

Graduate Counseling Program Self-Study:

Graduate Counseling Program Self-Study: Clinical Mental Health Program

Spring 2026

**M.S. in Counseling – Clinical Mental Health
Certificate in Special Issues in Counseling**

Megan M. Krell, Ph.D., NCC, ACS, HS-BCP
Program Chair

Graduate Counseling Committee
Lynn D'Agostino, Ed.D.
Daneen P. Deptula, Ph.D.
Megan Krell, Ph.D.
Mark Williams, Ph.D.

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Executive Summary of Comprehensive Plan for Improvement

Since the last review, the Fitchburg State Counseling program has actively worked to guide the program through the Covid pandemic, maintain and strengthen the program curriculum, and implement strategies to help increase student enrollment. Specific changes since the last program review include:

- launched the Special Issues in Counseling certificate program including developing the associated learning outcomes
- creation of the Counseling Faculty Manual
- updates to course title and description to better align with current trends in the field
- created a mental health student exit survey
- updated the clinical skills rubric
- proposal of 4+2 program, and
- confirmed decision to no longer actively pursue CACREP accreditation.

The strengths of the program consist of committed full-time and adjunct faculty, strong student performance ratings on assessment measures as reported by both faculty and external supervisors, and a strong assessment program which collects data across the program from both faculty and field supervisors. Our students are successful in obtaining licensure and they are often employed in local mental health agencies, providing a valuable service to the community.

However, areas of weakness were also identified as part of this review. Although the program's assessment plan is strong, data are not collected electronically which results in a delay in the sharing and reporting of the assessment results. There is a lack of faculty diversity, which has been identified as an area of concern in previous program reviews as well. While Fitchburg State has outstanding library resources and librarian support, these resources are highly underutilized by Counseling faculty. Lastly, students would benefit from additional resources to help them navigate the Counseling program, which may in turn impact retention.

The five key objectives for program development determined as a result of this program review include:

1. Modernize Strategic Foundation
2. Systematize Assessment Processes
3. Strengthen Program Navigation
4. Enhance Academic Support through Library Partnerships, and
5. Expand Program Growth & Visibility

Overview and Vision

The Graduate Counseling Program consists of three inter-related graduate degrees, plus a certificate in Special Issues in Counseling. Students can pursue a Master's degree in Counseling with either a school counseling concentration or a clinical mental health counseling concentration. Students can also pursue an Ed.S. (formerly CAGS) degree in Interdisciplinary Studies with a Counseling Psychology concentration. Ed.S. students complete the necessary coursework and practicum experiences necessary for licensure as a school counselor. The LMHC requires a 60-credit master's degree in Counseling, and as such students may not pursue the Ed.S. to obtain their LMHC. It should be noted that the School Counseling concentration and Ed.S. are pausing admissions in Summer 2026 due to low enrollment.

The focus of this report is on the clinical mental health program and Special Issues in Counseling certificate, as the school counseling program is reviewed separately for licensure by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Student assessment data was gathered from the MS Clinical Mental Health Counseling students as well as the Special Issues in Counseling Certificate students. In some cases, assessment data includes school counseling as the programs could not be separated.

To maintain a clear counseling identity, the Graduate Counseling program resides within the Behavioral Sciences department, which also houses the undergraduate Criminal Justice, Human Services, and Sociology programs, and Criminal Justice Master's Program. The Human Services program contributes substantially to the Counseling program, through faculty and chair involvement (detailed in Assessment section C). The program is also staffed by Psychological Science faculty through course coverage and the coordination of the graduate internships. The Counseling program has been part of Fitchburg State since before 1974. Over the years, the program has adjusted with the trends in the field, with a variety of concentrations and certificate programs.

1. Program's vision, mission, and objectives

The vision of the Fitchburg State University Graduate Counseling Program is to develop counselors who can assist clients in the enhancement of their well-being. It is based on a developmental socialization model of intervention, which recognizes that at each developmental stage throughout the lifespan, individuals face tasks that can lead to problems needing professional assistance. Counselor education is based on the belief that effective counselors are both personally and professionally integrated. For this reason, a balance between didactic and experiential learning is maintained. While the importance of research in both academic and clinical settings is recognized, the program is clearly seen as an educator program for counselor practitioners. Throughout the program students increase their empathy to others, their effectiveness as facilitators, and they develop clinical counseling skills.

This mission of the Fitchburg State University Graduate Counseling Program is to meet the needs of an educated citizenry in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in the areas of: Licensed Mental Health Counselor (MA Board of Allied Mental Health and Human Services Professionals) and School Counselor (All Levels) Initial Certification (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Commonwealth of MA).

Learning objectives are detailed in Assessment Section 3b.

2. Link to the university mission and planning

As a professional program, the mission and vision of the counseling program focuses on licensure and career preparation for our students. The clinical mental health counseling program requires a high degree of community involvement, as all students are required to complete at least 2 smaller fieldwork experiences (50 hours and 100 hours) and 1 academic yearlong (600 hours) experience in the field. As a result, the program has strong community links with the mental health, behavioral health, and school communities. Students who choose to pursue these fields are inherently interested in global responsibility and public service. This engagement specifically maps onto Strategic Plan, Part 4: Pursue a purposeful, University-wide approach to community relations, and increase the number of faculty, staff and students who embrace civic responsibility and actively engage with community beyond campus.

4.1 Overview of the program - M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling

a. Question - Specify the degree requirements for the program, using the format of the catalog description

The M.S. graduate program consists of 60-credits including a 12-credit internship that spans a full academic year. All courses are required; there are no electives. Successful completion (minimum grade of 2.5) of two undergraduate prerequisites are required for program admission: a course in developmental psychology and a course in statistics. This program of study offers students the opportunity to apply for licensure in mental health counseling (LMHC). The specific courses in the program are detailed under Program Processes Curriculum.

b. Question - Determine if there are discipline specific best practices and whether the department is following them

Students in the Clinical Mental Health Graduate Counseling Program must demonstrate knowledge and skill competencies based on the Massachusetts Board of Allied Mental Health and Human Services Professions for licensure as a Mental Health Counselor standards. The board requires that each course can be used to fill only one requirement. Therefore, each course is only listed once and not in a grid as might be commonly expected with a cross-mapping. Required competencies are met by the following courses:

Counseling Theory: The theories of psychotherapy and counseling, theories of personality, treatment and prevention modalities

Course(s): COUN 7010 – Counseling Theories
COUN 8710 – Family & Systems: Models & Interventions

Human Growth and Development: Understanding the nature of human development

Course: COUN 8030 – Lifespan Development

Social and Cultural Foundations: Issues and trends of a multicultural and diverse society;
working with minority populations

Course: COUN 8190 – Social and Cultural Foundations: Issues and Diversity

Helping Relationships: Counseling techniques, skills, and procedures

Course(s): COUN 7030 – Intro to Professional Counseling: Issues and Skills

COUN 8130 – Psychopathology I: Diagnosis and Assessment

COUN 8132 – Psychopathology II: Treatment Planning and Delivery

COUN 8901 – Counseling Techniques and Case Analysis: Mental Health Counseling

Group Work: Dynamics and Processes

Course: COUN 8700 – Group Work and Leadership in Mental Health Counseling

Special Treatment Issues: For example, psychopharmacology, substance abuse, school, career issues, marriage and family treatment, sexuality and lifestyle choices, treating special populations.

Course: COUN 8215 – Lifestyle and Career Development

Appraisal: Appraisal and Psychological assessment and techniques

Course: COUN 8300 – Psychological Testing and Assessment: Theory & Practice

Research and Evaluation

Course: COUN 8015 – Research and Program Evaluation

Professional Orientation: Ethical and legal issues in counseling

Course: COUN 7005 – Mental Health and Family Counseling: Professional Practice, Standards, and Ethics

In addition, students in the program complete the required number of practicum (100) and internship (600) hours as required by state licensure regulations. Licensure requirements involving the maximum number of students for group supervision (students ≤ 10) are also followed. Our students are successful in obtaining licensure after completing the program and the additional post-masters requirements.

To receive timely information about licensure requirements, faculty from the Graduate Counseling Committee are involved with the Massachusetts-Rhode Island Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (MARIACES) which provides information from the licensure boards, the Massachusetts Mental Health Counselors Association, and information sharing among the respective programs.

