



The COUN program provides an annual report documenting outcomes of program evaluation, descriptions of any program modification, and student results on national exams and graduation rates. This information is distributed to current students, program faculty, institutional administrators, site supervisors, and employers via email with attached report “Outcomes of Systematic Counseling Program Evaluation” and on the program’s webpage. The following evidence can be found in this appendix: Outcomes of Systematic Counseling Program Evaluation for Fall 2023 and Spring 2024, distribution emails, and program webpage

Outcomes of Systematic Counseling Program Evaluation Fall 2023 and Spring 2024

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Counseling Program Evaluation Purpose

The purpose of our evaluation efforts is to assess how program mission, objectives, and student learning outcomes are met. Our ultimate goal is to inform our decisions about the program. The evaluation plan includes examining the program from three vantage points—University, Program, and external. Each offers a perspective from different entities with differing degrees of influence upon the counseling program. However, these various evaluations provide a variety of information about the program that can be used to evaluate program performance and to inform and guide the faculty's decision making.



Counseling Program Mission

The mission of the Counseling Program at The University of South Dakota is to graduate competent and ethical professional counselors. Master's and doctoral graduates serve diverse populations and the profession locally, nationally, and internationally as counselors, counselor educators, and clinical supervisors. The doctoral program prepares graduates to become the profession's next generation of leaders. Located in the city of Vermillion, South Dakota, the Counseling Program is housed within the School of Education and maintains a special commitment to preparing professional counselors to work in rural settings.

The Counseling Program is designed to graduate counselors who see themselves first and foremost as professional counselors, regardless of chosen specialization or degree program. Thus, graduate students are expected to demonstrate a commitment to professional and personal development. Moreover, graduate students demonstrate leadership by advocating for the profession, embracing diversity, and offering service to others. Graduate students will be engaged learners who meet and aspire to exceed the CACREP-based professional competencies and performance standards.

As role models, Counseling Program faculty members dedicate themselves to excellence and ethical practice in teaching, research, scholarship, clinical practice, leadership, and service. The curriculum adheres to a reflective decision-making model of training. Professional and personal growth are interrelated and encouraged through experiences that promote awareness of self and one's impact on others. The curriculum underscores the importance of supervised clinical experiences. To ensure excellence throughout the curriculum and our identity as professional counselors, the program maintains CACREP accreditation.

Recent Student Accomplishments

Several of CMH and SC students attended our annual South Dakota Counseling Association conference. Additionally, several students were awarded over \$16,000 in scholarships for their outstanding work during their 2023-2024 master's programs.

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Master's in counseling: School Counseling and Clinical Mental Health Counseling

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the eight core common areas designated by the program's accreditation body (CACREP).

The Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination-CPCE measures knowledge level in the eight core areas of CACREP. CPCE is administered in the academic semester prior to enrolling in internship (final semester of course work). Student results from the CPCE attempts are categorized into three levels of performance:

Unacceptable=student scored below the national average (i.e., less than 80 of 136 questions answered correctly).

Acceptable=student scored above at or above the national average of 80.

Exceptional=student scored more than 1 Std. Dev. above mean for the CPCE.

The program expects that 90% of the students will be at the category of *Acceptable* or above for this student learning objective. For 2023-2024 academic cycle, 17 students sat for the exam. Four students were *unacceptable* (23%), Four were *acceptable* (23%) and 11 were *exceptional* (64%) with a score of 95/136 or higher. The average for all CPCE scores was a 91% for FA23 and SP24.

2. Students will demonstrate competent skills as an entry-level professional counselor in a supervised internship (i.e., either a clinical mental health or school) setting.

The final Clinical Mental Health internship evaluation has three content areas (counseling skill, ethical practice, professional relationship) scored on a 5 point scale:

5=outstanding performance (more like that of a professional who performs consistently well)

4=above average performance (performed at a level above that of the average entry-level counselor)

3=satisfactory performance (commensurate with satisfactory entry-level performance)

2=needs considerable improvement (not commensurate with entry-level performance; concerns are considered developmental)

1=inadequate performance (performance marked by a pattern of incompetence; concerns are not developmental)

The final School Counseling internship evaluation has four content areas (Planning, Environment, Delivery of Service, Professional Responsibilities) scored on a 4-point scale: (CMH conversional scale for comparability)

U=Unsatisfactory (1-2 for CMH)

B=Basic (3 for CMH)

P=Proficient (4 for CMH)

D=Distinguished (5 for CMH)

Student results from the evaluation are categorized into three levels of performance: 4-5=Above Average; 3-

4=Satisfactory; Below 3=Unsatisfactory

The program expects that 90% or more of the students will average 3 or above on internship evaluations. Evaluations are completed by approved site supervisors. Of the 10 students evaluated for the 2023-2024 academic year, 100% received performance scores of 3 or above on internship evaluations. Zero students scored below 3.0.

