



CAPELLA

UNIVERSITY

PhD Counselor Education & Supervision | MS Clinical Mental Health Counseling |
MS School Counseling

2022-2023 Counselor Education Unit Stakeholder Report

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INTRODUCTION

This report contains highlights of recent activities, changes, and initiatives that affect the programs with specialized accreditation within Capella University's Counselor Education Unit (CEU). The CEU continues to focus on academic excellence through our curriculum, residency experiences, practicum and internship, and learner advising. A comprehensive assessment process guides program improvement at the course, program, and unit levels.

COUNSELOR EDUCATION UNIT (CEU)

In 2022–2023, the Counselor Education Unit at Capella University offered the MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC); the MS in School Counseling (SC), which is also part of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) accredited Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) unit; and the PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision (CES).

The CEU has primary responsibility and authority for preparing professional counselors and counselor educators. One of its major responsibilities is to ensure graduate degree programs within the CEU adhere to best practices and national accreditation standards and prepare learners to become competent counselors and educators.

CEU MISSION STATEMENT

The Counselor Education Unit helps prepare adult learners committed to leadership, advocacy, and service to become professional counselors and counselor educators. Through our competency-based curriculum and comprehensive assessment program we ensure entry-level counseling program learners have access to the knowledge and skills necessary to develop into practitioner-scholars. We help prepare our graduates to serve a diverse population of clients across a variety of therapeutic settings and situations. We also help prepare our doctoral learners to serve as scholar-practitioners committed to the ethical practice of administration, teaching, supervision, and leadership in the counseling profession.

CEU DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The Counselor Education Unit in the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Capella University believes a diverse learning community is critical to preparing future practitioners. In an inclusive learning environment that values individual differences, we prepare learners to serve their clients and communities while embracing these values of inclusivity and diversity.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

MS Clinical Mental Health Counseling

The mission of the CACREP-accredited Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program is to help prepare master's-level counselors to work effectively with clients across diverse therapeutic settings and situations. Learners receive academic preparation and clinical training for professional practice based upon established ethical standards for counselors and sensitivity to the complex mental health needs of a multicultural society. The CMHC program seeks to deliver its curriculum through a dynamic, interactive, and collaborative learning environment and

provides learners with a strong theoretical foundation in professional clinical mental health counseling.

Key Program Modifications/Highlights in 2022- 2023

- During the reporting period (July 2022 through June 2023), CMHC learners successfully completed courses at proficient or distinguished levels over 90% of the time.
- The average rate of continuous enrollment in the CMHC program during the reporting period was approximately 89%.
- The CEU submitted a substantive change to CACREP to support the restage of the current curriculum allowing CMHC learners to choose electives in different focus areas. This change was approved by CACREP. Ongoing curricular work in support of this change in Q4 2023 has been a focal project throughout the year.

MS School Counseling

The mission of the CACREP- and CAEP-accredited School Counseling (SC) program is to help prepare master's-level school counselors to serve diverse populations of students in public or private elementary, middle, and high school settings. The comprehensive school counseling standards of the American School Counselor Association serve as the curricular model and offers a comprehensive approach to the delivery and management of contemporary school counseling programs. Through coursework and clinical skills training, learners demonstrate proficiency in evidence-based counseling approaches for P-12 children and adolescents, including assessment; intervention; service delivery at individual, group and classroom levels; consultation with parents, teachers, and community stakeholders; and advocacy.

Key Program Modifications/Highlights in 2022-2023

- During the reporting period (July 2022 through June 2023), SC learners successfully completed courses at proficient or distinguished levels over 91% of the time.
- The average rate of continuous enrollment in the SC program during the reporting period was approximately 86%.
- The CEU submitted a substantive change to CACREP to support the increase to 90 credits to maintain accreditation and allow learners to choose electives in different focus areas. Ongoing curricular work in support of this change in Q3 2023 has been a focal project throughout the year.

PhD Counselor Education and Supervision

The mission of the CACREP-accredited PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision (CES) program is to help prepare doctoral-level scholar-practitioners to pursue leadership positions within counselor education, counseling and supervision, and research. The program utilizes the highest professional standards of counselor educator and supervisor training in a climate of collaborative scholarly inquiry to support all learners to have the knowledge and skills necessary to fully participate and enhance the counseling profession. We help prepare our learners and graduates to assume counseling leadership positions at a regional, state, and national level.

Key Program Modifications/Highlights 2022- 2023

- Thirty CES learners completed dissertations and graduated during the reporting period (July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023).
- To improve the site-based learning experience, the doctoral practicum and internship courses were consolidated from six 2-credit courses (one practicum and five internship courses) to three 4-credit courses (one practicum and two internship courses). This change was approved by CACREP.

CEU FACULTY AND ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE**Core Faculty**

Core faculty in the CEU support all accredited programs regardless of their specialization and primary teaching assignments. The CEU hired or reassigned 11 new core faculty between July 2022 and June 2023: Dr. William Attridge (reassignment), Dr. Kathryn Babb, Dr. Candice Crawford, Dr. Emeline Eckart, Dr. Amber Hughes (promotion), Dr. Danielle Nimako, Dr. Brent Powell, Dr. David Schlosz, Dr. Rachelle Smith, Dr. Alyssa Swan, and Dr. Alexis Wilkerson (promotion). Of these faculty hires, four were added to support increases in learner enrollment and three resulted from program leadership changes.

