

Loyola University New Orleans

Department of Counseling

Outcome Report AY 2021-2022

Program Assessment and Evaluation Overview

The program assessment and evaluation are ongoing. We follow a circular cycle of collecting data, reviewing the data, making necessary adjustments, implementing the adjustments, and collecting more data. We follow the Planning and Assessment Calendar (see Appendix A) and review the data we are obtaining through surveys, Advisory Board meetings, student feedback, NCE data, and course rubrics. We use our regularly scheduled faculty meetings and set aside time in each meeting to review items/data from the Planning and Assessment calendar and determine if we will make adjustments and how to implement the adjustments. Adjustments can range from adding a form to a significant policy change.

Additionally, we use faculty meetings to discuss other curricular adjustments that might come up in a more ad-hoc fashion. When this occurs, we collect data (e.g. survey data), review the data, and then implement the changes. If an adjustment is going to impact students, we hold focus groups in order to gain information from the students. We usually ask a staff member, one of the counselors from the on-campus counseling center, or a faculty member from another department to hold the focus groups so that students feel comfortable to speak honestly.

The following is a list of the items on the 2021-2022 Assessment and Planning Calendar that the department faculty reviewed.

- Department Annual Report
- Annual Advisory Board meeting & Annual Supervisors meeting
- Surveys (Exit, Alumni, Employer, Supervisors)
- KPI Data from Core Courses
 - Based on CACREP Standards
- NCE results
- Course Evaluations
- Clinical Review (site supervisor's reports and student evaluations of sites)
- Demographic data

Academic Year 2021-2022 Outcomes

Curriculum Changes and Adjustments

In 2020-2021, we made the CACREP group participation requirement the Racial Identity Processing Group (RIPG) as the long standing “Group Lab” that students sign up for as a co-req to the group course. In 2021-2022, the students completed the RIPG groups as “affiliate” members. We found through student report that BIPOC students were experiencing some harm by being mixed with non-BIPOC students, so we adjusted the groups to be affiliate groups based on both racial identity and how one is perceived in dominant culture. For students of mixed ethnicity or race, this was sometimes challenging to determine. The outside group leaders, worked with students individually to determine their best choice for the affiliation RIPG groups.

The faculty created an ad hoc committee to explore more trauma-oriented coursework to enhance the student experience and likely attract non degree seeking professionals for a trauma certificate, in coming years.

Telehealth training will continue, to prepare people to meet the criteria for offering Telehealth. We have offered several telehealth trainings for students and professionals in 2020, 2021, and 2022 on a variety of populations including children, couples, individuals, groups, and supervision, as well as best practices and ethics across populations. We plan to continue offering telehealth training moving forward to support students and professionals.

In our Intro to Counseling course and our Group Counseling course, we maintained the clinical “Actor” experience in telehealth simulation (rather than moving the simulation back to in person as it was before covid), in order to start the students in training for telehealth and gradually build up to in person trainings when they are in Fundamentals (Actors), and then in Practicum and Internship (usually both in person and tele-health depending on the site).

The Self Study was accepted by CACREP in full on December 2021 (after a 2-year period to update the data collection system). The accreditation will be eight years (until 2027). The department revamped the data collection system and updated training and orientation practices with site supervisors to meet the remaining elements required from the 2019 site visit recommendations.

In Fall 2021, the program resumed normal programming (post pandemic). The only course that stayed online for the 2021-2022 AY was the RIPG group, due to the availability and location of the leaders, at this time.

In the summer 2021, we offered Human Sexuality for the first time as an experimental course. The course was highly received and we will run it again as an experimental course in summer 2022 and then plan to send it to curriculum committee for approved to be an annual course beginning summer 2023. Human Sexuality was brought by both alumni and current students (as well as other state requirements) as something the department should consider adding.

The Department Chair is elected and a new DC will begin in Fall 2022.

Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling Accreditation (MCFC)

The MCFC track was added due to overwhelming student interest in pursuing and specializing in this area. The faculty included the MCFC accreditation in the current CACREP 2019 Self Study. The MCFC accreditation Self Study was accepted by CACREP and was reviewed by the site team when they visited the program in fall 2019 and approved the MCFC accreditation.

