

## **SchoolCounseling@Denver 2022-2023 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 data is formally reviewed by program faculty and staff during an annual Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) Retreat and annually with external partners that are members of the [SchoolCounseling@Denver Advisory Council](#). Feedback from both groups was used to draft this report.

### **Past Year Program Improvements**

The SchoolCounseling@Denver program made the following program improvements during the 2022-2023 academic year.

**Program Characteristics Data Updates** – Program added gender identity as another demographic to the Annual Assessment Data Report. The Program also examined retention rates by various demographics such as legal sex, gender, race/ethnicity, age, plan of study, first term GPA, undergraduate GPA, admissions rubric ratings, and comp exam attempts and results.

**Site Supervisor Survey** – The program added open-ended questions to ask respondents to indicate “why” they rated various professional dispositions and learning outcomes as “less important.”

**Hourly Log Review** – Updated the hourly log to limit the number of hours students can log prior to the start of the fall quarter for either Practicum or Internship (I & II). Also, screening questions were added to the survey to ensure that students received approval from the Practicum & Internship Coordinator before logging hours prior to the fall quarter. Lastly, tutorials were recorded for students to demonstrate how to complete the hourly log.

**Pre-Practicum Experience** – The Program created a PowerPoint presentation and other asynchronous materials that were incorporated into the Student Orientation and Roles & Responsibilities course. These changes will be effective for new students starting in fall 2023 and beyond.

**Lifespan Course Updates** – The Program conducted an item level analysis of the final exam in the Lifespan Development course. Informed by response rates and trends, changes were made to exam questions to improve clarity or changes were made to course content to better prepare students in the relevant content area(s).

**Comprehensive Exam Preparation** – The Program created a video related to the comprehensive exam that was added to the Program’s Digication webpage and incorporated into the exam sign-up process.

**Crisis Content Augmentation** – Content related to crises in schools was more intentionally integrated across the Program curriculum by surveying faculty to understand existing crisis content within the curriculum, then adding related resources to the Program’s Digication page, collaborating with faculty to include related content earlier in the program, and updating the definition of crisis within evaluation materials, toward ensuring a mutual understanding of the construct.

**Student Connectedness** – The Program surveyed students to gather additional feedback regarding “connectedness.” Tips for new students to increase connectedness were added to the Program’s Digication page. Additionally, student representatives have organized events for students; surveying students about their interest and engagement in these events. Lastly, students were surveyed regarding their unique talents, interests, passions, and abilities with students being featured in Student Spotlights articles.

**Advisory Council Revamp** – The Program collected feedback from current Advisory Council members regarding strengths and possible areas for improvement.

## 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.

During the 2022-2023 academic year, the following data were collected and reviewed:

- Program Characteristics (e.g., applicant, student, and graduate demographics, faculty demographics, retention / attrition / graduation rates)
- Key Performance Indicators (e.g., specific course assignment grades / rubrics)
- Annual Student Review (e.g., student self-evaluation on professional dispositions and learning outcomes)
- Professional Dispositions Assessment
- Practicum & Internship Evaluations
- Practicum & Internship Hourly Log
- Comprehensive Exam
- University Course Evaluations
- Course Grades
- Site Supervisor Satisfaction Survey
- Student Placement Survey
- Program Satisfaction Survey
- Graduate Survey
- Alumni Survey
- Employer Survey

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.

#### *Program Characteristics*

Data reviewed for this domain included demographics such as race/ethnicity, legal sex, gender designation, and age for admitted students, enrolled students, and graduates. Faculty demographic data was also reviewed and included race/ethnicity and legal sex. Lastly, retention, attrition, and graduation rates for both students and faculty were provided.

#### Main Findings

- Incoming GPA appears to be the main reason applicants are denied admission to the program.
- SchoolCounseling@Denver students tend to identify as white, female, and between the ages of 24 and 30.
- First year retention rates averaged around 80% (74% - 2019-20 cohort; 86% - 2020-21 cohort; 82% - 2021-22 cohort) with minimal difference between students by race/ethnicity (students of color vs white students).
- As of 2022-23, 57% of SchoolCounseling@Denver faculty are persons of color and 71% are female.

