



SchoolCounseling@Denver 2019-2020 Annual Report

The following report summarizes assessment activities of the SchoolCounseling@Denver program during the past academic year. Furthermore, program improvements and assessment focus for the coming academic year are also discussed.

Assessment Narrative

Assessment Plan Development

The SchoolCounseling@Denver program launched in autumn 2019 and in addition to collecting, reviewing, and using some preliminary and ad hoc assessment data, the program has also taken the past year to thoughtfully refine assessment practices. Faculty and staff worked together to identify necessary data collection processes, establish formal venues to both review and use assessment data, and determine ways to share assessment data and program improvements efforts with our larger community. The SchoolCounseling@Denver assessment plan can be found on the Morgridge College of Education website.

Past Year Program Improvements

The SchoolCounseling@Denver program made the following program improvements during the 2019-2020 academic year.

Remediation Process – Prior to this program beginning, several stakeholders collaborated and developed remediation policies and program expectations for students. Throughout this inaugural year, these policies and procedures were refined for clarity and timeliness. These changes included the creation of programmatic forms and a more streamline process of gathering faculty feedback and input on a student’s remedial process.

Course Iteration Process – In order to collect suggestions to improve all courses, our Program Director developed a Course Iteration Suggestion Survey that both course leads and section instructors can access to submit their feedback. This survey is pertinent for section instructors who wish to document feedback to the Course Lead. From there, Course Leads compile the feedback for their course(s) and implement any necessary changes for the subsequent quarter.

Coursework Plan – In order to improve efficiency and obtain an accurate plan of study for each student, the coursework plan form was transitioned to an online format that reduces error and automates the approval and tracking processes.

Technology Improvements – Based on data collected by our learning partner, 2U, regarding technology, the Program addressed issues with Zoom, recording, and accessing personal meeting rooms.

Development of the Course Lead Policy – As the student enrollment grew and multiple sections of courses were offered, it was determined that faculty needed guidance in relation to the responsibilities of a Course Lead. The Program Director, in collaboration with faculty, the MCE Associate Dean, and the Library and Information Science Program Director, developed policies for all Course Leads. By establishing clear tasks and expectations, all faculty associated with the SchoolCounseling@Denver program (e.g., core faculty, non-core/adjunct faculty) have better communications processes and input.

Attendance & Participation Assignment – In efforts to motivate student engagement and assess for learning, the faculty created an Attendance and Participation (A&P) assignment that would be consistent in all courses. Initially, this assignment involved students writing short reflection papers during weeks five and ten of the quarter. After receiving student feedback informally and in course evaluations, the faculty decided this process of evaluating student attendance and participation was redundant and ineffective. Beginning in the winter 2020 quarter, this assignment was condensed and revised to be more streamlined and specific to each class.

Student Portfolio Requirement – Review of Annual Student Review data indicated that almost 75% of students reviewed had not built/updated their Portfolio as suggested by the faculty. In response, the Course Lead for Orientation to Professional Counseling & Ethical practice, during which course the Portfolio Requirement is formally introduced, added a component to the course which will require students to set up their individual Portfolio prior to the end of the course.

Preliminary / Ad Hoc Assessment Data

Data Collection

Faculty and staff developed multiple points of data collection each quarter in various courses to assess student development and performance as well as the program in general.

In the program's initial year (2019-2020), the following data were collected and reviewed:

- Academic performance (e.g., course grades, cumulative GPA)
- Demonstration of the program's professional dispositions
- University course evaluations
- Learning partner (2U) end of term surveys

In the future, additional assessments will be disseminated to further assess students' clinical development (e.g., placement evaluations) and reflect on student growth and school counselor competence (e.g., Alumni Survey and Employer Survey). Moreover, the Program will be reviewing Key Performance Indicator data (e.g., assessments of student learning). The faculty meet once a year for a Program Learning Outcome Retreat to discuss the data collected over the academic year, determine program strengths, and strategize to address programmatic improvements.

Results

The following provides a summary of findings from the assessment data noted above.