Accreditation is a much more complicated, and currently controversial, issue in the area of best practices in the discipline. The clinical mental health program is currently not accredited by an outside agency. Although program accreditation is not required for licensure, the faculty of Fitchburg State recognize the benefits of an external programmatic oversight. However, many counseling programs in Massachusetts are currently struggling to find a recognized accreditation body that matches with their program aims and structure. Through the years, the FSU counseling program has repeatedly expressed a desire to pursue CACREP accreditation. CACREP has historically been the accrediting body for master's programs. It is nationally recognized and strongly associated with the field of counseling education. The Massachusetts licensure standards are based upon CACREP standards. TRICARE, which is the health care provider for military families, is now requiring that independent clinicians hold degrees from a CACREP-accredited institution or be able to document 3,000 hours of supervised clinical practice. CACREP requires that faculty have degrees in counseling education (as opposed to clinical psychology or other mental health disciplines) from CACREP institutions and requires full-time core faculty. The Counseling Program has spent several years navigating this and brainstorming pathways to pursue this accreditation, however we have come to the conclusion that the requirements unfortunately deem Fitchburg State University ineligible for accreditation.

In contrast, the Masters in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council (MPCAC) is a relatively new accrediting body that itself became accredited by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) in 2021. Current holders of MPCAC accreditation include Assumption University, Boston College, University of Massachusetts Boston (School Counseling & Mental Health Counseling), and Bridgewater State (Clinical Psychology). Now that MPCAC has CHEA accreditation, it may be worth exploring for our Counseling Program. There may be similar concerns with requiring full-time faculty, however MPCAC has a clause that core faculty can be “full-time and/or have a multiyear academic appointment with significant and identifiable responsibilities devoted to program-related activities and functioning. Core faculty are individuals whose education, training and experience are consistent with the program mission” ([Mpcac](#), 2024, p. 9).

c. Explain the balance between breadth and depth designed in the program

The program provides both breadth/introductory courses as well as field-work courses to expose students to current counseling practices. Because of the demands of meeting licensure requirements, there are currently no electives in the program. However, students are encouraged

to take the courses with greater breadth (e.g., Stage 1 courses) earlier in the program. High-depth courses address trends in the field (e.g., Coun 8140: Substance Use and Addictive Disorders and Coun 8625: Crisis Intervention for Counselors) and are slotted later in the program.

4.2 Overview of the program - Special Issues in Counseling Certificate

a. Specify the degree requirements for the program, using the format of the catalog description

The Special Issues in Mental Health certificate program is designed to provide individuals with specialized knowledge in the field of counseling that could either broaden the student's expertise in the field of counseling, or form a foundation for more extensive work at the master's level. This concentration would be ideal for educators, including school counselors, who desire a stronger knowledge base in the field of mental health counseling.

b. Determine if there are discipline specific best practices and whether the department is following them

The certificate is designed to provide an overview of counseling, and is not intended to assist students in pursuing licensure.

c. Explain the balance between breadth and depth designed in the program

The program provides both breadth/introductory courses to expose students to current counseling practices. This program provides 2 required courses with greater breadth (COUN 8030: Introduction to Professional Counseling and COUN 8130: Psychopathology I: Diagnosis and Assessment), along with a choice of 3 out of 8 high-depth courses based on individual interests.

3. Internal demand of the program or department

The Counseling program does not provide any defined service learning courses to any other program or division. However, many of our courses do not have prerequisites, and as such can be taken by students in other programs. We have on rare occasions had students from EdS IDIS, criminal justice, and education take our classes.

4. Recommendations and actions from previous five year review AND

5. Departmental/program initiatives and significant changes during the last 5 years since the last review.

The following includes the previous review cycle action plan along with the actions taken during the review period:

1. Strengthen assessment
 - Strategy 1: Refine clinical skills rubric
 - Action taken: Updated clinical skills rubric to more accurately assess the clinical skills students should learn to display throughout the program. Clarified criteria for individual items.
 - Strategy 2: Automate assessment
 - Action taken: No specific action to automate the assessment process was taken, however Dr. Megan Krell completed a sabbatical project which reviewed online fieldwork management systems to assist with practicum/internship paperwork and assessment process.

2. Increase student enrollment, particularly diverse student enrollment
 - Strategy 1: Work with marketing and SGOCE to advertise the program
 - Action taken: SGOCE has coordinated semesterly counseling-specific information sessions, which are recorded and posted on the website. Overall student enrollment has declined, however the percentages of students of color and male student enrollment has increased.
 - Strategy 2: Develop community partnerships through advisory board
 - Action taken: While several local agencies have proposed partnerships with the Fitchburg State University Counseling Program, none have come to fruition.

3. Increase faculty involvement in the program
 - Strategy 1: Form a faculty focus group for adjunct faculty
 - Action taken: Held annual all-faculty meeting, however attendance and interest in this type of participation appears low. Asynchronous communication and the Counseling Faculty Manual may be more effective tools for engagement.
 - Strategy 2: Invite tenured/tenure-track faculty to join graduate counseling committee
 - Action taken: Fulltime faculty were invited to join the graduate counseling committee, however over the review period some have dropped off, retired, or no longer teach counseling courses. The current core of 4 core faculty has been working well this past year. While the offer stands for others to join, active recruitment has ceased.
 - Strategy 3: Increase full-time teaching in counseling
 - Action taken: This is an important component of CACREP

accreditation and as we are no longer pursuing accreditation (see action item 4) no action was taken.

4. Address accreditation issue for the program
 - Strategy 1: Continue discussions with administration regarding pursuing Accreditation
 - Action taken: The program made the decision to no longer actively pursue CACREP accreditation based on extensive investigation into how we might be able to meet the accreditation criteria. Unfortunately, Fitchburg State does not have any faculty that will qualify as core faculty under their updated standards.

Additional program initiatives and changes during the last 5 years (which were in addition to the identified action plan) include the following:

- Launched the Special Issues in Counseling Certificate Program and created student learning outcomes for the program
 - Created a 15-credit certificate program for individuals who may be interested in learning more about counseling, but are not interested or able to complete the full master's program. Established four student learning outcomes for the program.
- Created the Counseling Faculty Manual
 - Created a manual specific to the counseling program that details university information, counseling program policies, and frequently used program assessment tools.
- Updates to course title and description to be more current
 - COUN 8140 course title changed from "Alcohol Abuse and Other Addictive Disorders" to "Substance Use and Addictive Disorders."
 - The course description for COUN 8300: Psychological Testing and Assessment was updated to more accurately reflect the role that counselors play in psychological testing and add in cultural and social justice responsiveness in assessment practices.
 - The course description for COUN 7030: Introduction to Professional Counseling was updated to include skills in ethical practices and multicultural counseling, as well as clearly indicate that this course is part of the Stage 1 review process.
- Created a mental health exit survey
 - In Spring 2025, the program launched a mental health counseling exit survey. This is similar to the process used for the school counseling students and will be

useful in program evaluation in the future.

- Drafted 4+2 program
 - Drafted 4+2 program to support the pipeline of Fitchburg State University psychological science and human services undergraduate students entering the counseling field.

Assessment

1. Program Inputs

This section details information about the Clinical Mental Health program's reputation, information about student enrollment, faculty data, and resources. Given the low enrollment and overlapping coursework with the Special Issues in Counseling certificate program, the MS and certificate program data is represented in the aggregate (except admissions data, which is separate).

a. Program reputation

Due to the need to meet MA LMHC licensure requirements, most of the MA counseling programs share some basic characteristics with each other in terms of consisting of 60 credit hours, requiring a year-long internship, and having similar required classes. Fitchburg State's Counseling Program is distinctive in that we maintain a strong clinical training program, going beyond the licensure requirements for fieldwork. Our students complete an additional 50-hour fieldwork experience to better advance their clinical skills and prepare for practicum and internship. Students have informally reported that they have pursued Fitchburg State due to geographic location, tuition rates, and recommendation by alumni and supervisors.