### ***Program Learning Outcomes***

**2022-2023 PLOs of Focus.** During the Program Learning Outcomes Retreat in September 2022, faculty and staff identified one learning outcome on which to focus during the 2022-23 academic year. The learning outcome is identified below. Key Performance Indicators (KPI) measuring student learning in this area included course assignments, comprehensive exam sub-scores, and practicum & internship evaluation competency domain ratings. The timeframe of data presented generally reflects the most recent two years; not all KPIs had data for the entire timeframe.

#### Learning Outcomes

- **Assessment and Treatment Planning** - Students demonstrate the ability to identify effective assessment strategies to facilitate treatment planning.

#### Main Findings

- Assessment and Treatment Planning
  - 100% of students met expectations on the Assessment Report (course assignment) KPI.
  - 100% of students met expectations on the ASCP: Video Reflection (course assignment) KPI.
  - 96% of students met expectations on the Case Study & Intervention Plan (course assignment) KPI.
  - 70% of students met expectations on the comprehensive exam Appraisal, Research, and Program Evaluation sub-section KPI on their first attempt; 98% met expectations by the third attempt.
  - Between 97% and 100% of students met expectations on the Assessment & Case Conceptualization Domain within the Practicum and Internship Evaluation (100% - Practicum, 97% - Internship I, 100% - Internship II).

**General PLO Review.** Data reviewed for this domain included 1) comprehensive exam results; 2) student self-assessment of learning outcome proficiency during the annual review process (optional response); and 3) site supervisor assessment of learning outcome relevance (optional response; 55% response rate).

#### Main Findings

- 28% of students passed the comprehensive exam on their first attempt; 96% passed by the third attempt (data from winter 2020 to spring 2023).
- Students were less likely to pass the following exam sections on their first attempt: Human Growth and Development (58%), Research Methods (60%), and Assessment (70%).
- Students generally self-assessed as “proficient” across most learning outcomes as part of their first annual review; slightly less students rated themselves as “proficient” for the following learning outcomes: social and cultural diversity (46%), school counseling focus (43%), career development (40%), and assessment and treatment planning (30%).
  - Rating percentages shifted from “proficient” to “advanced” between their first and second annual review.
- Half of site supervisors (54%) reported that “research and program evaluation” was “important” or “very important” learning outcomes.

### ***Professional Dispositions***

Data reviewed for this domain included 1) faculty assessment of students enrolled in Basic Counseling Techniques, Diversity, Practicum, Internship I, and Internship II; 2) student self-assessment during annual review process (response optional); and 3) site supervisor assessment of professional disposition relevance (response optional; 55% response rate).

#### Main Findings

- At least 95% of students across all courses and dispositions met expectations.
- Two ratings of “needs improvement” were given during the timeframe analyzed for “Ethical Behavior.” One rating of “needs improvement” was given for “Professional Behavior.” One rating of “needs improvement” was given for Cultural Humility.

- Students generally self-assessed as “proficient” across all Professional Dispositions as part of their first annual review.
  - Rating percentages shifted from “proficient” to “advanced” between their first and second annual review.
- At least 80% of site supervisors found all Professional Dispositions as “important” or “very important.”

### ***Clinical Experience***

Data reviewed for this domain included 1) practicum and internship evaluations; 2) hourly log data; 3) site supervisor assessment of clinical experience (optional response; 55% response rate); and 4) student assessment of clinical experience (optional response; 90% response rate).

#### Main Findings

- The percentage of “meets expectations” varied across experiential courses:
  - At least 98% of students met expectations across all competency domains during Practicum.
  - At least 93% of students met expectations across all competency domains during Internship I.
  - At least 99% of students met expectations across all competency domains during Internship II.
- 92% of site supervisors were generally “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their experience partnering with the Program.
  - 92% of site supervisors agreed that SchoolCounseling@Denver faculty “were proactive in sharing materials.” 64% agreed that faculty “provided site supervisors with the resources when asked.”
- 895% of students were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their site supervisors; 94% were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their placement site.
  - At least 80% of students reported that site supervisors gave them experience in all areas noted (e.g., apply coursework, counseling skills, indirect student services, instruction).
  - At least 84% of students responded that their site “created a supportive environment” and “school staff valued the school counseling program at the school.”

