

**Western Washington University  
School Counseling & Clinical Mental Health Counseling  
Graduate Programs  
Annual Report (2022-2023)**



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## A summary of program evaluation results:

Below, you will find student assessment data addressing the passing rate for the NCE, job placement statistics, demographic and other characteristics of applicants, students, and graduates, aggregate assessment data on student knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions, and the results of our systematic follow-up of graduates for the purposes of program evaluation and modification. We also included a summary of outcomes for our comprehensive exam administered in April of 2023.

Of note:

- **100% of the graduating class of 2023 passed their Comprehensive Examination**
- **100% of our graduates were hired into professional counseling positions within three months of graduation**
- **Both the Clinical Mental Health and School Counseling Programs are now CACREP re-accredited through 2031.**

### Passing Rate for the National Counseling Exam:

For the Spring 2023 testing cycle, WWU had 11 students (out of 12) take the National Counseling Exam (NCE), including 6 Clinical Mental Health Counseling students and 5 School Counseling students. The National Board for Certified Counselors administered the NCE for our students and 90 percent passed the exam (See table below). Of note, 100% of our CMHC cohort passed *and* scored above the national average across all 8 CACREP Core areas, as well as all 6 sections covering ‘Work Behaviors and Domains’.

<u>Cohort</u>	<u>Number of Test-Takers</u>	<u>Passing Number (Percentage)</u>
School Counseling	6	5 (100%)
Clinical Mental Health Counseling	6	6 (100%)

### Passing Rate for the Comprehensive Exam

We created comprehensive exam questions in the following CACREP content areas: Research Methods/Program Evaluation; Career Counseling; Development & Psychopathology; Professional Identity/Professional Practice (by Specialty area). Multicultural considerations were included in several questions. The exam was blinded for review and each question was graded by two counseling faculty members. If the evaluators did not initially agree on a score, a third reader was brought in to read the exam question. Once all the scores were reported to our Comp Exam coordinator, Dr. Brent Mallinckrodt, the whole counseling faculty met to discuss the results and determine pass/fail rates.

<u>Cohort</u>	<u>Passing Number (Percentage)</u>
School Counseling	6/6 (100%)
Clinical Mental Health Counseling	6/6 (100%)

## Graduation Rates for 2021-2023 Cohort:

Our program had a 100% graduation rate for the students admitted in Fall 2021.

Program	Number of Graduates (Spring 2023)
Clinical Mental Health Counseling (n=6)	6 (out of 6)
School Counseling (n=6)	6 (out of 6)

## Job Placement Statistics:

The following table shows a summary of job placement statistics for the 2021 graduating class (see 'Job Placement' documents in annual report evidence folder).

Program	Number of Job Placements
Clinical Mental Health Counseling (n=6)	6 (out of 6)
School Counseling (n=6)	6 (out of 6)

## Demographics of Applicants in 2023

Demographic Category	Cohort	Overall Percentage
Race/Ethnicity	SC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 21 = White (63%)</li> <li>• 4 = Hispanic (12%)</li> <li>• 3 = Black (9%)</li> <li>• 1 = Japanese (3%)</li> <li>• 1 = International (3%)</li> <li>• 1 = Native American/Alaskan Native (3%)</li> <li>• 1 = Multiracial (3%)</li> <li>• 1 = Unknown race (3%)</li> </ul>
	CMHC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 125 = White (72%)</li> <li>• 12 = Mexican (6%)</li> <li>• 11 = Multiracial (~6%)</li> <li>• 5 = Black (~3%)</li> <li>• 5 = Chinese (~3%)</li> <li>• 5 = Did not report (~3%)</li> <li>• 3 = Native American (~2%)</li> <li>• 2 = Korean (~1%)</li> <li>• 2 = Puerto Rican (~1%)</li> <li>• 2 = Filipino (~1%)</li> <li>• 2 = Indian (~1%)</li> </ul>
Gender	SC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25 = Female (76%)</li> <li>• 8 = Male (24%)</li> </ul>
	CMHC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 128 = Female (74%)</li> <li>• 44 = Male (25%)</li> </ul>

