintaining this SLO and benchmark, supporting student learning and upholding the integrity of the program. The Individual Counseling Evaluation Form will be used in COUN 5550 and 5570 beginning Fall 2020.
- SLO #3: While scores indicate students apply and adhere to legal and ethical standards, counseling faculty recognize the landscape for mental health issues is diverse and ever-changing. As a response, faculty committed to introducing additional professional development regarding current ethical issues for program improvement. The following professional developments were offered in the Fall 2019: (1) Suicide prevention and ethical obligations, (2) ethics and counselor boundary issues, and (3) ethical considerations in dealing with physically aggressive clients. Due to COVID-19, the focus in the Spring shifted to working with clients online and the legal/ethical issues surrounding telecounseling.
- SLO #4: While the CACREP Standards aligned with this SLO were being met, the faculty identified an additional area of focus for the Fall of 2019: helping students thoroughly ground technique in their theory of choice. This was done through incorporating specific activities into field experience courses that

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enhanced student learning and prompted students to reflect on the integration of theory and practice (i.e., guided questioning, technique demonstration and theory conceptualization).

- SLO #5: The faculty recommended the student learning outcomes remain aligned to the CACREP Standards and have completed the crosswalk to the 2016 Standards under which the next accreditation visit will occur. As part of this process, the faculty have been engaged in reviewing assessments for potential redesign to ensure alignment with 2016 CACREP Standards. This process will continue over the next year as faculty prepare to write our self-study during Spring 2021.

Plan of Action Moving Forward:

The Counseling Program is in a transition period. The new 2016 CACREP Standards are being implemented and assignments are being redesigned or newly designed in order to align with the Standards. It will be important as to build assessment data in process and procedure in meeting the 2016 CACREP Standards. This will be a multi-year process to examine low numbers for each course (an average of 10 students per course) and most courses are only offered once per year. However, based on the AC 2019-2020 data there are some specific actions the COUN faculty will take:

- In addressing SLO #1, for Research, the instructor of the course (EDUC 5010 - online) will design and conduct a WebEx session on different research methods to enrich students' understanding. For Assessment and Testing (ESPY 5520 - online) the instructor added a number of WebEx sessions/recordings last Fall which received positive feedback from the students. The instructor will continue offering those recordings and add additional synchronous WebEx instruction so students have an opportunity to ask questions and interact in real-time.
- Beginning in the Fall of 2020 the Individual Counseling Evaluation Form will be used in COUN 5550 and 5570 to assess SLO #2. This aligns with the program's Key Performance Indicators for the 2016 CACREP Standards, which are concentration specific for Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) and School Counseling (SC): (1) CMHC 3.b. techniques and interventions for prevention and treatment of a broad range of mental health issues and (2) SC 3.h. skills to critically examine the connections between social, familial, emotional, and behavior problems and academic achievement.
- In COUN 5610 a Class Journal/Portfolio is used to assess SLO #4. This assignment was completed, and data was successfully collected in the Spring 2020 semester. However, based on instructor feedback and student questions around the assignment, the following changes will be implemented to seek further improvement in the quality of instruction and student work: (1) a template will be provided, (2) each entry will be aligned with the requisite CACREP Standards, and (3) a more descriptive rubric will be created.

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- An Article Screening in EDUC 5010 is used to assess SLO #5. The number of COUN students completing this course in the Spring was low (n=3) so it is difficult to draw conclusions on the limited data. However, in reflection on instruction and in answering student questions, the instructor has determined additional instructional content, such as a supplementary handout with content regarding what to look for in articles, would improve the quality of instruction and student work.