PhD in Counseling: Counselor Education

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the eight core common areas designated by the program's accreditation body (CACREP), as well as the knowledge areas specific to doctoral specialization.

This objective is measured by the required completion of Comprehension Exam. This is a written essay to evaluate knowledge in three areas related to CACREP 2009 standards for doctoral studies: Counselor education/supervision; clinical practice/counseling theory; and research.

Students are scored using a rubric evaluating three levels of performance:

Target (high knowledge)

Acceptable (moderate knowledge),

Unacceptable (low knowledge).

A student is considered successful if they receive a Target or Acceptable rating on the rubric. The program expects that 90% of the students will score in the category of *Acceptable* or above for this student learning objective. For 2023-2024, zero students sat for their doctoral comps.

2. Students will demonstrate competent skills as an entry-level professional counselor in the supervised internship (i.e., either a clinical mental health or school) setting.

Approved site supervisors complete an end-of-internship assessment of the student's professional counselor skills and behaviors. The final internship evaluation has three content areas (counseling skill, ethical practice, professional relationship) scored on a 5 point scale

5=outstanding performance (more like that of a professional who performs consistently well)

4=above average performance (performed above average)

3=satisfactory performance (commensurate with satisfactory performance)

2=needs considerable improvement concerns are consider developmental)

1=inadequate performance (performance marked by a pattern of incompetence; concerns are not developmental)

Students are considered successful if they average a 3.0 or above for the evaluation. Student results from the evaluation are categorized into three levels of performance: 4-5=Above Average; 3-4=Satisfactory; Below 3=Unsatisfactory

The program expects that 90% or more of the students will average 3 or above. Zero students were enrolled in doctoral internships for the 2023-2024 academic school year.

Description of Program Modifications

The faculty have taken large steps toward improving the breadth and depth of evaluation in the program. Program review, including studies of clinical site supervisors, program graduates, and program modifications are completed every year. Data have been analyzed. Discussion and review is underway.

Specific revisions were considered this year including course scheduling from mostly evening courses to daytime courses for the upcoming FA 2024 and SP 2025 school year. Additionally, feedback from internship site supervisors and recent graduates suggests more classroom guidance opportunities for school counseling students are needed. More options addressing curriculum development and classroom guidance are actively underway.

Some data were available to draw comparisons:

<i>M.A. Counselor Education</i>				
<u>Student Learning Outcomes</u>	<u>Criteria</u>	<u>AY1-21-22</u>	<u>AY22-23</u>	<u>AY-23-24</u>
SLO1: Students will demonstrate knowledge of the eight core common areas designated by the program’s accreditation body (CACREP).	>90% Acceptable or Target	93%	93%	95%
SLO2: Students will demonstrate competent skills as an entry-level professional counselor in the supervised internship (i.e., either a clinical mental health or school) setting.	>90% Satisfactory or Above Avg.	100%	100%	100.0%

<i>Ph.D. Counselor Education</i>				
<u>Student Learning Outcomes</u>	<u>Criteria</u>	<u>AY21-22</u>	<u>AY22-23</u>	<u>AY23-24</u>
SLO1: Students will demonstrate knowledge of the eight core common areas designated by the program’s accreditation body (CACREP), as well as the knowledge areas specific to doctoral specialization.	>90% Acceptable or Target	100%	100%	100%
SLO2: Students will demonstrate competent skills as an entry-level professional counselor in the supervised internship (i.e., either a clinical mental health or school) setting.	>90% Satisfactory or Above Avg.	100%	100%	NA



Student Demographics

Student Demographics for Academic Years: 20/21, 21/22, 22/23, & 23/24										
	Female	Male	White	Black/African American	Native American	Int.	Unknown	H or PI	H	Multiple
N	75	19	78	3	1	3	1	1	3	3
%	80	20	83	.03	.01	.03	.01	.01	.03	.03

Job Placement Rates

Job Placement Rates for Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 were self-reported by students to internship instructors or academic advisors. Results provided below were accurate as of June 2024.

Table			
<i>Descriptive Statistics for Job Placement Rates</i>			
	<u>AY21-22</u>	<u>AY22-23</u>	<u>AY23-24</u>
Students that secured gainful employment within their professional discipline related to their degree in Clinical Mental Health, School Counseling, or Counselor Education and Supervision.	100%	100%	92% CMH: 8/8 SC: 2/3 CE & S: 2/2 Total: 12/13



Internship Supervisor Satisfaction Survey

USD CMH and SC programs partner with a wide variety of internship sites and coordinators to meet the needs of our students and client populations in the tri-state area and beyond. Of the multiple clinical mental health and school counseling sites, our programs reflect interns are generally well prepared and trained for working with diverse populations. Using a Likert type scale with response anchors (1= inadequate training, 2 = needs considerable improvement and training, 3 = satisfactory training preparation, 4 = above average training preparation, 5 = outstanding training preparation) internship site supervisors were asked two questions. Two free response questions were provided to gather insights how programs could be improved and if the USD counseling program should take any additional ideas into consideration. Results from our FA 23/ SP 24 supervisor satisfaction survey results are provided below in aggregate and de-identified form.

