

Annual Program Report 2024-2025

(For programs not using Planning & Self Study software for the annual report)

The report(s) should be inclusive of all levels, degrees (i.e. certificates, bachelor's and master's), modalities and locations.

Program/Department: **Counseling**

Program Chair: **Daneen Deptula**

Program Assessment Committee Contact: **Daneen Deptula**

This document is to be kept in the department and an electronic file is due to the AVP of Institutional Research and Planning by June 1, 2025.

Section I: Program Assessment (please complete this section for each program in your department)

Please note that this report primarily addresses the Master's in Counseling/Clinical Mental Health concentration and the Special Issues in Counseling Graduate certificate. The School Counseling programs are assessed through AAQEP.

Program: Counseling M.S. (Mental Health)

A. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) (Educational Objectives)

I. List of PLOs and the timeline for assessment

PLO #	PLO – Stated in assessable terms	Where are the learning outcomes for this level/program published? (please specify) Include URLs where appropriate.	Timing of assessment (annual, semester, bi-annual, etc.)	When was the last assessment of the PLO completed?

1.	Students will demonstrate effective counseling skills	<p>Website: https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/clinical-mental-health-counseling-counseling-ms</p> <p>Student Manual: https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/media/4177</p>	Across all three stages of the program (COUN 7010, 7030, other Stage 2 classes, and internship).	Spring 2024
2.	Students will engage in professional behavior	<p>Website: https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/clinical-mental-health-counseling-counseling-ms</p> <p>Student Manual: https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/media/4177</p>	Across all three stages of the program (COUN 7010, 7030, other Stage 2 classes, and internship).	Spring 2024
3.	Students will display caring for others	<p>Website: https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/clinical-mental-health-counseling-counseling-ms</p> <p>Student Manual: https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/media/4177</p>	Across all three stages of the program (COUN 7010, 7030, other Stage 2 classes, and internship).	Spring 2024
4.	Students will demonstrate effective written and oral communication skills	<p>Website: https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/clinical-mental-health-counseling-counseling-ms</p> <p>Student Manual: https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/media/4177</p>	Across all three stages of the program (COUN 7010, 7030, other Stage 2 classes, and internship).	Spring 2024

II. **PLO Assessment** (Please report on the PLOs assessed and/or reviewed this year. Programs should be assessing at least one each year.)

Using the table below, list and briefly describe the **direct method(s)** used to collect information assessing whether students are learning the core sets of knowledge (K), skills (S) and attitudes (A) identified as essential.

PLO # (from above)	Assessment description (exam, observation, national standardized exam, oral presentation with rubric, etc.)	When assessment was administered in student program (internship, 4 th year, 1 st year, etc.)	To which students were assessments administered (all, only a sample, etc.)	What is the target set for the PLO? (criteria for success)	Reflection on the results: How was the “loop closed”?
1	<p>Internship Evaluation (S) in COUN 9090 of 38 different clinical skills. Completed by field supervisor at end of internship using a scale of 1-5.</p> <p>Clinical Skills Evaluation (S) in COUN 9090. Interns are observed and rated by</p>	Data from COUN 9090 were utilized for this report. This is the culminating field experience for the clinical mental health counseling concentration.	All students in COUN 9090 classes graduating in 2024 or 2025.	80% of students meeting criteria	<p>Of the 38 clinical skills, 100% of interns met proficient level (4 or 5) for all but one item. 96% of interns met proficient level for #31, communicating with clients. Skills were rated very similarly, with most approximately 4.5 on a 5 point scale, with the highest being openness to growth and learning (#38) and focuses on clients as persons of worth (#4) average 4.88 for both. No item emerged as particularly low.</p> <p>Clinical Skills Evaluation item scores ranged from 91%-100% meeting proficiency. While the</p>

	<p>their supervisor conducting a clinical session using a 9 item scale from 1-4. Completed by field supervisor</p> <p>Disposition Assessment (S&A) Items 3, 4, 10 in COUN 9090. Completed by university supervisor using a 4-point scale.</p> <p>Disposition Assessment (S&A) Items 3, 4, 10 in COUN 9090. Completed by field supervisor using a 4-point scale.</p>				<p>criteria for success was met, the lowest score was “pacing” at average score of 3.4. The highest score was for using appropriate vocabular at 3.86. It should be noted that pacing was also the lowest item two years ago.</p> <p>100% of students met the criteria for proficiency in counseling skills and attitudes on the disposition assessment as ranked by the faculty supervisor. Lowest score of 3.75 for demonstrating professional demeanor was still quite high.</p> <p>100% of students met the criteria for proficiency in counseling skills and attitudes on the disposition assessment as ranked by the field. Average for each of the 3 items was identical at 3.91.</p>
2	Disposition Assessment (A). Items 2, 3, 4, 9, and 10 in COUN 9090 as rated by the university supervisor using a 4-point scale.	Data from COUN 9090 were utilized for this report. This is the culminating field experience for the clinical mental health counseling concentration.	All students in COUN 9090 classes graduating in 2024 or 2025.	80% of students meeting criteria	100% of students met the criteria for proficiency in professional behavior on the disposition assessment as rated by their university supervisor. High score (3.94 out of 4) with regards to skills in interacting with others.