Lacking accreditation would presumably decrease the reputation of a program. Potential students often ask about accreditation and the impact of not being CACREP-accredited. We actively advise students of the challenges, which include reciprocity concerns when seeking licensure in states that require CACREP-accreditation (Florida, Kentucky, North Carolina, and Ohio) and working with Veterans Affairs. We note that CACREP is not required in Massachusetts, and is not considered a sufficient equivalent in and of itself for Massachusetts licensure. We also share with students that our coursework is aligned with major course requirements of CACREP. These are listed below, with the primary matching FSU courses following the requirement:

CACREP Core Areas (FSU Coursework)

1. Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice (COUN 7005)
2. Social and Cultural Diversity (COUN 8190)
3. Human Growth and Development (COUN 8030)
4. Career Development (COUN 8215)

5. Counseling and Helping Relationships (COUN 7030)
6. Group Counseling and Group Work (COUN 8700)
7. Assessment and Testing (COUN 8300)
8. Research and Program Evaluation (COUN 8015)
9. Clinical Mental Health Foundations (COUN 7010)
10. Clinical Mental Health Contextual Dimensions (COUN 8130)
11. Clinical Mental Health Practice (COUN 8901)

There are no known standards of ranking or visibility. Through MARIACES, MA state counseling programs have been actively pursuing the release of data regarding LMHC licensure test (NCMHCE) pass rates. Students take this test after they have graduated with their Master's degree. However, both the MA licensure board and the National Board of Certified Counselors have declined to release the data. As a result, we have no way of easily knowing how many of our students become licensed. We would need to develop an alumni tracking system or manually search every alumni in the MA license lookup system, which would not include anyone who has been licensed out of state.

b. Students by program

Clinical Mental Health Applicant Information

Based on the program chair's unofficial records, there were a total of 226 applicants to the clinical mental health program between Fall 2020 and Summer 2025. This represents a 67.40% increase in applicants compared to the 2015-2020 review period. The number of applications varied by year as follows:

Academic Year	# of Applicants	Acceptance Rate	Average GPA of Applicants
Fall 2020 - Summer 2021	54	87.04%	3.22
Fall 2021 - Summer 2022	29	75.86%	3.30
Fall 2022 - Summer 2023	53	69.81%	3.30
Fall 2023 - Summer 2024	45	75.55%	3.40
Fall 2024 - Summer 2025	41	70.7%	3.28

Of the applicants, 56 were denied admission, making the acceptance rate 75.22%. This is similar to an acceptance rate of 79% reported in the previous program review. Historically, denials were largely due to missing prerequisite courses. Over the last year, SGOCE has updated their process and will not send an application for review until all requirements have been submitted. Currently,

the most common reasons for denials are for prerequisite grades and undergraduate GPA below the minimum requirements (2.5 for prerequisites and 2.8 undergraduate GPA).

The overall undergraduate GPA of applicants was recorded to be 3.298. There was little difference in overall GPA across the years (ranging from 3.22 to 3.40). Average grades in the Developmental Psychology prerequisite was 3.54, with the average score in the Statistics course lower at 3.28. Program admission, as established by the Graduate Catalog, requires a minimum grade of 2.5 in these prerequisite courses.

The program has a rolling admissions policy which results in a sizable number of students who are admitted for the Spring semester.

Certificate in Special Issues in Counseling Applicant Information

Based on the program chair's unofficial records, there were a total of 5 applicants to the certificate in the Special Issues in Counseling program between Fall 2020 and Summer 2025. These varied by year:

Academic Year	# of Certificate Applicants	Acceptance Rate
Fall 2020 - Summer 2021	2	100%
Fall 2021 - Summer 2022	1	100%
Fall 2022 - Summer 2023	1	100%
Fall 2023 - Summer 2024	0	N/A
Fall 2024 - Summer 2025	1	100%

Of the applicants, 0 were denied admission, making the acceptance rate 100%. The overall undergraduate GPA of applicants was recorded to be 3.66.

Student Enrollment

As of Fall 2024, there were 59 Clinical Mental Health master's students and 1 special issues in counseling certificate students. This is down from a high of 79 Clinical Mental Health master's students in Fall 2020. Overall, enrollment in courses has decreased from a high of 499 seats in AY21 to 347 seats in AY25, with a low of 304 seats in AY24. See Appendix A. (Note: this includes all counseling seats, including school counseling, which has had a sharper decrease in overall enrollment.)

The program has become slightly more diverse since our last program review, which was predominately white (83%; AY18) female students (88%; AY18). While the program still has a larger percentage of white (65%; AY25) and female students (76%; AY25), we have seen an increase particularly in the percentage of male students (24%; AY25), Hispanic students (15%; AY25), and non-resident students (7%; AY25).

Minimum qualifications of students/student retention for Clinical Mental Health Counseling

In addition to the requirements of the graduate school, and to maintain enrollment in the counseling program, students must:

1. Maintain an overall GPA of 3.25
2. Earn at least a 3.0 in each course
3. Demonstrate appropriate ethical/professional behavior
4. Demonstrate competent interpersonal behaviors

Although the chair evaluates potential candidates with respect to university and program admission, they are not formally awarded “candidacy” until after their Stage 1 review. Our program aligns with the CACREP requirements that applicants be considered based on 1) relevance of career goals, 2) aptitude for graduate-level study, 3) potential success for forming effective counseling relationships, and 4) respect for cultural differences. As part of the consideration for their Stage 1 review, candidacy is reviewed on the following criteria:

- 1) Relevance of career goals: students submit a candidacy paper describing their career goals in COUN 7010: Counseling Theories
- 2) Aptitude for graduate-level study: GPA and disposition assessments
- 3) Potential success for forming effective counseling relationships: disposition assessments
- 4) Respect for cultural differences: reflected in the candidacy paper

These areas are also reflected in the outcomes assessment data presented later in the program review.

c. Faculty

See the required tables in the Appendix for a summary of [faculty teaching from Fall 2024 to Summer 2025](#). As all faculty teach in Counseling part-time, faculty were separated into core full-time faculty versus non-core categories. There are a total of 4 core full-time tenured/tenure-track faculty (D’Agostino, Deptula, Krell, and Williams) who currently assume responsibility for program administration. The core faculty represent three different academic departments, which are housed in three separate academic schools. They all have service responsibilities in their undergraduate programs in addition to their work supporting the Counseling Program. An additional full-time tenured faculty member (Adams) teaches in the program but does not participate in the Graduate Counseling Programs Committee.

There are 10 additional faculty members teaching in the clinical mental health program. Two are FSU staff members: Robert Hynes (Associate Dean, Student Support Services) and Lauren O'Brien (Director of Counseling Services). The other faculty members have strong connections to the community including Devereaux Advanced Behavioral Health, Community Health Link, Assumption University, The Counseling Center at MOC, and private practice.

Across all faculty, 64% have terminal degrees. Service includes being a past member of the MA Board of Allied Mental Health and Human Services professionals, Human Rights Core Committee for Seven Hills Foundation, serving on journal editorial boards, and serving as President of NARACES, the regional association for counselor education.

Looking at the table, it is clear that the counseling faculty are experienced and have longevity at Fitchburg State University (75% of non-core faculty have been teaching here for 8+ years). However, a significant area of concern is the noticeable lack of racial/ethnic diversity among the faculty members.

d. Staff Support

Melissa Daniels is the current administrative assistant who is assigned to all of Behavioral Sciences, including Counseling, Criminal Justice, Human Services, and Sociology. Ms. Daniels's responsibilities to the Counseling program include adding courses into EMS, handling the budget and financial transactions, and assisting students as needed (granting overrides, assisting with registration, etc.).

e. Resources

Behavioral Sciences is provided with \$1500 for teaching materials as well as \$2500 for supervision travel. However, this amount is split between the Counseling and Criminal Justice graduate programs.

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The program uses the clinical meeting rooms which have both video equipment as well as one-way mirrors to conduct live observation of counseling sessions. Multiple classes use these rooms (e.g., COUN 7030, 8130, 8901). The program stores licensure and testing materials in locked cabinets in the McKay adjunct space.

f. Program Processes

This section details information about the Clinical Mental Health Program's curriculum and the overall structure of the program.

g. Curriculum

Curriculum development is the responsibility of the core counseling faculty (D'Agostino, Deptula, Krell, and Williams). The committee meets once per month and discusses curriculum issues as well as conducts student reviews (see section 2b below). A graduate student representative also joins the committee for the first half of the meeting when program/curriculum issues are discussed.