Professional Dispositions

Data reflected 1) faculty assessment of students enrolled in Basic Counseling Techniques during the spring 2020 quarter and 2) select students' self-assessment during the summer 2020 annual student review process. It should be noted that the students assessed in either term were not the same group of students.

- Faculty rated students between “developing” and “proficient” across the dispositions. Students were rated highest on “self-awareness” and lowest on “cultural humility.”
- Students rated themselves between “development” and “proficient” across all dispositions. Students rated themselves highest on “ethical behavior” and lowest on “cultural humility.”
- No students received a rating of “needs improvement” from faculty on any disposition.

Annual Student Review

Data reflected students who began the program during either a fall or winter term and were reviewed during the summer 2020 as part of the annual student review process. As part of the annual student review process, students are asked to complete a survey. For the summer 2020 annual student review, 21 out of 30 students completed the survey (response rate: 70%).

- The vast majority of students were rated as “satisfactory” in all three areas: academic status, clinical development, and professional dispositions.
 - Regarding academic status, almost three-quarters of students had not updated their Portfolio.
- Of students who responded to the Annual Student Review students, few students had joined a counseling related professional organization (76% indicating no membership).
 - More than half (57%) of students had engaged in professional and/or community activities during the past year (e.g., published, presented, volunteered).

University Course Evaluations

Data reflected evaluations from the autumn 2019 to spring 2020 quarters.

- With the exception of Research Methods and Program Evaluation, the majority of students agreed that they learned a great deal in the course and overall, felt the course was excellent. This general satisfaction with courses was also found to be consistent across terms.
- Regarding the Research Methods and Program Evaluation course, students were less likely to agree that they learned a great deal or overall, felt the course to be excellent. The majority of students also strongly agreed that this course was challenging (100% in both the winter 2020 and spring 2020 quarters).

Learning Partner End of Term Survey

Data reflects evaluations from the autumn 2019 to spring 2020 quarters.

- Students were generally satisfied with the program overall and their experiences with the Student Success team. Satisfaction with technology was low in autumn 2019, but has steadily increased.

- With the expectation of Research Methods and Program Evaluation, students were generally satisfied with asynchronous course content, live sessions, and the course overall. This general satisfaction with courses was also found to be consistent across terms.
- Regarding the Research Methods and Program Evaluation course, satisfaction was low across these three areas. However, satisfaction appeared to have slightly increased between the winter 2020 and spring 2020 quarters.

Interpretation

The SchoolCounseling@Denver program used the aforementioned data to make the following insights about student learning and the program.

Professional Dispositions

Upon reviewing the student self-ratings completed in the annual student review and faculty professional disposition ratings of students, it was determined that student self-ratings were often higher than faculty ratings, except for the Cultural Humility disposition. The faculty are still uncertain about the students' tendencies to rate themselves higher, but noticed that students were aware of their limited competence in multiculturalism and perceived willingness to acknowledge more growth in this area.

Annual Student Review

After reviewing the data associated with the annual student review, the faculty learned several things. First, the faculty recognized that many students had not begun to develop their Portfolio, a graduation requirement for this program. Further, the faculty noticed that students are not as active in professional counseling organizations as hoped for, which could be a result of students' limited awareness of available organizations and/or the fact that the surveyed students were all early in the program (i.e., matriculated < 1 academic year).

University Course Evaluations

As the faculty reviewed and discussed the course-related questions included in the university course evaluations, we noticed that the aggregated scores for the Research Methods and Program Evaluation course were lower than the other courses. The faculty recognized that students may have hesitation and apprehension prior to taking this course due to the content covered and considered the student's personal view towards this course as a factor affecting their evaluation.

Learning Partner End of Term Survey

Similar to the university course evaluations, students' ratings of the Research Methods and Program Evaluation course were lower compared to other courses indicating students are having difficulties learning the material in this course and that revisions to the course are necessary. Further, the faculty need to revisit how students distinguish their faculty advisor from their student success advisor when they are in need of support or have programmatic questions.

Program Highlights

The SchoolCounseling@Denver program has many things to be proud of during the inaugural year. A few of these accomplishments are described below.