	Disposition Assessment (A). Items 2, 3, 4, 9, and 10 in COUN 9090 as rated by the field supervisor using a 4-point scale.				100% of students met the criteria for proficiency in professional behavior on the disposition assessment as rated by their field supervisor, with very similar ratings across items.
3	<p>Disposition Assessment (S). Items 7-8 in COUN 9090 as rated by university supervisor using a 4-point scale.</p> <p>Disposition Assessment (S). Items 7-8 in COUN 9090 as rated by field supervisor using a 4-point scale.</p>	Data from COUN 9090 were utilized for this report. This is the culminating field experience for the clinical mental health counseling concentration.	All students in COUN 9090 classes graduating in 2024 or 2025.	80% of students meeting criteria	<p>100% of students met the criteria for proficiency in caring on the disposition assessment based on ratings by their university supervisor. However, these ratings were somewhat lower (3.69 and 3.63) compared to ratings for professional behavior.</p> <p>100% of students met the criteria for proficiency in caring on the disposition assessment based on ratings by their field supervisor. The ratings by field supervisors (3.91 and 3.87) were slightly higher than that of university supervisors.</p>
4	Internship Evaluation (S/A) Items 29-33 in COUN 9090. Completed by field supervisor at end of internship using a scale of 1-5.	Data from COUN 9090 were utilized for this report. This is the culminating field experience for the clinical mental health counseling concentration.	All students in COUN 9090 classes graduating in 2024 or 2025.	80% of students meeting criteria	Scores for this item ranged from 96% (communicate effectively with clients) -100% (all other items) in terms of students meeting proficiency standards.

	Disposition Assessment (S). Item 1 in COUN 9090 completed by university supervisor on a 4-point scale.				100% of students met the criteria for proficiency in effective oral and written communication skills on the disposition assessment.
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You may use this comment box to provide any additional information, if applicable:

With school counseling now part of the AAQEP accreditation, the assessment plan was adjusted so that only the clinical mental health was used in the above information.

Previous feedback from the UARC suggested increasing the criteria for success. However, keeping this standard aligns our program with the Education Unit and helps to address issues due to low sample sizes. We have included a review of averages to provide some additional data and nuance to our reflections.

Summary of Findings: Briefly summarize the results of the PLO assessments reported in Section II above combined with other relevant evidence gathered and show how these are being reviewed/discussed. How are you “closing the loop”?

Reflection Prompt	Narrative Response
Other than GPA, what data/evidence is used to determine that graduates have achieved the stated outcomes for the degree? (e.g., capstone course, portfolio review, licensure examination)	Across the program, we use multiple sets of informants, including professors and external supervisors. Over the course of the program, each student undergoes three program reviews, in which disposition ratings from faculty and field supervisors are utilized. The first Stage review occurs after the Stage I classes (COUN 7010, 7030). The second Stage review is conducted before students enroll in internship. The third Stage review is conducted at the end of internship, and is based on the successful completion of that final clinical experience. Program retention is determined both by GPA standards (by course and overall GPA) as well as proficient ratings in their disposition assessments.

	<p>Although we would like to examine the results of the licensure tests for the LMHC students, that information is not available to us.</p> <p>For CMH students, we ask internship supervisors if they would hire our student. Of the data submitted for 2024 and 2025 ($n = 25$), 96% of supervisors said yes. In an exit survey (new for the 2024-2025 year), 100% of respondents strongly agreed that they would recommend the program to a friend ($n = 5$).</p>
<p>Who interprets the evidence? What is the process? (e.g. annually by the curriculum committee)</p>	<p>The chair, who is also the advisor of the program, is responsible for monitoring the assessment results of the Stage 1 and 2 reports to identify any students who need action or remediation. Any concerns are brought to the committee throughout the year. Although the plan is to review the assessment data as part of the April meeting, the heavy time demands of student issues this semester absorbed scheduled committee time (which does seem to be a reoccurring issue). This report will be presented at the first meeting of the Fall 2025 semester.</p>
<p>What changes have been made as a result of using the data/evidence? (close the loop)</p>	<p>As the data suggests that students have been meeting benchmarks, no changes have been made based on this specific evidence (or similar evidence reviewed in the 2022 report).</p>