## Demographics of Students Admitted in 2023

<b>Demographic Category</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Overall Percentage</b>
Gender	SC	2 (%) = Male 4 (%) = Female
	CMHC	5 (83%) = Female 1 (17%) = Male
Race/Ethnicity	SC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 (50%) = Spanish/Hispanic</li> <li>• 1 (17%) = Native American or Alaskan Native</li> <li>• 1 (17%) = Caucasian/White</li> <li>• 1 (17%) = Black</li> </ul>
	CMHC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 = White (33%)</li> <li>• 1 = Black (17%)</li> <li>• 1 = Vietnamese (17%)</li> <li>• 1 = Filipino (17%)</li> <li>• 1 = Multiracial (17%)</li> </ul>

The overall acceptance rate of applicants into the CMHC program was 3.4% (6/174). Among students of color the acceptance rate was 9.1 % (4/45), whereas for White applicants the acceptance rate was 1.6% (2/125) into the CMHC program. The overall acceptance rate of applicants into the SC program was 18.2% (6/33). Among students of color the acceptance rate was 45.5% (5/11), whereas for White applicants the acceptance rate was 4.8% (1/21) into the SC program.

Thus, for both programs combined, the acceptance rate for students of color was 7.8 times greater than for White students (16.07% vs 2.05%, respectively).

### **Demographics of Graduates in 2023**

<b>Demographic Category</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Overall Percentage</b>
Gender	SC	2 (~ 33%) = Male 4 (~ 66%) = Female
	CMHC	5 (~ 83%) = Female 1 (~ 17%) = Male
Race/Ethnicity	SC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 (~ 16%) = Filipino</li> <li>2 (~ 33%) = Caucasian</li> <li>2 (~ 33%) = Mexican/Chicano</li> <li>1 (~ 16%) = Multiracial</li> </ul>
	CMHC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 (~ 16%) = Japanese</li> <li>2 (~ 33%) = White</li> <li>1 (~ 16%) = International</li> <li>1 (~ 16%) = Filipino</li> <li>1 (~ 16%) = Asian/ Pacific Islander</li> </ul>
English as 2nd Language	SC CMHC	1 (~ 16%) (no data)
<b>Demographic Category</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Overall Percentage</b>

Gender	CMHC & SC	3 (25%) = Male 9 (75%) = Female
Race/Ethnicity	CMHC & SC	9 (~ 75%) = Caucasian 1 (~8.3%) = Native American 1 (~8.3%) = Korean 1 (~8.3%) = Asian/Pacific Islander

## **Systematic follow-up studies of graduates, alumni, site supervisors, and employers:**

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) and School Counseling (SC) graduate programs at Western Washington University (WWU) are committed to both gathering and being reflexive to program evaluation data. In addition to the comprehensive data review that occurs every four years (using 8 surveys to 8 different stakeholders [exiting SC and CMHC students, SC/CMHC alumni, SC/CMHC Employers, and SC/CMHC Site Supervisors], for our annual reports, we distribute exit surveys to our departing students every year. After three communications requesting participation in the exit survey, we had the following participation rates (broken down by cohort):

- CMHC Exit Survey (n = 2/6)
- SC Exit Survey (n = 5/6)

To review this data – along with other key indicators of student success (e.g., dispositions data, key assessment outcome data, etc.) – the faculty meets during the Fall quarter counseling program faculty retreat. Faculty are sent the raw data and a summary of the data in advance of the counseling faculty retreat to help enrich the comprehensive data review and program/curriculum modification process.

## **Summary of Exit Survey Results:**

### **SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM EXIT SURVEY RESULTS:**

#### Student Feedback on Program Objectives and Training (n=5):

Students were asked to rate their satisfaction with the training they received in each of the 5 Program Objectives (POs) on a scale of 1 (totally unsatisfied) to 6 (totally satisfied). Of note, all Program Objectives (POs) were rated as satisfied or higher (Mean = 5.5/6 with higher score meaning greater satisfaction). Highest rated POs were PO2 (Think critically about professional issues and engage in ethical, reflective decision-making) and PO3 (Advocate for equity and social justice and demonstrate self-awareness in developing multicultural competence) with average means of 6.0 (Completely Satisfied). The lowest rated Program Objectives were PO1 (Demonstrate the knowledge and skills outlined in the CACREP Basic and Specialty Standards) and PO4 (Utilize current research and evidence to implement and evaluate effective counseling services and programs) with means of 5.0 (Satisfied). As far as written feedback, respondents

note that the strengths of the School Counseling Program are its strong clinical focus and emphasis on personal growth and self-awareness while working to develop an authentic counseling voice. They also requested more diverse guest speakers and faculty and more training and education in classroom management and systems theory.