In the 2021-2022 AY, [redacted] students graduated with the MCFC specialization.

CACREP Mid-Cycle Report

The next mid-cycle report will be due in Summer 2024.

College

The program resides in the College of Nursing & Health (CNH). The School of Nursing and the Loyola Institute for Ministry (LIM) are also housed under CNH.

Dean Search update: a new Dean was chosen August 2021. She is a nurse that came in from Rush Hospital in Chicago. She is organized and for the first time in a while is primarily interested in growing the college without being swamped in her own departmental issues. So far it has been a nice change to have more structure. She shows interest in understanding CACREP.

Assessment and Planning Calendar Activities

- Department Annual Report: Faculty review of the 2020-2021 annual report suggests that the department is continuing to thrive, is profitable, and receives positive feedback from a variety of data sources. We had a smaller incoming cohort, but, we still needed two sections of our intro courses (25 students entered)
- Annual Advisory Board meeting and Annual Supervisors training & meeting: Both meetings were held the same day in fall 2021 (virtual).
- The Advisory Board was impressed with the program curricular modifications made during the current year and previous year.

Surveys (Alumni, Employer, Exit) **note-the response rate was low this AY even though we sent the survey 3 times for 3 months. We believe this is due to the general feelings of being overwhelmed as things began to get back to “normal” after COVID- not due to lack of interest. We expect our survey date to begin building as people regain their routines.*

- Alumni Survey ($N=3$)
Administered in September, 2021. Responses were received between September, 2021 and November 2021. This survey is sent to alumni three years after graduation.

Alumni reported either attaining licensure (2) or being in a doctoral program (1- PsyD). 100% of Alumni surveyed reported having a mental health job at the time of the survey

(3/3). 33% in private practice, 33% in res treatment, 33 % in agency work. 100% of Alumni report overall satisfaction at the “*strongly agree*” or “*agree*” level in all CACREP core areas. 100% said they would recommend the program, would repeat the program, and feel prepared to be counselors. They also reported feeling exceptionally prepared compared to peers from other local programs and that the labs (client actor) were exceptional. They report feeling strong in understanding counseling relationships, research, differential diagnosis, and ethics. Finally, they reported that improvements would include adding Human Sexuality and Crisis Counseling (both have been added) in order for students to move to other states with these requirements and meeting diverse needs of clients.

➤ Employer Survey 2021 ($N=2$)

Employer survey was administered in September-October, 2021 and all responses were received in October. Employers showed strong support for graduates of our program who are working for them in the field. They selected “*Strongly Agree*” or “*Agree*” (the two highest fields) in all of the survey questions. In the open response area, employers identified clinical relationship, consultation, autonomy, professionalism, counseling relationships, intake and risk assessments, consistent caseloads, and ethical awareness as some of our graduates’ strengths. Some areas for improvement one employer (the others didn’t comment) was in time management and time boundaries with clients. One employer recommended more preparation for working with clients with disabilities would be helpful (deaf, blind, intellectual).

➤ Exit Survey 2020-2021 Students ($n = 6$)

5/6 students reported they secured employment at the time of graduation in the counseling field and had taken and passed the NCE (the 1 other student has not taken the NCE and is not currently seeking employment). 1 student reported applying for PhD programs. They all described feeling competent in attention of professors, knowledgeability of professors, and preparedness for clinical work at time of graduation as evidenced by 100% responding that they “*Strongly Agree*” or “*Somewhat Agree*” in all areas surveyed. Most students felt fully prepared in all of the core coursework. However, in n diversity, legal issues, and assessment & psychometrics, three students reported feeling underprepared.

The exit survey was also sent in Spring 2021 ($n=6$) and Summer 2021 ($N=0$).

The 2015-2016 survey showed four respondents who reported concern with the diversity training, however all students reported feeling prepared in diversity training for the 2016-2017 surveyed graduates. In this current survey, all students reported feeling prepared in diversity training. The faculty have been working to further integrate diversity into the curriculum and throughout the program, including broaching (see examples listed below).