Curriculum changes during this review period include:

- Introduction of the Special Issues in Counseling Certificate Program
 - Created a 15-credit certificate program for individuals who may be interested in learning more about counseling, but are not interested or able to complete the full master's program.
- Updates to course title and description to be more current
 - COUN 8140 course title changed from "Alcohol Abuse and Other Addictive Disorders" to "Substance Use and Addictive Disorders."
 - The course description for COUN 8300: Psychological Testing and Assessment was updated to more accurately reflect the role that counselors play in psychological testing and add in cultural and social justice responsiveness in assessment practices.
 - The course description for COUN 7030: Introduction to Professional Counseling was updated to include skills in ethical practices and multicultural counseling, as well as clearly indicate that this course is part of the Stage 1 review process.
- Drafted 4+2 program
 - Drafted 4+2 program to support the pipeline of Fitchburg State University psychological science and human services undergraduate students entering the Counseling Program.

Master's Program Curriculum:

As previously stated, the Master's program is a 60-credit degree. All courses are required, including 12-credits of internship. Courses are primarily delivered in the evening, with one course delivered online (COUN 8030) and two others delivered in a hybrid format (COUN 7010 and COUN 8300). There are also no electives. Prerequisites for program admission consist of successful completion (2.5 or higher) of a course in developmental psychology and a course in statistics. See the appendix for rotations of courses. The specific courses are as follows:

Stage I

COUN 7010 - Counseling Theories

COUN 7030 - Introduction to Professional Counseling: Issues & Skills

Stage II

COUN 7005 - Professional Practice, Standards & Ethics: Mental Health Counseling
 COUN 8015 - Research and Program Evaluation
 COUN 8030 - Life Span Development
 COUN 8130 - Psychopathology I: Diagnosis and Assessment
 COUN 8132 - Psychopathology II: Treatment Planning and Delivery
 (with 50-hour fieldwork)
 Coun 8140 - Substance Use and Addictive Disorders
 COUN 8190 - Social and Cultural Foundations: Issues in Counseling
 COUN 8215 - Lifestyles and Career Development
 COUN 8300 - Psychological Testing and Assessment: Theory and Practice
 COUN 8625 - Crisis Intervention for Counselors
 COUN 8700 - Group Work and Leadership in Mental Health Counseling
 COUN 8710 - Family Systems: Models and Interventions
 COUN 8901 - Counseling Techniques & Case Analysis: Mental Health Counseling
 (with 100-hour practicum)

Stage III

COUN 9090 - Internship in Mental Health Counseling

Eligibility for Field Experience: Eligibility for field experience classes (COUN 8132 Psychopathology II: Treatment Planning and Delivery; COUN 8901 - Counseling Techniques and Case Analysis: Mental Health Counseling) requires admission to the MS in Counseling program. In other words, we do not accept non-degree seeking students to take these courses.

Eligibility for COUN 9090 Internship: Stage III of the program is determined by the Behavioral Science Committee on Graduate Programs based on: Candidacy, a grade point average of at least 3.0 in Stage I and Stage II courses, Stage I and Stage II courses completed, Overall GPA of 3.25, Demonstration of effective written and oral communication skills, Demonstration of competent interpersonal skills, Demonstration of competent personal and appropriate ethical behavior.

Special Issues in Counseling Certificate Program Curriculum:

The certificate program is 15 credits, consisting of 2 required courses and a choice of 3 out of elective courses.

Required Courses - 6 credits

COUN 7030 - Introduction to Professional Counseling: Issues & Skills
 COUN 8130 - Psychopathology I: Diagnosis and Assessment

Elective Courses - Choose 3 - 9 credits

COUN 7005 - Professional Practice, Standards and Ethics: Mental Health and Family

Counseling

COUN 8030 - Life Span Development

COUN 8100: Childhood Trauma and Its Impact on School Based Services

COUN 8140 - Substance Use and Addictive Disorders

COUN 8190 - Social and Cultural Foundations: Issues in Counseling

COUN 8215 - Lifestyles and Career Development

COUN 8300 - Psychological Testing and Assessment: Theory and Practice COUN 8625
- Crisis Intervention for Counselors

There is no stage review process for the certificate program. However, students must obtain a 3.0 in each course for it to count toward their program requirements.

Learning expectations and learning supports

As previously described, students are expected to maintain an overall GPA of a 3.25 as well as earn a score of at least 3.0 in each class. Student progress through the program is monitored by the Program Chair, who serves as the academic advisor for all Counseling students. Master's students are reviewed at least 3 points during their program. In addition, program reviews can be initiated by the advisor at any time when there is concern about a student. All Counseling faculty are encouraged to submit a written disposition assessment if there is ever a concern about a student. The purpose of this process is to allow students to have early information about any concerns about their suitability for clinical work, before placement in internship. This monitoring is a key part of the counseling program as it is important to both allow the student, in certain circumstances, the opportunity to remediate as well as protect the vulnerable populations the students may be working with in the future.

Stage I review: This review occurs after the completion of COUN 7010 Counseling Theories and COUN 7030 Introduction to Professional Counseling. Disposition ratings are obtained from the professors in these classes and the student's progress is discussed at a Counseling Program meeting (without the graduate student representative present). Students who do not meet the requirements may be more closely monitored, may have their Stage I review postponed for more information, may be asked to repeat courses, or may be dismissed from the program. Depending on the circumstances, the committee may ask a student to attend the meeting to answer questions or submit written work to be considered by the committee.

Stage 2 review: This review happens in the Spring semester before the student starts Internship in the Fall. Students must pass this review in order to be placed in the internship seminar class. Students' grades, overall performance, disposition assessments, and field supervisor ratings are considered.

Stage 3 review: This review happens before graduation. Students' progress and success in their

internship is evaluated.

f. Faculty

There are 4 full-time core Counseling faculty (Lynn D'Agostino, Daneen Deptula, Megan Krell, and Mark Williams) who are involved in the curriculum and student monitoring in the program. There are no faculty members who are allocated to the Counseling program full-time.

Megan Krell currently serves as chair, is a member of the Behavioral Sciences Department, has one course release per semester for Counseling program administration and advising. She teaches Counseling courses as part of load and/or overload, depending on departmental needs. She also teaches one Counseling course during the Summer semester. (Note: Daneen Deptula served as Program Chair during the majority of this review period from September 1, 2019 to June 30, 2025).

Daneen Deptula serves as the fieldwork coordinator for Counseling, is a member of the Psychological Science Department, receives one course release per year for this task, and typically teaches one Counseling course per semester as part of load. She additionally teaches one Summer course as overload. (Note: Megan Krell served as Fieldwork Coordinator during the majority of this review period from September 1, 2019 to January 15, 2025. Mark Williams served as interim fieldwork coordinator from January 16, 2025-June 30, 2025).

Lynn D'Agostino is a member of the Education Department. She teaches COUN 8190: Social and Cultural Diversity in the Spring and Summer semesters as overload.

Mark Williams is a member of the Behavioral Sciences Department. He teaches COUN 7030: Intro to Professional Counseling regularly in the fall and summer semesters, and in the spring semester as needed.

Two FSU Counseling Services staff members (Robert Hynes and Lauren O'Brien) also regularly teach in the program.

Faculty have the opportunity to be involved in a wide range of development activities. All the faculty (adjunct and full-time) are welcome to the meetings and workshops offered through the Center for Teaching and Learning. The School of Graduate, Online and Continuing Education offers a summer 2-day workshop and fall 1-evening workshop geared specifically for faculty teaching in their program.

Program outcomes

This section details the Clinical Mental Health Program's assessment of the overall program as well as individual student outcomes.

g. Program

Students who graduate from the Clinical Mental Health program are eligible for licensure after successfully passing the National Clinical Mental Health Examination (NCMHCE) offered by the National Board for Certified Counselors as well as completing 3360 hours (approximately 2 years full time) of supervised post-masters experience. Unfortunately, the MA licensure board and NBCC have not authorized the release of licensure data despite multiple requests over the years from Massachusetts counselor preparation programs.

Alumni data, as reported in the first-year survey 2023 (n=4) and third-year study 2020 (n=2), indicated that 100% of respondents were employed in the field at the time of the survey. Given the low response rates of this survey, the Counseling Program should explore additional avenues of gaining access to alumni.