#### Student Feedback on Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) (n=5):

Students were asked to rate their satisfaction with their training in each of the 9 Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) on a scale of 1 (totally unsatisfied) to 6 (totally satisfied). The average rating across all SLOs was a 5.47/6 (higher score = greater satisfaction). SLOs 2 (Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice – Understand the counselor’s role as an advocate in a collaborative, interdisciplinary network of human service providers), 3 (Social and Cultural Diversity—Develop an understanding of the cultural and societal influences on human behavior and an awareness of one’s own continuing growth as a culturally-competent counselor), and 7 (Group Counseling- Develop both theoretical and experiential understanding of group dynamics and development, as well as strategies for effective leadership and group counseling facilitation) were rated highest, each with a mean of 6.0/6.0 (Completely Satisfied). SLO4 (Human Growth and Development – Demonstrate knowledge of the biological, familial, social, and environmental factors that affect client development and identify strategies for promoting growth and resilience) was rated the lowest, with an average rating of 4.75 (Satisfied). Again, generally, all SLOs were rated at the satisfied or higher level, with the exception of one respondent who rated SLO4 a 2.0. As far as written feedback, Students appreciate the chance to discuss sensitive topics openly in a supportive setting. They particularly commend the cross-cultural counseling class and the integration of "EISJA" (Equity, Inclusion, Social Justice, and Advocacy) into the theories curriculum. However, they suggest more training on children's psychopathology and its effects on learning, a broader inclusion of non-western healing methods, and changes to the human growth and development class.

#### Student Feedback on School Counseling Specialty Content (n=5):

The students were asked to rate their satisfaction with their training in each of the two SC Specialty Content Areas on a scale of 1 (totally unsatisfied) to 6 (totally satisfied). The average rating across respondents for the SC specialty content was a 5.125/6 (Very Satisfied), with higher scores indicating higher satisfaction. SC Specialty Content 1 (Foundations of School Counseling – Demonstrate an understanding of the essential elements of P- 12 developmental school counseling programs, including the role of the SC in a tiered educational environment (prevention, intervention, and crisis) across domains (career, college readiness, academic and social-emotional) was evaluated by exiting SC respondents and had a mean score of 5.25/6. SC Specialty Content 1 (Evidence Based Counseling Services in the Schools – Develop proficiency in planning, implementing and evaluating the essential elements of a comprehensive, developmental, data-driven school counseling program) had a mean score of 5.0/6. Written feedback indicated areas for improvement in the curriculum. There's a strong demand for a separate course on prevention and intervention, particularly concerning substance use and regulations for minors. There's also a call for more training in Motivational Interviewing (MI) within the techniques or practicum class. Additionally, there's a need to better prepare high

school students for college and to offer practical experience in curriculum development tailored for school counselors.

General Program Characteristics as Rated by SC Students (n=5):

20 general program characteristics were rated on a 3-point scale of Unsatisfied (0), Satisfied (1), and Good to Excellent (2), with an average score of 1.36 (with higher scores indicating higher satisfaction). The highest rated program characteristic were (with an average of 2 (Good/Excellent): The procedures used to evaluate student performance in the program; Library Resources; Computer Labs and Technology. The lowest rated (with an average score of 1, which indicates Satisfied), were academic/professional knowledge gained; Counseling skills gained; availability of faculty mentors; support by faculty for professional development; and the duration of the program.