- Beginning with the current (2020) cohort, all students were/are required to participate in a Racial Identity Processing Group as a co-req with the group course as the group lab.
- Faculty have been working with Students Addressing Race and Privilege (SARP) to come up with ways to continue to integrate diversity awareness. Beginning with the 2017 new student orientation, we added a diversity exercise

that is led by current students for incoming students. We included the diversity exercise in the 2018 and 2019 cohort orientations. We are also working with SARP to bring in more outside speakers. The counseling faculty and SARP agreed to work together on projects that include: (a) further infusing the topics of diversity, social justice, and privilege into existing coursework; (b) finding ways to include social justice topics in the interview process and student orientation; and (c) pursuing extracurricular opportunities for faculty and students both on and off campus.

➤ Course Evaluations

Faculty reviewed the course evaluations in 2020-2021. It was determined that we would continue to work on diversity integration.

- Continue to modify syllabi, required readings, and assignments in ways that continue to expand diversity in a variety of ways (cases used, order to readings, inclusion in assignments, etc.) and meet 1x/semester to review updates with faculty.
- Bring in a consultant to help with diversity integration (Completed Fall 2021)
 - NCE results: 100% of those who took the NCE passed the NCE in 2021-2022
 - Faculty determined that the students are scoring well above students at other CACREP-accredited institutes in all areas tested.

➤ Clinical Review (site supervisors reports and student evaluations of sites)

Site Supervisors Survey (2021) ($N=1$) consistently report that the student is very well trained and very professional. Supervisor reports the student is prepared in all CACREP Core academic and clinical areas as evidenced by scoring students as *Strongly Agree*, or *Agree* on 98% (no opinion on other questions) of surveyed criteria.. The supervisors report that the students seem adequately prepared. One supervisor expressed developing counselor identity as something they worked on.

➤ Demographics review (gender, ethnicity, etc.)

Although our demographics are still primarily Caucasian females, we continue to sustain or increase our student populations in non-white (BIPOC) students. Our incoming cohort in 2021 had an increase in BIPOC enrollment to 33%. We have also increased our population of students who identify as non-cis, non-binary, queer, and trans.

Faculty continue to work on how to increase diversity within the department. The university has set graduate tuition at a rate that is two times higher than the next most expensive counseling program in our area and we have limited options for scholarship and assistantships. We have been working with the Chief Diversity Officer in order to try to increase our diversity in students, faculty, and staff, as well as ensure retention. Some adjustments we implemented, so far, include:

- At the end of the 2020-2021 AY, faculty were able to get funding to hire a consultant to help the faculty understand the needs of current students, work with current students and SARP to integrate more diversity in students and curriculum as well as create more and more inclusive classroom experiences.
 - This process started in the Fall of the 2021-2022 AY and has helped us integrate more literature into our curriculum, create policy for students to report micro-aggressions internally (anonymously or confidentially to our LPC admissions coordinator), and facilitated faculty student conversations, with the facilitator, on classroom management and inclusivity. We are also working to decolonize our syllabi.
- Hiring practices. We hired two faculty members and a staff member who are people of color, including our new Clinical Director for the counseling clinic. Unfortunately, one of the faculty is leaving in Summer 2022, so we have to hire an interim visiting faculty. She did report some concerns around the lack of systemic support for faculty of color at Loyola, which is something we are advocating for.
- Recruitment of students. We are actively recruiting students of color and have continually given assistantships, when available, to students of color.
- Work with students of color to provide as much support as possible and to assess how marginalized students are experiencing the program.
- Addressing students of color to assess and support student success. How are marginalized students doing? How can we support students?