In addition, at the completion of the student's internship, supervisors were asked if they would recommend employment at their agency for the student as a counselor. 24/25 (96%) supervisors who answered this question indicated support for employing the student if they could.

h. Student Learning Outcomes

In addition to the licensure requirements, the Counseling program has adopted the learning outcomes of the Education Unit Conceptual Framework, and focused on the "Counselor as Reflective Leader" at its center. Candidates who complete the Clinical Mental Health program are **knowledgeable, skillful, caring** and **ethical**. This individual **knows** the subject matter that they deliver, is **skilled** in making decisions about the most effective intervention method to use when with diverse clients, makes decisions based upon sound **ethical** behavior, and demonstrates **caring** for their clients through commitment to both the clients and the profession. The Clinical Mental Health learning outcomes are:

- 1) Demonstration of effective counseling skills
- 2) Engagement in professional behavior
- 3) Displaying caring for others
- 4) Demonstration of effective oral and written communication skills

The Special Issues in Counseling Certificate Program learning objectives are slightly different, and as follows:

- 1) Exhibit empathy and understanding the process of helping others
- 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)
- 3) articulate an application of their coursework to their professional development goals

- 4) demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills

There are too few students to report or make meaning out of the Special Issues Certificate data.

Description of Assessment Measures. The program utilizes multiple types of assessments. Some assessments are utilized as part of the Stage review process, and others are used to evaluate the program itself. A description of each is provided below.

- 1) Disposition Assessment (Collected during Stages 1, 2, and 3): This measure is shared with the school counseling program and is similar to those used by the rest of the Education Unit. It reflects the core areas of the program's learning outcomes including being knowledgeable, skillful, caring, and ethical. It also reflects areas of professionalism in the field. The disposition assessment is completed by faculty members for Coun 7010 and Coun 7030, and by field supervisors in Coun 8132's 50-hour fieldwork and Coun 8901's 100-hour practicum. The disposition assessment is collected during each of the three internship site visits from the Internship site supervisor, and the Internship seminar faculty completes a disposition assessment at the completion of the internship.
- 2) Clinical Skills rubric (Completed during Stages 2, and 3): In the Clinical Skills Rubric, students are assessed with regards to skills such as pacing, interventions, vocabulary, rapport, and other clinical skills. This rubric was updated at the beginning of this review period, and we have been using the updated form for several years now. This measure is used across multiple courses in the program (Stage 2: 8710 and 8130; Stage 3: Internship). In Stage 2 courses, they are used in class role-plays and completed by the university faculty. For internship, they are based on an actual interaction with a client. Students have the choice of being observed by their site supervisor during a session, or recording the session for review by the university faculty.
- 3) Candidacy paper rubric (Stage 1): Students complete a written product in Coun 7010 which details: how their background will help them develop counseling relationships, their approach to diversity issues, their intended clinical population, and their theoretical orientation. The rubric is completed by the faculty member in Coun 7010 to assess these areas as well as written communication skills.
- 4) Coun 7010: Counseling Theories test scores (Stage 1): A consistent set of questions are asked as part of a larger pool of questions for the midterm and final exam in Coun 7010. These questions ask students to differentiate different counseling theories.

- 5) Psychopathology Diagnosis Role-play (Stage 2): Students complete a role-play in which they are required to pose questions designed to show their understanding of differential diagnosis. Part of the assessment rates their questioning skills, and is completed by their university faculty member.
- 6) Counselor Work Sample (Stage 3): Students complete a work product which details their interactions with a client in terms of setting counseling goals and objectives, developing an assessment plan, determining outcomes and analysis, and conducting reflection and self- evaluation. The university faculty supervising the students' internship completes a rubric based on this work product. The assignment and rubric is shared across sections of internship.
- 7) Internship Evaluation (Stage 3): This measure is completed by the internship student's site supervisor. Key areas include the student's counseling skills, assessment and appraisal skills, information skills, general communication, and professional skills. Although this is collected at two time periods during internship (midterm and final points), this report will focus on the final assessment conducted at the end of the internship.

Summary of Findings

Due to the small sample sizes, the data is reported in the aggregate (as opposed to year by year). It includes all students who received scores on the assessments in the past 5 years (Fall 2020 - Summer 2025).

A. FSU Learning Outcomes - Clinical Mental Health Master's Program

The FSU counseling program also has learning outcomes reflecting 1) demonstration of effective counseling skills, 2) engaging in professional behavior 3) displaying caring for clients and 4) demonstration of communication skills. Data for these outcomes can be found across the assessment measures.

Learning Outcome #1: Students will demonstrate effective counseling skills	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	Stage 1	*	Stage 2	*	Stage 3	*
Clinical Skills Rubric (Target for meeting standard is a	*	*	*	*	*	*

rating of 3 on a 4 point scale)						
Structure: Was the beginning of the session appropriately structured? Was direction for the session provided?	N/A	N/A	3.11/4 (N=18)	94.44% Rating as meeting standard	3.47/4 (N=53)	94.34% Rating as meeting standard
Preparedness: Was the counselor appropriately prepared for the session?	N/A	N/A	3/4 (N=20)	100% Rating as meeting standard	3.72/4 (N=53)	100% Rating as meeting standard
Interventions: How well did the counselor employ appropriate interventions for the client and their problem?	N/A	N/A	3.5/4 (N=12)	100% Rating as meeting standard	3.41/4 (N=51)	98.04% Rating as meeting standard
Vocabulary Level: Was the vocabulary used by the counselor appropriate for the person being counseled?	N/A	N/A	3.37/4 (N=19)	100% Rating as meeting standard	3.63/4 (N=52)	98.08% Rating as meeting standard
Pacing: How well paced was the session? Did the counselor allow time for the client to respond and allow for silence when appropriate?	N/A	N/A	3.26/4 (N=19)	100% Rating as meeting standard	3.39/4 (N=53)	90.57% Rating as meeting standard
Culturally Appropriate: Did the counselor provide culturally appropriate counseling?	N/A	N/A	2.95/4 (N=19)	94.74% Rating as meeting standard	3.71/4 (N=48)	97.92% Rating as meeting standard
Closing: Was time allowed for summarization? Was the stage set for the next session?	N/A	N/A	3/4 (N=12)	100% Rating as meeting standard	3.54/4 (N=50)	96% Rating as meeting standard
Internship Evaluation (Target for meeting standard is a rating of competent, 4 on a 5 point scale)	*	*	*	*	*	*
Ability to conduct an interview appropriately	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.44/5 (N=48)	100% Rating as meeting standard
Focuses on the content or problem	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.54/5 (N=48)	100% Rating as meeting standard
Maintains an awareness of the	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.44/5	95.83%

client's readiness to change					(N=48)	Rating as meeting standard
Able to utilize appropriate data and information methods	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.45/5 (N=47)	100% Rating as meeting standard
Able to help clients and others accumulate, integrate, and interpret information pertinent to expressed needs	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.34/5 (N=48)	100% Rating as meeting standard
Able to make reasonable and effective referrals	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.46/5 (N=48)	100% Rating as meeting standard

Learning Outcome #2: Students will engage in professional behavior	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	Stage 1	*	Stage 2	*	Stage 3	*
Disposition Assessments (Target for meeting standard is a rating of proficient; 3 on a 4 point scale)	*	*	*	*	*	*
Demonstrates preparedness for coursework and/or fieldwork	3.11/4 (N=183)	99.45% Rating as meeting standard	3.37/4 (N=107)	98.13% Rating as meeting standard	3.74/4 (N=43)	100% Rating as meeting standard
Interacts with others in a thoughtful and considerate manner	3.18/4 (N=183)	100% Rating as meeting standard	3.50/4 (N=109)	99.08% Rating as meeting standard	3.77/4 (N=44)	100% Rating as meeting standard
Reflects on their work, behavior, and/or practice	3/4 (N=185)	100% Rating as meeting standard	3.43/4 (N=108)	98.15% Rating as meeting standard	3.86/4 (N=44)	100% Rating as meeting standard
Demonstrates respect for human diversity, community, and cultural perspectives.	3.17/4 (N=183)	100% Rating as meeting standard	3.54/4 (N=109)	100% Rating as meeting standard	3.86/4 (N=44)	100% Rating as meeting standard
Meets all delegated obligations.	3.18/4 (N=182)	95.60% Rating as	3.51/4 (N=108)	99.07% Rating as	3.80/4 (N=44)	100% Rating as meeting

		meeting standard		meeting standard		standard
Demonstrates professional demeanor and a passion for counseling	3.10/4 (N=183)	99.45% Rating as meeting standard	3.57/4 (N=108)	99.07% Rating as meeting standard	3.82/4 (N=44)	100% Rating as meeting standard
Internship Evaluation (Target for meeting standard is a rating of competent, 4 on a 5 point scale)	*	*	*	*	*	*
Personal appearance	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.58/5 (N=48)	97.92% Rating as meeting standard
Able to maintain appropriate boundaries	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.65/5 (N=48)	97.92% Rating as meeting standard
Ability to be honest and accurate in self-evaluation	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.69/5 (N=48)	100% Rating as meeting standard
Openness to growth and learning	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.81/5 (N=48)	100% Rating as meeting standard