Student Feedback on Strengths of the School Counseling Program (n=5):

Students reported that the program helped them cultivate an authentic counseling voice, emphasizing personal growth and self-awareness. The program underscores the significance of consultation in the counseling profession, ensuring students recognize the importance of peer and mentor guidance. Participants feel adept in their clinical skills, indicating comprehensive training in therapeutic methods. The benefits of a small cohort are evident, with an emphasis on collaboration, consultation, and a supportive learning atmosphere.

Overall Student Recommendations for the School Counseling Program (n=5):

To improve the program, there's a call to boost diversity and inclusion by recruiting diverse faculty and guest speakers and offering multicultural counseling training. There's a suggestion to add courses centered on school counseling topics. Addressing financial challenges, especially in the second year, by providing scholarships and other financial aid is crucial. Collaborations with Woodring College and other entities for workshops, courses, and internships are also recommended.

<b>CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING PROGRAM:</b>
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Student Feedback on Satisfaction with the Program Objectives (n=2):

Students were asked to rate their satisfaction with the training they received in each of the 5 Program Objectives (POs) on a scale of 1 (totally unsatisfied) to 6 (totally satisfied). Of the two students who responded, the highest rated PO was PO4 (Utilize current research and evidence to implement and evaluate effective counseling services and programs) at 5.5/6. The lowest rated by the two respondents was PO3 (Advocate for equity and social justice and demonstrate self-awareness in developing multicultural competence) at 4/6. The average across the two respondents on all POs was a 4.25/6. Finally, in terms of written feedback, the two respondents from the CMHC side reported wanting more diverse guest speakers and more opportunities to build relationships between the students within the cohort.

Student Feedback on Satisfaction with our 9 Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) (n=2):



Students were asked to rate their satisfaction with their training in each of the 9 Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) on a scale of 1 (totally unsatisfied) to 6 (totally satisfied). The average across all 9 SLOs for the two respondents was a 3.78/6. SLO 1 (Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice – Apply knowledge of professional, legal and ethical standards to practice) and SLO7 (Group Counseling- Develop both theoretical and experiential understanding of group dynamics and development, as well as strategies for effective leadership and group counseling facilitation) were rated the highest with an average rating of 5.5/6. The lowest rated SLO (averaging a 2.0/6) was SLO4 (Human Growth and Development – Demonstrate knowledge of the biological, familial, social, and environmental factors that affect client development and identify strategies for promoting growth and resilience). As far as written feedback, while the student raters mentioned strengths in the areas of ethics and group counseling, they reported wanting a developmental perspective across all counseling courses, more assistance discerning which theory might be a good fit as they learn more and progress through the program, and more specialized training around specific interventions.

Student Feedback on the Two CMHC Specialty Content Areas (n=2):

The students were asked to rate their satisfaction with their training in each of the two CMHC Specialty Content Areas on a scale of 1 (totally unsatisfied) to 6 (totally satisfied). The average across both specialty content areas was a 4.75/6. The highest rated CMHC specialty content area was CMHC Content Area #2 (Demonstrate practical knowledge in the areas of diagnosis, intervention planning and delivery, advocacy, collaboration and consultation) with an average rating of 5/6. CMHC Content Area #1 (Demonstrate understanding of cultural factors that may affect the counselor-client relationship and impact treatment decision-making) was in second with an average rating of 3.5/6. The students did not provide any written feedback to evaluate either CMHC Specialty Content Area.

Student Feedback on the General Strengths of the Program (n=2):

The two students that responded noted that they will take the importance of collaboration between interdisciplinary professionals into their places of employment. They also note appreciating the importance of developing and maintaining meaningful relationships with the program's faculty and staff as a cornerstone for them throughout their careers.

Student Feedback on General Programmatic Improvements (n=2):

The two respondents noted wanting us to focus more on recruiting students and faculty of color. They also suggested a rotating speaker series to help bring in more diverse voices and a need to tailor the curriculum to the student demographics of each cohort. For example, for cohorts which are predominated by people of color, there should be less education on inequities and more on managing, for example, racism from clients.

## **Subsequent program modifications:**

To help ensure that our students' feedback is honored and towards holding ourselves accountable for modeling reflexivity to feedback, we have provided a brief summation of some of the programmatic modifications based on the School Counseling and Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Exit Surveys.

