NCU - Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Annual Report for Stakeholders and the Public

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NCU-CMHC Annual Report for Stakeholders and the Public

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CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING
YEARLY ASSESSMENT REPORT

I. Introduction
a. Mission of the University
   NCU is a university that fosters wisdom, faith and service through excellent academic programs within a Christ-centered community.

b. Mission of the Program
   The mission of the NCU Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program is to prepare culturally competent mental health counselors who integrate current, evidence-based interventions and techniques with clients to foster their wellness and relationships.

c. Program Objectives
   Upon completion of the NCU Masters of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling candidates will be able to:
   1. Develop and exhibit a professional identity as a counselor, as evidenced by membership in relevant professional organizations, active preparation for licensure, and obtaining relevant counseling credentials.
   2. Verbalize a personal theoretical orientation to counseling.
   3. Conduct a comprehensive mental health assessment including a DSM diagnosis as appropriate.
   4. Formulate an evidence-based treatment plan for counseling.
   5. Deliver supervised counseling services to individuals and groups and document a minimum of 700 clock hours (280 direct hours) of supervised clinical experience.
   6. Model professional ethical practices and adherence to legal requirements for counselors.
   7. Demonstrate awareness of social, spiritual, and cultural issues impacting clients, and integrate that awareness into culturally competent counseling practice.

II. Program Faculty 2015-2016
a. New Faculty
   The program hired three new faculty members in 2015-2016.

   Dr. Michelle Cox (August 2015 start) received her PhD in Human Development & Family Studies with minors in Counseling and Gerontology from Oregon State University (2008). She was Counselor Education Faculty at George Fox University from 2006-2012. She is a frequent presenter at the Oregon Counseling Association Annual
Conferences and provides the required 30-hour Supervisor Training for many Oregon counselors.

**Dr. Marilyn Montgomery** (August 2015 start) has taught in several CACREP programs since attaining her PhD in 1995, including programs at Texas Tech University, Florida International University, Florida Atlantic University, and Capella University. She is an active scholar, author, and presenter at counseling conferences.

**Dr. Amanda Brookshear** (January 2016 start) is a recent graduate of the CACREP accredited PhD in Counselor Education program at Old Dominion University. She is active in several counseling divisions and has a growing vitae of presentations and publications.

Each of our new faculty are National Certified Counselors (NCC), a designation granted by the National Board of Certified Counselors.

b. **Continuing Faculty**

**Dr. Gene James** continues as the Program Director and Dean of the School of Education and Counseling. He received his PhD from Oregon State University in 2007. **Dr. Paula Belcher**, Clinical Faculty, was an original founder of the program; she received her PhD from the University of Oregon in Counseling Psychology (1995).

**Dr. Abraham Cázares-Cervantes** and **Dr. Johnny Lake** continue as affiliated faculty in the School of Education and Counseling.

### III. Studies of Program Graduates (Alumni)

a. **Alumni Survey – Graduate Perceptions, Employment, Licensure**

In Spring 2015, there were 11 graduates from the program. These alumni were invited to participate in a survey. Of those responding, the majority (77%) indicated that they were working as a counselor, and most (67%) were hired in their first counseling job prior to graduation. All those not hired at that time (33%) were hired as a counselor within 6 months or less after graduation.

Most of the alumni (78%) feel confident or very confident in their ability as a counselor, overall. One graduate had taken the licensure exam for counselors and had passed it. Most of the others plan to take a licensure exam this year (67%).

All were satisfied (45%) or very satisfied (55%) that their M.A. in Counseling helped them to achieve their career goals. The majority (89%) were satisfied that they obtained a realistic view of the counseling field from the NCU-CMHC program.
b. Graduation Rate
Of those students who entered in Fall 2011 or Fall 2012, and who enrolled in the 2nd semester of their program, one is a current student, one was dismissed for academic reasons, and six withdrew. A total of 77% of those entering the program in Fall 2011 or Fall 2012 have graduated.

c. Graduate Characteristics
The average age of our graduates from 2014-2015 was 38. Most (78%) were non-Hispanic White and identified some religious affiliation. Most we were female (81%), and two graduates were veterans.

IV. Studies of Applicants and Current Students
a. Program Applicant Characteristics
The majority of our applicants (based on 2015 program application data) are White Non-Hispanic (85%). The majority are from the Eugene/Springfield area (60%). Most applicants graduated from an Oregon public university (34% of applicants). A small portion graduated from NCU (16%). Most have a Denominational or Non-Denominational religious affiliation (71% of applicants), though many have “other/unknown/no affiliation” (29% of applicants).

b. Current Student Characteristics
In Fall, 2015, 21 admitted students began the CMCH program. Five more admitted students began the program in January, 2016.

