

SchoolCounseling@Denver 2023-2024 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 applicable stakeholders. Feedback from all groups was used to draft this report.

Past Year Program Improvements

The SchoolCounseling@Denver program made the following program improvements during the 2023-2024 academic year.

Advising Improvement – The faculty review current advising practices and streamlined expectations and institutional resources to ensure students receive consistent information. Group advising meetings were held throughout the year to reach more students and provide program updates and announcements.

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 2023-2024 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; 78% - 2022-23) with minimal difference between students by race/ethnicity (students of color vs white students).
- As of 2023-24, 43% of SchoolCounseling@Denver faculty are persons of color and 83% are female.

Program Learning Outcomes

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

- 27% of students passed the comprehensive exam on their first attempt; 83% passed by the third attempt (data from winter 2020 to winter 2024).
- Students were less likely to pass the following exam sections on their first attempt: Human Growth and Development (58%), Research Methods (61%), and Assessment (64%).
- 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 (58%) 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 Counseling Techniques, Social & Cultural 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.
- Within the Counseling Techniques course, a “needs improvement” rating was given for the Ethical Behavior disposition. Additionally, within the Social & Cultural Diversity course, a “needs improvement” rating was given for the Cultural Humility disposition.
- 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.
 - 91% of site supervisors agreed that SchoolCounseling@Denver faculty “were proactive in sharing materials.” 68% agreed that faculty “provided site supervisors with the resources when asked.”
- 89% of students were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their site supervisors; 93% 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 80% 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, 6% 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:
 - 91% 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 92% 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 (93% 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 (“satisfied” or “very satisfied” on average of 74%)
- 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.
- During the final term prior to graduation, 34% of students had not yet found employment as a school counselor and were still looking. Of the remaining 66%, 57% had found employment as a school counselor and 9% 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

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%). 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. In addition, the program will now be offering continuing education credits for the PDs offered to site supervisors and tracking engagement with PDs.

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 2023-24 academic year. Examples of improvement in outcomes are listed below.

- COUN 4610: Counseling Techniques. Pass rates for the *Counseling Techniques* course increased from 97% in 2022-23 to 100% in 2023-24.
- COUN 4840: Educational Strategies & Policies. Pass rates for *Educational Strategies & Policies* course increased from 97% in 2022-23 to 100% in 2023-24.

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 91% of Program Satisfaction Survey respondents indicating that they were



either “satisfied” or “very satisfied.” Additionally, 97% of respondents indicated that they “agree” or “strongly agree” that the program learning outcomes are well-defined, 93% of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that the program is teaching to its mission, 93% 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 2023-24 academic year, the Program focused efforts on improving enhancing advising protocols and responsiveness from faculty advisors. In the 2022-23 academic year 58% of respondents indicated they sought advisement from a faculty member other than their faculty advisor. For the 2023-24 academic year, only 46% of respondents indicated doing so.

The program was able to identify opportunities for improvement of general program health. When reviewing the open-ended comments regarding program improvements, respondents indicated they would like more support during field placement and more visibility from the program’s student representatives.

Program Highlights

The SchoolCounseling@Denver program has many things to be proud of based on the 2023-2024 academic year. A few of these accomplishments are described below.

Faculty Leadership – Throughout the 2023-2024 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 *Association for Death Education and Counseling*, and the *American School Counselor Association*.

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

Program Degree Conferrals – The Program conferred 34 School Counseling MA degrees between November 2023, March 2024, June 2024, and August 2024. Many of these graduates traveled to Denver from across the country to attend the on-campus Commencement ceremony and program end-of-the year celebration to recognize their accomplishments.

Program Alumni Credentialing Exam Pass Rates – Program Alumni continue to achieve success on post-graduate credentialing examinations, with a pass rate of 95%.

Future Considerations

Program Improvements

Considering the data reviewed, the SchoolCounseling@Denver program will be focused on the following program improvements during the 2024-2025 academic year.

Alternative Comprehensive Exam – The Program will continue with transitioning to an in-house comprehensive exam, with an anticipation formal launch in Summer 2025.

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 2024-25 academic year on reviewing program learning outcomes and related Key Performance Indicators to ensure the new accreditation standards are met.

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