Program: Special Issues in Counseling Certificate

B. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) (Educational Objectives)

III. List of PLOs and the timeline for assessment

PLO #	PLO – Stated in assessable terms	Where are the learning outcomes for this level/program published? (please specify) Include URLs where appropriate.	Timing of assessment (annual, semester, bi-annual, etc.)	When was the last assessment of the PLO completed?
1.	Exhibit empathy and understanding the process of helping others	Student Manual: https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/media/4177 Website: https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/special-issues-counseling-graduate-certificate	Every course offering for COUN 7030 Exit Survey at program completion	2024
2.	Critically analyze our understanding of mental health, in terms of differentiation of diagnoses as well as connection to the broader field of integrated wellness (e.g., physical, educational)	Student Manual: https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/media/4177 Website: https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/special-issues-counseling-graduate-certificate	Exit Survey at program completion	N/A
3.	Articulate an application of their coursework to their professional development goals	Student Manual: https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/media/4177 Website:	Exit Survey at program completion	N/A

		https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/special-issues-counseling-graduate-certificate		
4.	Demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills.	Student Manual: https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/media/4177 Website: https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/special-issues-counseling-graduate-certificate	Every course offering for COUN 7030 Exit Survey at program completion	2024

IV. **PLO Assessment** (Please report on the PLOs assessed and/or reviewed this year. Programs should be assessing at least one each year.)

Using the table below, list and briefly describe the **direct method(s)** used to collect information assessing whether students are learning the core sets of knowledge (K), skills (S) and attitudes (A) identified as essential.

PLO # (from above)	Assessment description (exam, observation, national standardized exam, oral presentation with rubric, etc.)	When assessment was administered in student program (internship, 4 th year, 1 st year, etc.)	To which students were assessments administered (all, only a sample, etc.)	What is the target set for the PLO? (criteria for success)	Reflection on the results: How was the “loop closed”?
1	Disposition Assessment (S). Item 7 and 8 in COUN 7030	Although there is some flexibility in course ordering, this course is generally taken at the start of the program.	Planned for current certificate students.	80% of students meeting criteria	Not assessed because of no students in the program.
2	Exit Survey	An exit survey was developed for the mental health students and could have been slightly adjusted for certificate students.	Planned for current certificate students.	80% of students meeting criteria	Not assessed because of no students in the program.

3	Exit Survey	An exit survey was developed for the mental health students and could have been slightly adjusted for certificate students.	Planned for current certificate students.	80% of students meeting criteria	Not assessed because of no students in the program.
4	Disposition Assessment (S). Item 1 in COUN 7030	Although there is some flexibility in course ordering, this course is generally taken at the start of the program.	Planned for current certificate students.	80% of students meeting criteria	Not assessed because of no students in the program.

You may use this comment box to provide any additional information, if applicable:

The 2023-2024 assessment report examined the data for students between 2016-2024. No students were available to assess. Enrollment and the future of this program will be a point of discussion for next year. The certificate program has been useful for students who have not been able to complete a 60-credit Master's degree.

Summary of Findings: Briefly summarize the results of the PLO assessments reported in Section II above combined with other relevant evidence gathered and show how these are being reviewed/discussed. How are you “closing the loop”?

Reflection Prompt	Narrative Response
Other than GPA, what data/evidence is used to determine that graduates have achieved the stated outcomes for the degree? (e.g., capstone course, portfolio review, licensure examination)	Currently, only the disposition assessment and the exit survey are planned.

<p>Who interprets the evidence? What is the process? (e.g. annually by the curriculum committee)</p>	<p>The chair, who is also the advisor of the program, is responsible for monitoring the COUN 7030 reports to determine if there are any concerns, which are brought to the committee throughout the year. This report will be presented at the first meeting of the Fall 2025 semester.</p>
<p>What changes have been made as a result of using the data/evidence? (close the loop)</p>	<p>Not enough data has been available to utilize to generate changes. Last year was the first reporting of assessment data separately for the certificate program. As stated in last year's report, it does appear that the certificate students are meeting expectations, and there are no signs that they differ from Master's students. Therefore, any changes made for the Master's program would likely be appropriate for certificate students.</p>

B. Assessment Plan for Program/Department

- I. Insert the program or department Assessment Plan (This is an independent plan from what is reported in this document).