Learning Outcome #3: Students will display caring for others	*	*	*	*	*	*
Blank	Stage 1	*	Stage 2	*	Stage 3	*
Disposition Assessments (Target for meeting standard is a rating of proficient; 3 on a 4 point scale)	*	*	*	*	*	*
Demonstrates respect for clients'/students' differences and shows empathy when working with clients/students.	3.13/4 (N=182)	100% Rating as meeting standard	3.56/4 (N=109)	100% Rating as meeting standard	3.80/4 (N=44)	100% Rating as meeting standard

Candidacy Paper Rubric (Target for meeting standard is a rating of meets expectations; 2 on a 3 point scale)	*	*	*	*	*	*
Potential success in forming effective counseling relationships	2.02/3 (N=46)	89.13% Rating as meeting standard	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Clinical Skills Rubric (Target for meeting standard is a rating of 3 on a 4 point scale)	*	*	*	*	*	*
Empathy: Did the counselor display empathy toward the client?	N/A	N/A	3.55/4 (N=20)	100% Rating as meeting standard	3.72/4 (N=53)	96.23% Rating as meeting standard
Counseling Relationship: Did the counselor establish rapport with the counselee to set the stage for a positive counseling relationship? Has the counselor demonstrated existing rapport with the counselee?	N/A	N/A	3.1/4 (N=20)	100% Rating as meeting standard	3.60/4 (N=53)	96.23% Rating as meeting standard
Internship Evaluation (Target for meeting standard is a rating of competent, 4 on a 5 point scale)	*	*	*	*	*	*
Demonstrates sensitivity to client	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.73/5 (N=48)	100% Rating as meeting standard
Focuses on clients as persons of worth	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.77/5 (N=48)	100% Rating as meeting standard
Initiates a working relationship	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.65/5 (N=48)	100% Rating as meeting standard
Communicates understanding and acceptance	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.66/5 (N=47)	100% Rating as meeting standard

Learning Outcome #4:	**	*	*	*	*	*
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Students will demonstrate effective written and oral communication skills						
Blank	Stage 1	*	Stage 2	*	Stage 3	*
Disposition Assessments (Target for meeting standard is a rating of proficient; 3 on a 4 point scale)	*	*	*	*	*	*
Communicates effectively in speech and writing	3.24/4 (N=183)	95.08% Rating as meeting standard	3.36/4 (N=109)	96.33% Rating as meeting standard	3.75/4 (N=44)	100% Rating as meeting standard
Candidacy Paper Rubric (Target for meeting standard is a rating of meets expectations; 2 on a 3 point scale)	*	*	*	*	*	*
Written communication	2.26/3 (N=46)	93.48% Rating as meeting standard	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Internship Evaluation (Target for meeting standard is a rating of competent, 4 on a 5 point scale)	*	*	*	*	*	*
Able to convey information orally	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.63/5 (N=48)	100% Rating as meeting standard
Able to convey information in written form	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.56/5 (N=48)	100% Rating as meeting standard
Able to communicate effectively with clients	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.56/5 (N=48)	97.92% Rating as meeting standard
Able to communicate effectively with colleagues	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.56/5 (N=48)	97.92% Rating as meeting

						standard
Able to communicate effectively with supervisor	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.69/5 (N=48)	100% Rating as meeting standard

Impressions based on the FSU learning outcome data:

1. The Counseling program assesses our four learning outcomes across multiple time periods, using both faculty and site supervisor raters. Students are assessed on their written work as well as on their clinical skills. All of the Stage 3 data shows over 90% of students meeting the program standard for the individual item.
2. Learning Outcome 1: Students will demonstrate effective counseling skills, does not have any Stage 1 data. Historically, this was utilized in the COUN 7010: Counseling Theories role-play assignment, however faculty decided this was not an appropriate use of the rubric, as not every theory assigned to students utilizes the skills the rubric assesses. It may be worthwhile to explore if there is any experience in COUN 7030: Introduction to Professional Counseling which may be able to use the rubric.
3. The N for the Clinical Skills Rubric items in Stage 2 appear lower than expected. This suggests that this assessment tool was not being utilized consistently by non-core faculty.

Ongoing changes made to the program based on assessment data:

Student performance was rated very favorably in the assessment data, particularly by internship supervisors. Slight improvement in scores was observed from Stage 1 to 3, corresponding in student growth in these skills. No specific student weaknesses were observed.

Trend Data:

The five-year average retention rate for students in the program is 62.40% (range = 20% to 100%).

Analysis and Proposed Action Plan for the Future

1. Comparative strengths and distinctiveness, and areas of improvement across all program levels

- A. Faculty. The counseling faculty currently consists of 4 tenured/tenured track full-time faculty members with a demonstrated commitment to cover graduate courses, often in addition to a full undergraduate load of coursework. Despite being pulled from three different undergraduate departments, the full-time counseling faculty work very well together. The

program is also staffed by a solid group of counseling professionals who adjunct in the program. Many of these adjunct faculty have consistently taught in the program (e.g., 18 or more years) which gives the students and the coursework stability from year to year.

- B. Student performance. Overall, the assessment data indicate that site supervisors rate our students highly across multiple program learning outcomes. In particular, the finding that 98.11% of site supervisors would recommend our students for a position speaks highly of both our students as well as their preparation for the field.
- C. Enrollment. Enrollment in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program has decreased by 25% (79 in AY21 to 59 in AY25) in the past five years.

Academic Year (Fall, Spring, Summer)	Total Number of Enrollment by Seats Filled
AY21	499
AY22	442
AY23	380
AY24	304
AY25	347

(Note: This includes clinical mental health and school counseling students.)

While the program is still quite healthy with the current enrollment, the decrease in enrollment is notable and requires intentional planning to ensure its stabilization and growth. This decrease not only impacts the graduate program, but the pipeline of mental health counselors to support the regional community. Various methods of increasing enrollment, such as establishing a 4+2 program for undergraduate human services and psychological science majors at the university, are being explored.

- D. Assessment. The program also collects extensive assessment data, across different time periods in the program.

2. Opportunities to extend existing strengths and resources in place or needed

The following are opportunities for us to strengthen our current program, which would be supported by our current resources. More information on each is provided in the action plan section.

- Reconvene the counseling advisory board.
- Increase student enrollment through the 4+2 program.
- Increase collaboration with library services.

3. Weaknesses found during self-study

- D. Assessment process. Despite the quality of assessment data collected by the program, data entry and analysis continues to be time-consuming and cumbersome. Exploring avenues for equitable distribution of data entry and/or automation of data entry would greatly benefit the program.
- E. Diversity. The trend data reveal a notable lack of racial/ethnic diversity in the faculty teaching in the program. The student population would benefit from more ethnic as well as gender diversity.
- F. Staffing. As previously noted, the counseling program is staffed mostly by adjunct faculty along with a few full-time faculty members whose primary responsibility is teaching in the undergraduate program. This structure results in a significant strain on faculty and can result in a lack of communication between faculty teaching in the program. We have many wonderful and dedicated adjuncts and it would be beneficial to increase the communication and engagement with this important group of professionals. Although there are Center for Teaching & Learning professional development opportunities, as well as a biennial professional development opportunity for SGOCE faculty, these are not attended by our adjunct faculty. Current efforts to engage faculty include the chair communicating with faculty over email to see if they need resources or support, the development of a counseling-specific faculty manual, and 1:1 support as needed. More support may be needed, particularly when it comes to assessment and licensure issues. In addition, full-time faculty do not have the support they need to pursue new initiatives such as new programs or changes, as their priority is to their undergraduate assignment.
- G. Library Engagement. The library report indicated that there was minimal utilization of library resources. Most notably, there were 0 information literacy sessions (asynchronous or synchronous) that librarians provided for counseling courses. The counseling research guide was utilized 40.92% less than average. And course reserves were under-utilized, with only 2 mental health counseling texts on reserve. This concern was also brought up by the graduate student representative prior to receiving the data from the library.
- H. Advising. In a survey conducted (see Appendix A) on advising effectiveness, there seems to be a disconnect for some students regarding the program expectations and advising role. Students would benefit from a counseling-specific orientation to the program.