Successful Launch - The SchoolCounseling@Denver program officially launched in autumn 2019 after much time of planning, hiring new faculty, and securing our relationship with learning partner, 2U. As the academic year progressed, the program's cohorts grew each quarter.

Teaching & Course Development - Prior to the program launching, faculty began to develop program courses in conjunction with our learning partner, 2U. Course development continued throughout the 2019-2020 academic year as more faculty assisted with developing the 18 courses for this program. Each course was developed with attention to counseling literature and considerations of the accreditation (e.g., Colorado Department of Education, Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs) and professional (e.g., American School Counselor Association National Model) competencies and standards.

Assessment Plan – The SchoolCounseling@Denver program is proud to have developed a solid foundation for assessment and in turn, continuous program improvement.

Self-Study Writing – The SchoolCounseling@Denver program will be applying for accreditation through the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) in autumn 2020. Faculty and staff have spent the full 2019-2020 academic year, as well as many months prior, preparing a self-study document and needed evidence artifacts. Their efforts, in addition to other responsibilities, cannot go unrecognized.

COESA Award - For the first time, online students were eligible to receive the Morgridge College of Education Student Association (COESA) Award. This year, the faculty selected an outstanding school counseling student who embodies the program's mission and displays great potential as a future school counselor.

Student Involvement – Through collaboration with faculty and students within the Counseling Psychology Department, structures have been developed and implemented for the 2020-2021 AY to actively include online students in traditionally on-ground activities. Examples include holding positions in the Social Justice Cooperative and serving their peers as departmental Student Representatives for the SchoolCounseling@Denver program.

Faculty Scholarship / Service - In addition to the faculty's commitment to teaching, their scholarship and service accomplishments continue to excel over the academic year. Each core faculty member shared their research and insights to the counseling profession through publications, webinars, and conference presentations. In addition, faculty members were involved in several professional counseling associations and held many leadership roles in those capacities.

Future Considerations

Program Improvements

The SchoolCounseling@Denver program will be focused on the following program improvements during the 2020-2021 academic year.

Enhance the Faculty Advising Protocol – To continue supporting students and ensure that students know program requirements and expectations, the faculty will revise the current advising protocol for initial and subsequent advising meetings. By revising this plan, faculty advisors will disseminate consistent and accurate program information to all students, including their Portfolio requirement and faculty and student success advisor roles.

Improvements to Research Methods and Program Evaluation Course – With the support and input from all faculty, the Course Lead of the Research Methods and Program Evaluation course will meet regularly with an Instructional Designer throughout the academic year to change aspects of the asynchronous and synchronous components of this course. These changes will be based on student feedback (e.g., university course evaluations, learning partner end of term survey) and faculty insight. As changes are made, the Course Lead and Section Instructors will solicit student feedback and adjust as needed.

Begin Revising Program Mission – As a result of review of all data points and reflecting on the inaugural year of this program, it was decided that the faculty will begin to revisit the current program mission. Since the program mission was developed, additional faculty, staff, and students have joined the program, so we find it crucial to include many voices in this long-term revision process. Further, we will discuss aligning the program mission to our professional dispositions and program learning outcomes.

Revisit Rigor of Admissions Process – Now that the program has progressed through one academic year, the faculty want to revisit the admission selection process. In these conversations, faculty will work alongside the College's admission staff members to ensure the admission process promotes rigor and equity, while aligning with our program mission and expectations.

Establish Advisory Council – As we continue to implement assessment processes and collect essential data related to the program, we want to maintain transparency and collaborate with several stakeholders involved with this program. As a result, we will establish an advisory council comprised of faculty, staff, alumni, and community partners. This council will review our programmatic assessments, data collected throughout each academic year, and recommendations for program improvements.

Next Year's Program Learning Outcome Focus

The SchoolCounseling@Denver program will focus on the following learning outcomes in the 2020-2021 academic year.

Social & Cultural Diversity: Students will demonstrate multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills necessary for competency in working with a diverse population.

Research and Program Evaluation: Students will demonstrate an understanding of research methods to inform evidence-based practice.

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