Please see separate document on the website.

- II. Explain any changes in the assessment plan including new or revised PLOs, new assessments that the program/department plans to implement and new targets or goals set for student success.

Based on the feedback received from the UARC regarding the 2023-2024 report, the Graduate Counseling committee has begun the process of revising the PLOs for the Master's program. Our plan is to further develop and finalize these PLOs, which are currently in draft format. In addition, the program designed and implemented an exit survey for our mental health students, with items which may be useful as we develop these new PLOs. Please see our work in process below:

Proposed (VERY) first draft

- 1. Demonstrates subject matter knowledge specific to relevant licensure standards**
- 2. Demonstrates effective counseling skills including active listening, empathy, and rapport building**
- 3. Demonstrates respect for human diversity, community, and cultural perspectives in their interactions with students/clients, peers, and supervisors**
- 4. Engages in professional behavior, including meeting delegated obligations, following both ethical and moral standards of the profession, and demonstrating professional conduct.**
- 5. Demonstrates effective oral and written communication skills.**

III. If you do not have a plan, would you like help in developing one? **N/A**

C. Program Review Action Plan or External action Letter/Report

Annual Reflection/Follow-up on Action Plan from last Program Review or external accreditation (only complete the table that is appropriate for your program)

I. Programs that fall under Program Review:

i. Date of most recent Review: **2019**

ii. Insert the Action Plan table from your last Program Review and give any progress towards completing the tasks or achieving targets set forth in the plan.

Specific area where improvement is needed	Evidence to support the recommended change	Person(s) responsible for implementing the change	Timeline for implementation	Resources needed	Assessment Plan	Progress Made this Year
#1 <u>Assessment:</u> Strengthen	Program Review	Megan Krell will revise the rubric based on past observations.	2019-2020	None	Examination of assessment results in the	The assessment continues to be successful with field supervisors

Clinical Skills Rubric.		Multiple faculty will pilot-test new version.			2019-2020 year.	completing the measure.
<u>#1 Assessment:</u> Automation.	Program review and External reviewer	Daneen Deptula will work with faculty to pilot-test using aspects of TK20 to collect data.	2019-2020	Assistance of assessment office	Will review pilot testing at end of 2020.	No further updates at this time, but a lower-tech version utilizing excel and multiple entry points throughout the year continues to be successful. This may be something that we examine further as part of our program review next year.
<u>#1 Assessment:</u> Development of measures of missing CACREP competences.	External reviewer	Daneen Deptula will coordinate with faculty teaching those content areas to develop assessments.	2020-2022	None	New assessment measures developed.	The current uncertainty about the viability of applying for CACREP resulted in putting a hold on this action item. This hold is still in place.
<u>#1 Assessment:</u> Development of formalized system of assessment reporting.	External reviewer	Daneen Deptula will work with the graduate faculty, and in response to the result of assessment data automation pilot.	2025	None	Yearly assessment reports.	This is the fifth assessment report conducted by Counseling. In addition, there is a formal assessment process through AAQEP.

<u>#2 Increase student enrollment:</u> Marketing.	Program review and external reviewer	Daneen Deptula in combination with SGOCE staff, marketing department, and admissions.	All years	Admissions data, including diversity	Admissions reports/Class seats list.	Enrollment continues to be concerning. The chair recorded a new webinar in Spring 2025. SGOCE has been working with Carnegie to update website information. Continue to post on social media.
<u>#2 Increase student enrollment:</u> Community partnerships through advisory board.	Program review	Daneen Deptula	Starting in 2019-2020 year	Funding for refreshments	Admissions reports	Although the program was involved in conversations with Open Sky to explore paid internship opportunities, those conversations have currently stalled. A 4+2 program is still in the design phase.
<u>#3 Increase faculty involvement.</u> Form focus group for adjunct faculty to discuss assessment and curriculum.	Program review and external reviewer, particularly with respect to involvement in assessment	Daneen Deptula	Starting in 2020-2021 year	Funding for refreshments	Reports of number of participating faculty at focus groups.	The last meeting for adjunct faculty was in Spring 2024, with only 2 attendees. A school counseling focus group was proposed, with no response.
<u>#3 Increase faculty involvement.</u> Invite more	Program review	Daneen Deptula	2019-2021	None	Reports of number of participating faculty	Unfortunately, our faculty on the committee will likely

