

**The 2022-2023 Annual Report for the
Counseling Program at West Virginia University**

Continuing to serve the land grant mission of the State of West Virginia, the counseling program at West Virginia University successfully bolstered the mental health workforce over the last year. The program graduated 8 in the school counseling specialization and 14 in the clinical mental health counseling specialization during the reporting period.

Enrollment numbers for the WVU Counseling Program are as follows:

Total enrollment – 57 students

Students enrolled as 1st year students – 28

Students enrolled as 2nd year students – 19

Students enrolled in dual Sports Psychology Ph.D & CMH Counseling Specialization -
10

Additionally, pass rates for the Praxis II and NCE were as follows:

Praxis II for School Counseling – 100% pass rate

National Counselor Exam (NCE) – 100% pass rate

Program highlights for the reporting year include:

- Dr. Pat Love served as a major contributor to the Couples and Family Class. Dr. Love is a WVU program graduate and former president of the International Association of Marriage and Family Counseling and is an international speaker.

- Dr. Joanna White served as a major contributor to the Counseling Techniques course and the Counseling Children, Adolescents, and Parents course. Dr. White is Department Chair Emerita, Georgia State University and former President of the Association for Play Therapy.

- Drs. Boulden and Schimmel secured a \$5.2 million grant from the US Department of Education to increase and diversify the school-based mental health services offered in Harrison County Schools, WV. The grant will fund 12 Mountaineer School-Based Mental Health Fellows each year by providing tuition and other supports for students over the next 5 years.

The WVU Counseling Program expects to welcome 26 new students for the fall of 2023. The average GPA for the incoming class of 26 students is 3.52. The faculty have begun

working on starting a doctoral program in Counselor Education which we hope to have up and running by Fall, 2024.

Currently the faculty composition of the program includes:

Dr. Christine Schimmel— Program Coordinator

Dr. Monica Leppma—CACREP liaison (Dr. Leppma retired this May.)

Dr. Ed Jacobs

Dr. Rawn Boulden-

Dr. Jeff Daniels

Dr. Lisa Platt

Dr. Amy Root—School Director

The program also has outstanding adjuncts who teach and supervise students in the program.

Summary of Program Evaluations

Annual surveys are distributed to recent graduates and their employers, supervisors of our students, and current students. Overall, the evaluations received were positive with many compliments regarding the program. Also, there were suggestions for ways to improve the program which faculty look forward to addressing. The goal of the WVU Counseling Program is to offer a program which students enjoy as they work to become competent, entry-level practitioners. Survey data highlights are included here:

Mean scores for responses to Part 1 of the annual survey (items related to cultural competence, client advocacy, human development, and the importance or research in counseling) ranged from 4.56 – 4.92 demonstrating strong favorable responses to the program's success in these areas.

Mean scores for responses to Part 2 of the annual survey (items related to program enthusiasm, development of counselor identity, program requirements, the role of professional organizations in counseling, understanding the role of history in counseling) ranged from 4.44 - 4.84 demonstrating strong favorable responses to the program's success in these areas

Mean scores for responses to Part 3 of the annual survey (items related to students feelings of being valued and respected in the program, students feeling that their personal beliefs were valued, students feelings of recommending others to the program) ranged from 4.48 – 4.84 demonstrating the strong favorable responses to the program's success in these areas.

Part 4 of the annual survey provided respondents the opportunity to provide qualitative feedback on the program. Feedback was mostly positive and included the following statements around program strengths and areas for growth (students' comments have been aggregated to reflect broader themes):

Program Strengths

- Supportive faculty
- Personal growth
- Opportunities to practice skills immediately

Program Areas for Growth

- Post-graduate counseling processes/practices (e.g., pursuing licensure, continuing education)
- Support with guiding students through and preparing for the NCE
- More appropriate workload

From site supervisors:

Program Strengths

- Supportive faculty
- Applying academic theory into practice
- Students' knowledge of counseling theories and techniques
- Students are well prepared for practicum/internship • Students' professionalism

Program Areas for Growth

- Direct observation of students by faculty supervisors at sites (practicum/internship)

Program Modifications

This year we have adjusted in our course sequence. Two courses were “flipped” in the course sequencing in direct response to survey feedback; the addictions class was moved from the first spring to the second fall and the diagnosis and treatment class was moved from the second fall to the first spring semester. This insures that students complete the diagnosis course prior to entering practicum in the second fall.

Closing Comments:

The faculty extends sincere appreciation for all who serve this program in some way. We, the faculty, continue to dedicate ourselves making the program at WVU one of the best in the country. Faculty are committed to training outstanding school and clinical

mental health counselors. Faculty look forward to an outstanding 2023-2024 academic year.