### ***Curriculum***

Data reviewed for this domain included 1) course grade pass rates; and 2) course evaluations.

#### Main Findings

- Course grade pass rates range between 92% and 100% between fall 2019 and spring 2023.
- For most courses, students agreed that they learned a great deal in a course, felt that the course was excellent, and found the course challenging.

### ***General Program Health***

Data reviewed for this domain included 1) program satisfaction survey (response optional), 2) graduate survey (response optional; 57% response rate), 3) alumni survey (response option, 63% response rate), and 4) employer survey (response optional, 25% response rate). It should be noted that only one employer responded to the employer survey and data from this survey will not be provided.

#### Main Findings

- Overall Satisfaction:
  - 92% of **current students** were satisfied overall with the program and 87% were likely to recommend the program to others.
  - 95% of **recent graduates** were satisfied overall with the program and 91% were likely to recommend the program to others.
  - 100% of **alumni one to three years post-graduation** were satisfied with the program and likely to recommend the program to others.
- Regarding **program resource materials**, students were most satisfied with coursework plans (91% responding

“satisfied” or “very satisfied”) and least satisfied with the Advising Reference Sheet (64% responding “satisfied” or “very satisfied”).

- Regarding **program and university learning resources**, students were most satisfied with the DU library (94% responding “satisfied” or “very satisfied”) and least satisfied with the DU Disability Services Program (67% responding “satisfied” or “very satisfied”).
- Students were mostly satisfied with their **faculty advisor** as it relates to quality of advisement, availability, responsiveness, and quality feedback (range of “satisfied” or “very satisfied” responses from 73% to 75%).
- Students were also satisfied with **school counseling faculty** as a whole as it relates to teaching, availability, responsiveness, and quality feedback (range of “satisfied” or “very satisfied” responses from 88% to 95%).
- Students felt most connected to other students in the program (84% responding “connected” or “very connected”) and least connected to program alumni (12% responding “connected” or “very connected”). It should be noted that the program’s first graduate cohort occurred in June 2021.
- At the time of graduation, 33% of students had yet to find employment as a school counselor and were still looking; of that remaining 67%, 59% had found employment as a school counselor and 8% were not looking for employment as a school counselor.

### Interpretation

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

### Program Characteristics

Program characteristics were not interpreted, but they were analyzed throughout this process. See *Program Characteristics* subsection in the preceding *Results* section for data and refer to associated action item(s) in the *Program Improvements* subsection of the *Future Considerations* section at the end of this document.

### Program Learning Outcomes

**Assessment and Treatment Planning.** The Program is encouraged by student performance on the course based KPIs related to this area. However, there is concern regarding the relationship between student performance on course based KPIs and students’ ability to pass the Assessment section of the comprehensive exam on their first try (i.e., a rate of 70% of students). Given comprehensive exam data overall following a similar trend, the Program will be revisiting the use of the CPCE as the initial comprehensive exam that students complete.

### Professional Dispositions

Professional dispositions ratings by faculty and students alike are consistently favorable with little variability. The revision and dissemination of an updated rubric did not appear to have an impact, in any direction, on assessment ratings since implementation. The faculty are curious to better understand how well professional dispositions are being assessed and how the process might benefit from revision.

### Clinical Experience

The faculty is pleased with the scores of students meeting expectations across all competency domains in Practicum (at least 98%), Internship I (at least 96%), and Internship II (at least 99%). The Program also made changes to the Practicum & Internship Evaluation of Student Performance, reducing the length of the end-of-term evaluation. The number of open-ended comments referencing dissatisfaction with the length of this evaluation decreased (or were non-existent) when collected via the Site Supervisor Satisfaction Survey. In response to Survey feedback from site supervisors, the Program plans to offer professional development regarding how School Counselors in Training can help to improve student achievement, attendance, and behavior at their placement sites. Additionally, faculty noted that “professional development needs” data collected via the Site Supervisor Satisfaction survey might not be accurately capturing PD needs. The Program may update this section of the survey to better understand the development that site supervisors are receiving from their own schools / districts and thus update the professional development options suggested within the Survey.