- I. Mission & Learning Outcomes. The mission of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program has not been updated in 20+ years. It is unknown when the mission was last reviewed. Establishing a regular timeline for review would be advisable. Similarly, the learning outcomes would benefit from a review to ensure they accurately reflect current trends in the field.

4. Opportunities for addressing weaknesses

See action plan.

5. Positioning of the program to address future direction of the discipline in the next five years

The program meets Massachusetts licensure board requirements for the LMHC license. Through attendance at MARIACES and review of the Board of Allied Health and Human Services Professionals meeting minutes, it does not appear that there will be challenges in the program's ability to prepare students for Massachusetts licensure in the foreseeable future.

6. Proposed Action plan for the next five years

Based on the findings of this program review, the following objectives, strategies, timeline, and methods for achievement have been identified.

Objective 1: Modernize Strategic Foundation	Blank	Blank
Strategy	Timeline	Methods
1.1 Review Mission & Vision	AY26-27	Program Chair to lead a formal review at the Graduate Counseling Programs Committee; initiate change procedures if updates are required.
1.2 Review Learning Objectives	AY25-26	Program Chair to lead review of learning objectives to ensure alignment with current industry trends and standards with the Graduate Counseling Programs Committee.

1.3 Review Name of Certificate Program	AY26-27	Program Chair to lead review of certificate name to ensure alignment with course requirements and intent with the Graduate Counseling Programs Committee.
Objective 2: Systematize Assessment Process] = [-ses	Blank	Blank
2.1 Standardize Clinical Skills Rubric Implementation	Ongoing	Program Chair to identify target courses and confirm semesterly implementation with faculty.
2.2 Formalize Advising Assessment	Every Spring	Program Chair to administer an annual advising satisfaction survey to all students.
2.3 Automate Assessment Data	Fall 2026	Program Chair to consult with Institutional Research and Counseling Fieldwork Coordinator on appropriate digital data-entry and analysis tools. Implement thereafter if applicable.
Objective 3: Strengthen Program Navigation	Blank	Blank
3.1 Optimize Course Sequencing	Spring 2026 – Summer 2027	Program Chair to establish a sub-committee in Spring 2026 to evaluate summer course intensity and sequencing; implement approved changes by Summer 2027.
3.2 Centralize Program Resources	Spring 2026 (Launch); Ongoing	Program Chair to build a Blackboard "Program Hub" for manuals and licensure forms; Counseling Fieldwork Coordinator and Behavioral Sciences Library Liaison to serve as ongoing contributors.
3.3 Launch Program Orientation	Every Fall &	Program Chair and SGOCE

	Summer 1	Counseling Liaison to facilitate synchronous orientations for new students (to be aligned with offerings of COUN 7030: Intro to Professional Counseling).
3.4 Address Lack of Diversity Among Counseling Faculty	Ongoing	Program Chair to meet with Human Resources to establish a plan for adjunct faculty recruitment.
Objective 4: Enhance Academic Support through Library Partnerships	Blank	Blank
4.1 Point of Need Research Support	Spring 2026; Ongoing	Program Chair to coordinate with faculty to schedule Behavioral Sciences Library Liaison for classroom sessions (APA/Database searches) at specific points of need.
4.2 Promote Digital Lending/Reserves	Spring 2026	Program Chair to update the Counseling Faculty Manual with instructions for utilizing course reserves and controlled digital lending.
4.3 Integrate Library into Research Course	Ongoing	Program Chair to facilitate a formal collaboration between COUN 8015 instructors and Behavioral Sciences Library Liaison.
Objective 5: Expand Program Growth & Visibility	Blank	Blank
5.1 Launch 4+2 Program	Spring 2026: System Setup Summer 2026: Launch/Tracking	Program Chair to coordinate with SGOCE and Registrar to finalize system integration. Program Chair to create an undergraduate tracking system. Partner with Admissions,

		Behavioral Sciences, and Psychological Science to launch marketing.
5.2 Evaluate MPCAC Accreditation	Fall 2026 – Spring 2027	Program Chair to conduct a feasibility study on accreditation requirements and present a recommendation to the committee for potential AY 2028 action.

b. Resources necessary to achieve the plan

Many of these objectives can be achieved with the existing staff and budgetary resources.

Additional funds may be necessary to support:

- Automation of assessment data
- MPCAC external accreditation
 - [Fee Schedule](#)
 - \$3000 application fee + \$2000 x 2-3 site visitor fee = \$7000 to \$9000 startup
 - \$2500-\$3000 annual fee (based on enrolled students. 51-100 = \$2500 and 100+ = \$3000)

Appendix - Program Review Required Components

1. Student Data

A. Enrollment

Blank	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Clinical MH Counseling	79	73	60	57	59
EdS	5	4	0	0	0

B. Overall Enrollments

Blank	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
All counseling courses	499	442	380	304	347

Note: These numbers represent all students in counseling, including school counseling

C. Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Blank	AY2021	AY2022	AY2023	AY2024	AY2025
Asian	1	0	0	1	1
Black	5	4	2	5	5
Hispanic	9	8	6	7	8
Non-Resident	0	0	0	0	4
Native American	0	0	0	0	0
Pacific Islander	0	1	1	1	0
White	44	55	44	35	35
Two or more	1	2	1	1	0
Unknown	0	0	0	0	1

D. Student Enrollment by Gender

Blank	AY2021	AY2022	AY2023	AY2024	AY2025
Female	56	61	45	40	41
Male	4	9	9	10	13

E. Retention in the Program

Blank	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Retention	70%	89%	25%	89%	80%

Note: These numbers are reflected fall to fall only. Our 2-year accelerated program has a summer start which is not reflected in retention data.

F. Graduation Rates

Blank	AY17	AY18	AY19	AY20	AY21
5-year Grad Rates Clinical Mental Health Counseling	50%	20%	100%	67%	75%

G. Time to Degree Completion

Blank	AY17	AY18	AY19	AY20	AY21
Average time (in years) to degree for 5 years cohort	2.3	3.3	2.6	2.6	3.0

H. D-F-W Rates combined 2020-2025

To successfully complete COUN courses, students must achieve a 3.0 or higher. Grades between 2.0 and 2.7 do not count toward the program and must be repeated; this also triggers a program review. Any grade below a 2.0 is graded a 0.0 under the SGOCE grading scale, and results in automatic program dismissal.

Course Number/Title	Rate of Grades between 2.0 and 2.7	Rate of 0.0 Grades	Rate of Withdrawals
COUN 7005: Mental Hth Cou:Pro Prac,Std,Et	1.16	0.00	4.65
*COUN 7010: Counseling Theories	3.23	2.15	22.58
*COUN 7030: Intro to Prof Coun: Iss & Skil	0.00	1.03	4.12
*COUN 8015: Research and Prog Evaluation	4.29	1.43	4.29
*COUN 8030: Lifespan Development	2.56	1.28	3.85
*COUN 8130:	3.77	1.89	0.00

Psychopathology I:Diag-Assmt			
COUN 8132: Psychopathology II:Treatment	0.00	0.00	7.46
COUN 8140: Substance Use	2.67	0.00	0.00
*COUN 8190: Soc/Cultur Found:Iss in Couse	0.00	1.85	1.85
COUN 8215: Lifestyle & Career Development	0.00	2.38	2.38
*COUN 8300: Psych Test and Assmt:Theory/Pr	3.39	0.00	6.78
COUN 8710: Family Systems:Models & Interv	0.00	0.00	2.70
COUN 8901: Counsel Tech & Case Anlys: MH	0.00	0.00	3.17
COUN 9090: Internship in Mental Health Counseling	0.00	0.00	1.37

*Indicates all counseling students take this course, and as such is inclusive of clinical mental health, school counseling, EdS, and certificate students.