Table
Descriptive statistics and response patterns for Internship Supervisor Form

Item	Descriptive Statistics				Percent Response to Each Anchor				
	Min	Max	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
The program provided the necessary training that the intern was able to perform all duties assigned	3	5	4.11	0.73	0.00	0.00	22.22	44.44	33.33
The program provide training that facilitated the development of a culturally competent and ethical intern	4	5	4.55	0.49	0.00	0.00	0.00	55.55	44.44

Note: Nine internship supervisors completed both sections of the survey.

Free response questions asked of Internship Site Supervisors and results are provided below.

Q1. What should the USD Counseling Programs consider adding the following to strengthen student performance and preparation?

Diagnosis and knowledge of the DSM-V-TR and ICD10 codes.

Preparing students for information about 504 and parent meetings/involvement in schools. Preparing students to best support teachers.

Interns need more information on how to work with younger children and students with disabilities.

A classroom management course or unit.

The student's counseling skills and foundation were great. However, she came in with limited knowledge and experience related to middle and high school specific tasks, academic advising and college exploration and planning tasks in particular. She did not have any coursework or experience related to classroom management for classroom guidance activities.

In the elementary level, talking about classroom management skills would be beneficial as there are many elementary counselors in the state that are required to teach classroom lessons.



Q2. What additional comments do you have for the USD CP program faculty?

No additional feedback at this time. Interns were well prepared this year!

This student was well trained, and the learning curve was short. Shines well on your program.

Interns are well prepared with basic counseling skills, but they need more school counseling specific information. My interns in the last couple of years need more knowledge on comprehensive school counseling programs, classroom management/teaching, and MTSS.



Former Employer and Student Survey Results

USD CMH and SC programs average about 12-18 graduates per year combined. Each graduated student are employed at clinical mental health agencies, hospitals, prisons, private practices, and school districts across the tri-state area and beyond. Using a Likert type scale with response anchors (5 = definitely yes, 4 = probably yes, 3 = might or might not, 2 = probably not, & 1 = definitely not) we gathered insights from former graduates of the program and employers of our CMH or SC graduates. Results from our FA 23/ SP24 supervisor satisfaction survey results are provided below in aggregate and de-identified form

*Descriptive statistics and response patterns for **Employers** of USD Graduates*

Item	Descriptive Statistics				Percent Response to Each Anchor				
	Min	Max	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
Do you feel your CMH or SC employee who graduated from USD was prepared for the workforce?	5	5	5.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00

Note: Employer responses (N = 2)

Free response questions asked of employers of USD graduates and results are provided below.

Q1. In what ways do you believe your employee were prepared at USD?

I think the program has gotten better over the past five years or so, and students are coming out of USD with a more well-rounded view of psychotherapy, as well as receiving the content they need to step into the professional world.

She's organized. Professional. Very well informed on best-practices relative to student counseling situations.

Q. 2. In what ways do you believe your employee was not prepared at USD?

I think any student that applies themselves to the process of learning at USD, and is open to the supervision they receive (and hopefully from competent supervisors in their internship settings) will be adequately prepared to enter the workforce as a psychotherapist.

N/A

*Descriptive statistics and response patterns for **Graduates** of USD CMH or SC Programs*

Item	Descriptive Statistics				Percent Response to Each Anchor				
	Min	Max	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
Do you feel your CMH or SC program prepared you for the workforce?	4	5	4.50	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	50.00	50.00

Note: Graduate responses (N = 2)

Free response questions asked of USD graduates and results are provided below.

Q1. In what ways do you believe you were prepared?



I believe I was prepared for the mental health counseling side.

The rigorous standards we were held to, academically and ethically, made the transition from graduate student to school counselor smoother than I would have anticipated. The hands-on practice built into the instruction, the curriculum and expertise of faculty, and my experience in practicum and internship, in conjunction with the consistent reflection required by program faculty allowed me to build my skills as a school counselor. Graduating the program, I was confident in crisis and emergency procedures within a school setting, and my role as a school counselor.

Q2. In what ways do you believe you were not prepared?

There needed to be a more specialized class that was school counseling-specific, preparing for principal/teacher relationships/dynamics and the administrative part of the school counseling side. Also, how to deal with parents of students. While there are some similarities with clinical mental health, there are many other aspects involved with an almost daily interaction with one or more parent(s).

I do not believe any program (graduate or undergraduate) within education can ever "fully" prepare a student. However, I felt confident in my role, in the education I received, and the network of counselors and faculty I was able to build through the program.