graduate faculty to join graduate committee						reduce next year, down to four faculty
<u>#3 Increase faculty involvement.</u> Increase full-time teaching at graduate level	Program review	Discussions between administration and Daneen Deptula	Across all years	Unknown	Reports of numbers of participating faculty	At the current time, no full-time faculty have been added. Progress on this goal is also questionable due to uncertainties regarding seeking CACREP accreditation.
#4 Address CACREP accreditation issue	Program review and external report	Discussions between administration and Daneen Deptula. The external reviewer recommends meeting once per semester.	Across all years	Unknown	TBA	No further updates: Current faculty would not meet requirements for CACREP, and MPCAC is now requiring full-time faculty for program accreditation. The primary issue is transferability of licensure, and the landscape is being carefully monitored by the committee.

iii. If you do not have an action plan, would you like help in developing one based on your last program review and needs of the program? **N/A**

II. Programs with external Accreditation:

i. Professional, specialized, State, or programmatic accreditations currently held by the program/department.

The school counseling program is accredited by AAQEP and approved by the MA DESE.

ii. Date of most recent accreditation action by each listed agency.

Accredited by AAQEP in 2024; DESE in 2021

iii. Date and nature of next review and type of review.

For AAQEP, the first annual report is due 12/31/25. Accreditation will expire 12/31/2030.

For DESE, program approval will expire 8/31/2028.

List key issues for continuing accreditation identified in accreditation action letter or report.	Key performance indicators as required by agency or selected by program (licensure, board or bar pass rates; employment rates, etc.) (If required.)	Update on fulfilling the action letter/report or on meeting the key performance indicators.
For DESE: A key issue for counseling was <i>INS 1: Completers have the Subject Matter Knowledge (SMK) to be effective in the licensure role.</i>	None. Passing of MTELs required prior to admission.	In the last year, the assessments (candidate and supervising practitioner) were updated to reflect the new school counseling SMKs. Similar to previous years, 100% of supervising practitioners ($n = 7$) rated our school counseling candidates as meeting standards, with the vast majority of candidates rated as comprehensively meeting standards across all SMKs. Unfortunately, despite curriculum work conducted in response to the DESE findings (e.g., analysis of school data to Counseling in Elementary Class) and field supervisor high ratings in all SMK areas, candidate confidence in their own abilities was low across

		multiple SMK dimensions (2022-2023; 2023-2024) with no perceivable pattern. Anecdotally, school counseling candidates have shared their experience of the challenge and stress connected with education and school counseling in particular. Our FSU practicum instructor has been working to strengthen the support our students experience while they are in the field.
AAQEP: Concerns were raised about using a single assessment measure to reflect multiple indicators, as well as improved measurement of 2d and 2f.	None. Passing of MTEls required prior to admission.	We have responded to these concerns by adjusting our exit survey measure and clinical skills measure to more specifically and comprehensively examine these indicators.

Section II - Departmental Outcomes

A. Departmental Strategic Initiatives

Accomplished Initiatives AY24-25 Add more rows as needed	Corresponding Strategic Plan Goal & Strategy Goal # followed by Strategy # ex: 1.3	Indicate (X) if a Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness (DEI) Goal
Updating of assessment measures to address AAQEP, but also strengthened all programs	1.2	
Launching of mental health exit survey	1.2	

Planned Initiatives for AY 25-26 Add more rows as needed	Associated Strategic Plan Goal & Strategy Goal # followed by Strategy # ex: 1.3	Indicate (X) if a Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness (DEI) Goal
Continued development of 4+2 program for counseling	1.4, 1.5, 6.3	X
Continued progress on revising program learning outcomes for mental health programs	1.2, 1.5	
Updating of candidate disposition to be in alignment with Education Unit (new ed Unit disposition adopted 5/25)	1.2, 1.5	
Continue to strengthen enrollment in both certificate and master's programs	1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 3.6, 6.3 5.3, 5.4, 5.7	X

B. Departmental Accomplishments and Reflection:

Counseling is scheduled for our program review during the 2025-2026 year. We anticipate that more initiatives will be identified through this process. For instance, early discussions have indicated a need to update the mission statement in addition to the already discussed program learning outcomes. Other possible initiatives may revisit the automation aspect listed in the previous program report. It is possible that new mechanisms may provide more use than the ones previously reviewed.

In addition, the program provided support to the process of awarding funds to graduate students through the DHE's Behavioral Field Placements program which is important for DEI and supporting the region (#5.7). The Behavioral Health Workforce Scholarship, which was announced on April 29, 2025 is also an important step in helping to support students entering this field.