### **General Programmatic Modifications:**

In response to the invaluable feedback received from our alumni exit surveys, our program has undergone a series of significant modifications. These changes not only reflect our unwavering commitment to continuous improvement but also our dedication to meeting the evolving needs of our students.

Dr. Smith is working to secure funding to address requests for more specialized training and exposure to diverse voices in the field. He is working to initiate an inaugural 'Techniques and Interventions Lecture Series' for the academic year 2023-2024. This series will spotlight a rich tapestry of specialized clinical techniques and interventions, emphasizing the importance of diverse voices and perspectives in the counseling field. Additionally, we've enriched our curriculum by integrating guest lecturers from the Center for Cross Cultural Research lecture series, allowing them to engage in private, in-depth discussions with our graduate students.

Financial support remains a cornerstone of our commitment to student success.

Drs. Byrne and Gruman have championed this cause by developing a partnership between the Counseling Program and the Civic Leadership & Engagement Corps (CLEC) AmeriCorps grants. These grants promise to alleviate some of the financial pressures our students face, awarding \$1459 for each of two 300-hour service blocks completed during the 2023-24 academic year. This initiative aligns perfectly with their internship activities. CMHC students qualify under the "Healthy Futures – Access to Mental" category and SC students qualify under the "Education: K-12 & College/University Academic Engagement" category. Dr. King and Dr. Gruman also supported one student to receive the National Latino Behavioral Health scholarship to cover tuition, fees and living expenses during the second year of the SC program. In a collaborative effort, we have also partnered with the financial aid department, ensuring students can utilize financial aid funds for essential expenses such as licensure exams, application fees, and certification-related costs. Furthermore, Dr. Smith has generously offered his expertise to students keen on pursuing NBCC Fellowship and Grant opportunities, providing mentorship throughout their application process.

Recognizing the importance of licensure exam preparation, Dr. Smith developed and distributed an NCE/CMHCE FAQ and Study Resource Packet. He is also facilitating an optional NCE/CMHCE Preparation Workshop for our 2nd Year students during the Fall quarter, ensuring they are well-prepared for these pivotal exams. On the curriculum front, we have taken strides to minimize redundancy. Faculty members collaborated closely, sharing syllabi to ensure a diverse range of readings across courses. Based on the feedback, we've also moved the cross-cultural counseling class from the second year in the program to the first year, ensuring students have the opportunity to delve more deeply into these crucial topics earlier in their academic journey. After

our faculty took part in the Academics for Black Survival and Wellness workshops and receiving some requests from our outgoing students, Dr. Gruman worked to establish Madrona – one of the larger rooms in the counseling training clinic – to serve as a sanctuary for our BIPOC students.

Building and nurturing relationships within our cohorts is paramount. To this end, we've introduced new orientation procedures, fostering deeper connections between incoming students and their second-year counterparts. Beyond the confines of the classroom, Dr. Smith organized a summer bowling event, providing a relaxed atmosphere for students to bond. Our commitment to fostering these relationships is further evident in our continued tradition of hosting a Soup Party at the end of fall quarter and, based on positive feedback, offering regular potluck days during 2023-24. We also moved our group experience to the Fall quarter of their first year, as this is another powerful opportunity to build rapport and connection within the incoming group of counseling graduate students.

Dr. Sowell and Dr. Gruman have been working to enhance the School Counseling students' training in classroom management. The School Counseling students now benefit from augmented training in classroom management and are mandated to undergo a formal teaching observation during the Fall quarter of their internship. Recognizing the importance of Motivational Interviewing, Dr. Sowell has incorporated an MI-based textbook in her Techniques class for the first-year SC students. Dr. Smith will also be conducting an MI workshop for these students during their clinical practicum. In a bid to further refine our curriculum, our faculty is deliberating on the introduction of a new course focusing on the role of the school counselor. If resources permit, this course will be introduced in the Spring quarter of the second year, aiming to further hone the skills of our students during the final phase of their internship.

We remain deeply appreciative of the feedback from our alumni. Their insights have been instrumental in guiding these program enhancements. As we move forward, our commitment to excellence and student success remains at the forefront of our endeavors.