Professional Staff

The Counselor Education Unit (CEU) is housed within the Department of Counseling and Family Therapy in the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences. This organization supports counselor education programs to provide a positive learner experience and sustain the achievement of the programs' mission, goals, and outcomes. Program leadership has changed in the past year, while school leadership has remained stable:

- **Dr. Joshua Stanley** serves as dean of the School of Social and Behavior Sciences, providing broad strategic and operational oversight for the school and its departments.
- **Dr. Jody Neuman-Aamlie** was promoted from assistant dean to associate dean for the Department of Counseling and Family Therapy.
- **Dr. Theresa Kascsak** serves as academic program director (PD) and leader for the CEU. In this capacity, Dr. Kascsak also serves as CACREP liaison. Core faculty report either to the PD or the two assistant program directors.
- **Dr. Randy Astramovich** serves as assistant academic program director (APD) and administrator of the CES program. Previously, Dr. Astramovich served as a core faculty member within the CEU and is replacing Dr. William Attridge who returned to a core faculty role.
- **Dr. Nicole Holby** was promoted from APD to associate academic program director. Dr. Holby serves as the administrator of the master's CMHC and SC programs.
- **Dr. Blair Vincent** serves as APD and coordinator of specializations, certificates, and innovation. Previously, Dr. Vincent served as a core faculty member within the CEU. This is a newly created leadership position.
- **Dr. Teresa Smith** serves as faculty director (FD) for Counselor Education and reports to the associate dean. Part-time and adjunct faculty within the CEU report to the FD.

INNOVATIVE PROCESSES SUPPORTING THE CEU

Action Analytics and CEU Assessment System

The CEU's assessment system provides a framework for the quarterly faculty-led review of curriculum, program procedures and policy, and learner development for the CMHC, SC, and CES programs. The Counselor Education Academic Leadership Team (CE-ALT) comprises faculty leadership from each program, other CEU faculty leads, and PDs and is tasked with ensuring continuous improvement and faculty governance of the assessment plan. The assessment plan establishes the guidelines for the Action Analytics process to identify the programs' strengths and areas of opportunity, and to assess the programs' effectiveness in meeting its outcomes and professional standards.

Faculty Advising

Learners in the CEU are assigned a faculty advisor who provides guidance and support throughout their program tenure. Learners and faculty advisors interact in an online Faculty Advising Forum (FAF) courseroom. The FAF provides important program information to support learners' personal and professional development. Each FAF courseroom is structured by geographic region, which allows for the sharing of regionally specific information and resources and an opportunity for learners to build their professional network.

HONOR SOCIETY

Capella's Chi Sigma Iota chapter, Chi Upsilon Chi, is led by the Executive Board composed of Capella learners and guided by faculty advisors. Chi Upsilon Chi inducts new members during quarterly virtual induction ceremonies. Capella accepted 533 Capella learners into Chi Upsilon Chi who applied between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023.

At the start of 2022, Chi Upsilon Chi held seven professional development workshops for chapter members, alumni, faculty, and site-supervisors. Between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023, more than 65 individuals attended the Chi Upsilon Chi chapter's professional development webinars.

LICENSURE

The academic leadership team partners with the Legal and Academic Verification teams to support and resolve the licensure questions and needs of learners and alumni. Professional licensure disclosures are available for learners who wish to research requirements for licensure by state of residence and program. Capella also provides resources to support alignment of program coursework to state required licensure content. Learners can also request assistance with state licensure concerns or questions via a digital webform.

NATIONAL COUNSELOR EXAM

Through the Graduate Student Application for the National Certified Counselor (GSA-NCC) program, Capella facilitates the application process for learners seeking the voluntary National Certified Counselor (NCC) credential. One requirement for attaining the credential is passing the National Counselor Exam (NCE) or the National Mental Health Counselor Exam (NMHCE). These

two exams are also required by many states as part of the state licensure application. The CEU's liaison for the NCE works with qualified graduate learners to register for the NCE during the final stages of their program. Results of the NCE are provided to Capella and are reviewed by faculty to inform potential curriculum revisions.

CEU ADVISORY COUNCILS

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling/Counselor Education and Supervision (CMHC/CES) and the School Counseling (SC) Advisory Councils include in their membership key stakeholders such as faculty, practitioners/site supervisors, learners, and alumni. The CMHC/CES Advisory Council meets biannually to review program and accreditation updates and explore topics relevant to the enhancement and further development of the programs. The SC Advisory Council meets bi-annually to offer advice and counsel to the program director and leads on issues of importance to Capella and its learners in the School Counseling and Counselor Education and Supervision programs and shall limit its activities to advising on matters that directly concern the instructional programs. The specific purposes may include (1) assisting the program in identifying current issues in school counseling and counselor education and supervision; (2) identifying necessary entry-level skills, knowledge competencies, and professional dispositions for entry-level professional counselors and counselor educators and supervisors; and (3) assisting in program evaluation by providing recommendations based on program data. Reports from the advisory council meetings are maintained on SharePoint and presented to school program leadership teams.

Academic Standards and Professional Fitness Committees

The CEU Professional Standards Committee (PSC) and the school Academic Honesty Faculty Review Panel (AH-FRP) continue to support a growth-based review of learner needs, strengths, and academic/professional requirements. The PSC is chaired by Dr. Megyn Shea (core faculty) and is comprised of faculty members from the CEU and Marriage and Family Therapy program. The AH-FRP includes core faculty representation from all programs within the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences and is currently chaired by a CEU core faculty member, Dr. Marisa Rapp.