Ad Hoc Assessment and Evaluation Activities

Clinic. The new Clinical Director started in the Summer 2020 and began teaching in the Fall 2020. She has a reduced teaching load in order to manage the clinic. History: Students and faculty opened an on-site clinic at Loyola University New Orleans. The city of New Orleans is losing mental health services due to under-funding, and several sites have closed or stopped accepting counseling interns as they move to insurance models. The few facilities that are still open often have long waitlists. In accordance with the Jesuit values and our need to educate our students, the faculty and a student worked together to secure partnerships and gifts from the Musicians Clinic of New Orleans, the Preservation Hall Foundation, the City of New Orleans, and the Brett Thomas Doussan Foundations to offer clinical mental health services. The administration has helped secure office space to convert into clinical counseling rooms. The clinic opened in spring 2019. When the pandemic started, we moved the clinic to a tele-therapy model without difficulty. We also held trainings for students and community members on ethical models for working with both children and adults in teletherapy.

In 2021-2022, the clinic was mostly still tele-health with the exception of play therapy, although clients were offered in person services beginning in the Spring 2022, as an option. The clinic had 12 interns in 2021-2022 serving children, intimate relationships, families, groups.

Student-led group. Our student body formed a committee called the Students Addressing Race and Privilege (SARP) in 2015 and have been active in both the department and university. Their main goal is to increase awareness and training opportunities regarding diversity, social justice, and privilege within the counseling program. The counseling faculty and SARP agreed to work together on projects that include: (a) further infusing the topics of diversity, social justice, and privilege into existing coursework; (b) finding ways to include social justice topics into the

interview process and student orientation; and (c) pursuing extracurricular opportunities for faculty and students both on and off campus.

Outcome: The faculty have added literature to all courses on social justice, diversity topics and privilege. The faculty are working with students to review text book options that are the most inclusive available. The faculty added a Social Justice topic to the required admissions essay around serving and supporting social justice topics. Additionally, the essay response on social justice involvement is not in our Admissions Matrix- so students with high involvement will be reflected in our matrix/rubric

Success Stories AY 21-22

Faculty are presenting at many conferences, agencies, and schools regionally.

Students are presenting at many conferences with faculty and on their own, including national level (American Counseling Association).

Several alumni have been accepted into doctoral programs around the country.

The Play Therapy Center received renewal as both an Approved Center (AC) (university designation) of play therapy and as an Approved Provider of Play Therapy education (CE designation) from the National Association for Play Therapy.

Other Faculty/ Student Successes:

Student Mya Sherman published an article with Dr. John Dewell in the Louisiana Counseling Journal: "Addressing Climate Trauma Among Adolescents: Process-Oriented Group Therapy as a Way Forward." Congratulations, Mya!

Dr. T'Airra Belcher and Dr. Christine Ebrahim presented on Ethical Practices in LPC Supervision at the annual conference of the Louisiana Counseling Association in Baton Rouge, LA.

Alumni, Sarah Zogbi and Dr. LeAnne Steen worked together and published an article in the Journal for Creativity in Counseling.

Sarah Zoghbi, Penny Roberts, Miranda Pollock & LeAnne Steen (2021) Activity Groups as Mental Health Interventions for Creative Arts Professionals, Journal of Creativity in Mental Health, DOI: [10.1080/15401383.2021.1989353](https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2021.1989353)

APPENDIX A: **Counseling Department Calendar of Planning and Assessment**

Loyola University New Orleans

Calendar of Key Assessment Activities

- Exit survey administered (Departmental) 15 May 1-
- Alumni survey administered June 15
- Employer survey administered 15 June
- Supervisor survey administered 15 June
- Annual Report Due July 15
- Review Annual Report Meeting November Faculty
 - Previous AY National Counselor Examination (NCE) results
 - Review previous AY survey Data
 - Exit (Dec/May); Alumni, Employer, Supervisor (June)
- Outcome Report Posted October
- Advisory Board Meeting November
- Supervisors Meeting & Training November
- Discuss Faculty Course Evaluations (Spring/ Summer) November Faculty Meeting
- Clinical Review Meeting December Faculty
 - Site Supervisor Reports; Student Evaluations of Sites
- Advisory Board & Supervisor Meeting Review Meeting December Faculty
 - Review minutes, action items, etc.
- Exit survey administered (as needed) December 1-15
- Review Outcome Report January
- Discuss Faculty Course Evaluations (Fall) April