The average age of our current students is 39. Most are female (75%), and most indicate that their race is non-Hispanic White (66%). Other student races (totaling 34% of current students) include American Indian/Alaska Native; Hispanic/Latino; Black/African American; Two or more races, and Unknown. Currently, 8% of our students are Veterans. The majority (66%) indicate a religious affiliation, and these affiliations include a diverse array of faiths.

c. Student Satisfaction Survey
NCU distributes the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) each December before the end of term. In 2015, 34 CMHC students (49% of CMHC students invited to participate) completed the survey. Students rate items on a 7-point Likert scale. For importance scores, responses can range from 1 (not important at all) to 7 (very important). For satisfaction scores, responses can range from 1 (not satisfied at all) to 7 (very satisfied).

CMHC faculty extracted student ratings of both importance and satisfaction for 14 items (on a 7-point scale; 7 = very satisfied) related to our program and faculty. Average scores for the 14 items ranged from
neutral to satisfied, with the average score for all items falling in the somewhat satisfied range.

Students expressed the greatest satisfaction for classes are scheduled at times that are convenient to me (6.20). Next highest scores were obtained for faculty are usually available for students by phone, email, or in person (5.89), nearly all faculty are knowledgeable in their field (5.86), and content of courses within my major is valuable (5.81).

Lowest scores (averages between neutral and somewhat satisfied) were obtained for faculty provide timely feedback about my progress (4.13) and I seldom get the run-around when seeking information at this institution (4.62). These results highlight areas where improvements will be targeted; see Program Modifications (Section VII) below.

V. Studies of Site Supervisors and Sites
a. Feedback from Site Supervisors
Four site supervisors (from the 10 site supervisors contacted) responded to the email invitation that linked them to the Site Supervisor Survey in taskstream, allowing for anonymous submission. The survey was open in December, 2015.

To summarize, site supervisors were positive about the NCU CMHC program graduates they had known. They evaluated students as “very competent” or “competent” in the majority of the eight CACREP Curriculum areas. Strongest areas included Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice and Clinical Skills. Areas where some students were rated as “somewhat competent” included Human Growth and Development and Assessment (DSM-5 and informal).

Results for Helping Relationships showed that 75% (3) of students were “very competent” and 25% (1) was “somewhat competent.” This pattern was similar for Group Work, though half of the raters indicated “no opportunity to observe” this skill.

Importantly, all supervisors indicated that they would recommend the NCU CMHC program to a prospective applicant.

b. Student Evaluations of Fieldwork Sites
NCU currently has established relationships with 22 community sites where our Internship students are placed for their field experiences.

Student evaluations of Field Experience Sites are kept in a notebook in the NCU CMHC Clinic Office. The purpose of its availability is to allow each succeeding cohort to consider information about prospective
sites, contact persons, what was required to apply at those sites, and so forth.

Faculty review this information in order to ascertain those sites that best serve our students and those that might need to be dropped. Faculty also review this information to note whether only students with specific training would be appropriate for the site (e.g., working with client populations with particular disabilities).

VI. Studies of Faculty and Supervisors
   a. Faculty Course Evaluations
      In Fall 2015, six sections of academic courses were taught by core faculty; three were taught by non-core faculty. Students rated faculty on a 25-item 5-point Likert scale (5 = excellent). Averages in each of the four areas for which students evaluate students are as follows: Quality of Course = 4.34; Quality of Delivery = 4.29; Class Environment = 4.55; and Integration of Faith and Learning = 3.90.

      Unfortunately, just over half of students in courses are completing these evaluations. The faculty plan to encourage greater numbers of students to complete these evaluations so that feedback can be used to target continuous improvements.

   b. Clinical Supervisors
      Practicum I supervisors were rated by students in Fall, 2015 on a 29-item 5-point Likert scale (5 = very satisfied). Core faculty’s ratings averaged 4.52; the non-core faculty averaged 4.41. Because more than half of the students completed these evaluations, the faculty concluded that students had found their Practicum I supervision experience to be positive.

VII. Program Modifications
   a. Targeted Improvements
      Based on data from several sources, the faculty plan improvements in the following areas:

      1. Emphasize consistency in communication and application of policies and procedures to increase perceptions of fairness.
      2. Increase the frequency, quality, and amount of feedback to students on their coursework and clinical skills.
      3. Ensure that part-time and new faculty receive support and training for all aspects of teaching at NCU and in CMHC; improve on-boarding processes; retain excellent part-time faculty from year to year.
b. Sustaining Strengths
   Additionally, the faculty plan to do the following in order to sustain their areas of strength:
   1. Hire and retain faculty with strong academic backgrounds and expertise in specialization areas.
   2. Emphasize quality course content in curriculum planning and course design, for online, hybrid, and face-to-face courses.
   3. Continue high availability to students through face-to-face and online meetings as needed; increasing number of meetings per year with assigned faculty advisors.