## Curriculum

Assessment of course grade pass rates (between 92%-100%) and course evaluations suggests that students agree that courses are challenging and that they learn a great deal throughout the curriculum. For courses with which students appeared to struggle in past years, pass rates generally improved in the 2022-23 academic year. Examples of improvement in outcomes are listed below.

- COUN 4620: Counseling Theory. Pass rates for the *Counseling Theory* course increased from 93% in 2021-22 to 98% in 2022-23.
- COUN 4630: Research Methods & Program Evaluation. Pass rates for the *Research Methods and Program Evaluation* course increased from 92% in 2021-22 to 100% in 2022-23. Changes were implemented to the assignments and asynchronous work in this course to provide students with more checkpoints and feedback to help foster success. Trends in course evaluation data showed improvement for the *Research Methods and Program Evaluation* course with students more likely to agree “this is an excellent course” year-over-year since 2020-21.
- COUN 4800: Career Counseling. Student perceptions of satisfaction, learning, and rigor regarding the *Career Counseling* course have consistently increased since 2020-21.

## General Program Health

Program faculty and staff are pleased with the program’s general health. Students have indicated that they are generally satisfied with the program, with 92% of Program Satisfaction Survey respondents indicating that they were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied.” Additionally, 96% of respondents indicated that they “agree” or “strongly agree” that the program learning outcomes are well-defined, 94% of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that the program is teaching to its mission, 95% of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that they would consider the program to be an inclusive learning community, and 92% of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that program faculty are invested in their success.

During the 2022-23 academic year, the Program focused efforts on improving student connectedness with one another. Program Satisfaction Survey results regarding feelings of connectedness to fellow students increased from 46% of respondents indicating feeling “connected” or “very connected” to fellow students in 2021-2022 to 67% of respondents in 2022-2023.

The program was able to identify opportunities for improvement of general program health. When students were asked if they sought advisement from a faculty member other than their faculty advisor, 58% of respondents indicated doing so. The Program will focus improvement efforts on identifying expectations, best practices, and program mechanisms for accountability related to all domains of the faculty role, with particular emphasis on faculty advising and student assignment feedback.

### Program Highlights

The SchoolCounseling@Denver program has many things to be proud of based on the 2022-2023 academic year. A few of these accomplishments are described below.

**Faculty Leadership** – Throughout the 2022-2023 academic year, core faculty served in leadership positions within more than two dozen professional organizations, such as the *Society for Sexual, Affectional, Intersex, and Gender Expansive Identities*, the *International Association for Resilience and Trauma Counseling*, and the *Association for Death Education and Counseling*.

**Faculty Scholarship** – Core faculty scholarship over the past academic year has included involvement in over 30 scholarly publications and presentations.

**Program Degree Conferrals** – The Program conferred 55 School Counseling MA degrees between November 2022, March 2023, June 2023, and August 2023, a similar number to last year’s graduating class of 52 students. Many of these graduates traveled to Denver from across the country to attend the on-campus Commencement ceremony to celebrate their accomplishments.

**Program Alumni Credentialing Exam Pass Rates** – Program Alumni continue to achieve success on post-graduate credentialing examinations, with a pass rate of 100%.

## Future Considerations

### Program Improvements

Considering the data reviewed, the SchoolCounseling@Denver program will be focused on the following program improvements during the 2023-2024 academic year.

**Alternative Comprehensive Exam** – The Program will determine an appropriate alternative to the CPCE exam, as it is currently used for the first attempt at the Program’s comprehensive exam, and detail steps to implement the alternative.

**Professional Dispositions Rating Scale** – The Program will review the response scale used when assessing professional dispositions and decide whether to align with Practicum and Internship Evaluation response scale.

**Faculty Expectations & Best Practices** – The program will identify expectations, best practices, and program mechanisms for accountability related to all domains of the faculty role, with particular emphasis on faculty advising and student assignment feedback.

**Learning Outcomes & KPI Review** – The Program will review current learning outcomes and associated Key Performance Indicators due to updated CACREP accreditation standards.

### Next Year’s Program Learning Outcome Focus

Given the adoption of updated accreditation standards by CACREP, the SchoolCounseling@Denver program will focus program learning outcome efforts during the 2023-24 academic year on reviewing program learning outcomes and related Key Performance Indicators to ensure the new accreditation standards are met.

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