H. Average Class Size

Class caps range from 10 for classes that require a field experience (as determined by licensure regulations for supervision) to 20. For Fall 2018, the average number of students enrolled in a COUN course was 13. The average number of students enrolled in Fall 2024 courses was 11.

M. Admissions Funnel - Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Semester	Total Apps Started	Admits	Intents Received
Fall 2020 - Summer 2021	122	61	52
Fall 2021 - Summer 2022	107	36	23
Fall 2022 - Summer 2023	96	35	27

Fall 2023 - Summer 2024	106	31	22
Fall 2024 - Summer 2025	128	38	32

Admissions Funnel - Special Issues in Counseling Certificate

Academic Year	Total Apps Started	Admits	Intents Received
Fall 2020 - Summer 2021	4	3	3
Fall 2021 - Summer 2022	0	0	0
Fall 2022 - Summer 2023	4	3	3
Fall 2023 - Summer 2024	0	0	0
Fall 2024 - Summer 2025	3	2	2

2. Academic Advising

As per the DGCE contract, academic advising is the responsibility of the chair/coordinator of the program. All counseling students ($n = 74$ as of 9.1.2025) are advised by the Graduate Counseling Chair: Megan Krell. This includes clinical mental health counseling, school counseling, Ed.S., and certificate program students.

3. Effectiveness of Advising

As described above, advising data has not been collected regularly. Establishing a more consistent schedule for advising is warranted. In Fall 2025, following the university advising period, a Google Forms survey was sent to all mental health counseling students at the time ($n=62$). A total of 18 students responded in a two week period. The results are below:

My advisor is able to meet with me as needed.

Strongly Agree = 33.3% ($n = 6$)

Agree = 33.3% ($n = 6$)

Neither Agree or Disagree = 33.3% ($n = 6$)

I have been able to spend as much time with my advisor as I needed.

Strongly Agree = 27.8% ($n = 5$)

Agree = 27.8% ($n = 25$)

Neither Agree or Disagree = 33.3% ($n = 6$)

Disagree = 11.1% ($n = 2$)

I feel comfortable reaching out to my advisor with questions.

Strongly Agree = 50% ($n = 9$)

Agree = 27.8% ($n = 5$)

Neither Agree or Disagree = 11.1% ($n = 2$)

Disagree = 11.1% ($n = 2$)

Overall, how would you rate the overall quality of the advising you have received?

Excellent = 27.8% ($n = 5$)

Very Good = 33.3% ($n = 6$)

Good = 33.3% ($n = 6$)

Fair = 5.6% ($n = 1$)

Poor = 0% ($n = 0$)

4. Integration into the department – clubs, departmental committee representation

There are no clubs as part of the counseling program. A student serves on the counseling graduate committee, attends meetings, and is responsible for representing student concerns. Student representation alternates mental health and school counseling on a yearly basis.

5. After graduation – employment, graduate school

No standardized method exists to track graduate student employment. A review of known alumni identified via LinkedIn shows places of employment including, but not limited to, Community Health Link, Spectrum Health, LUK, Counseling and Assessment Clinic, Clinical & Support Options, Making Opportunity Count, local schools and private practice.

Demographic Faculty Summary (AY25)

Note: All faculty members teach part time;

Core faculty are those who hold full-time undergraduate appointments
and serve on the Graduate Counseling Programs Committee

Blank	Core Faculty	Non-core Faculty
Women	3	6
Men	2	2
<i>Ethnicity</i>	NA	NA
White/Caucasian	5	8
Asian	0	0
Hispanic/Latino	0	0
Black/African American	0	0
American Indian	0	0
International or Other	0	0
<i>Credentials – highest degree held</i>	NA	
Bachelor's Degree	0	0
Master's Degree	0	5
Doctorate	5	3
<i>Experience at FSU</i>	NA	NA
0-3 years	0	2
4-7 years	1	0
8-11 years	1	3
12-15 years	2	1
16-24 years	1	0
25+ years	0	2

Faculty Credential Table

*** Indicate member of curriculum committee for 2024-2025**

Name	Rank	Type of Appt	Ft/ Pt	Highest Degree	Professional Certs	Day Load	y Brief Desc ription of Acti vity	NA	NA
							Teaching	Scholarship	Service
Chris Adams*	Assoc Prof	T	FT	Ph.D.	Licensed Psychologist (NC)	No	Family Therapy, Lifestyles and Career Development	Religion and spirituality in counseling; Counselor training; Career development	Editorial Board for Journal of Counseling & Development, ACA Conference reviewer, past FSU Graduate Council
Daneen Deptula*	Prof	T	FT	Ph.D.	None	1 per semester plus internship coordination	Counseling Theories, Psychopathology I, Lifespan Development	Cyberbullying, Bystander behavior, Adolescent sexual activity	Editorial Board for Journal of School Psychology, past FSU Graduate Council
Megan Krell*	Prof	T	FT	Ph.D.	Approved Clinical Supervisor, National Certified Counselor, Human Services Board-Certified Practitioner	1 per semester as able, plus program chair (1 per semester release)	Group Work and Leadership, Lifespan Development, Practicum/ Internship	Supervision mapping, syllabus development, College and career readiness for students with autism	FSU Faculty award for service, Former Naraces Treasurer, Past-President Masca, Counselor Current Educator Liaison MASCA,

									past FSU Graduate Council
Mark Williams*	Assoc. Prof	T	FT	Ph.D.		No	Intro to Professional Counseling, Research Methods & Program Evaluation	Gerontology, LGBTQ+ health and human services, grief and loss, and religious and spiritual assessment	Former Vice President New England Organization for Human Services, Reader for Council for Standards in Human Services Education
Lynn D'Agostino*	Asst. Prof	T	FT	Ed.D.	ESL Teacher	No	Social and Cultural Foundations: Issues in Counseling	NA	Former Field Placement and Partnership Coordinator for FSU Education Unit, Current Graduate Program Chair of Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), the M.Ed. Pedagogy and Learning

Robert Hynes	Visit Assoc Prof	NTT	PT	Ph.D.	Lmhc (Ma)	No	Psychopathology II, Research, Counseling Techniques and Case Analysis	Gambling Education, Men/Masculinity, Mental Health of College Students	Associate Dean for Student Support Services; Former Director of FSU Counseling Services
Margaret O'Hearn-Curran	Assoc Prof	NTT	PT	Ph.D.	Lmhc (Ma), Licensed School Counselor, Principal, Special Education Director, School Psychologist. Psychologist	No	Psychological Testing		Principal of Johnny Appleseed, Principal's Advisory Council for Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Gordon Benson	Visiting Instr	NTT	PT	Ph.D.	Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Licensed Psychologist	No	Standards and Ethics Mental Health and Family Counseling	NA	Special Projects Community Health Link, Past member and Vice-Chair of MA Board of Allied Mental Health and Human Services Professionals, President of MA Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

Lauren O'Brien	Visit Instr	NTT	PT	M.S.	Lmhc (Ma)	No	Counseling Techniques and Case Analysis	NA	Director FSU Counseling Services
Nadyia Abbas	Visit Inst	NTT	PT	CAGS	LMHC, Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor	No	Substance Use and Addictive Disorders	Understanding and treating addicted youth	Assistant Executive Director at Devereaux Advanced Behavioral Health
Amber Haney	Visit Inst	NTT	PT	NA	Lmhc, atr-p	No	Group Work, Psychopathology II, Counseling Techniques & Case Analysis	NA	Clinical Director at Making Opportunity Count

MaryAnn Silvestri	Visit Inst	NTT	PT	NA	LMHC, School adjustment counselor (all levels), School Counselor (PreK-8), Elementary teacher (1-6), Emdr, Eft,	No	Crisis Intervention	NA	Director of Counseling, Assumption University
Nicole Berthiaume	Visit Inst	NTT	PT	NA	LMHC	No	Internship Mental Health Counseling	NA	Human Rights Committee Member, RFK Community Alliance

Resources

1. Operating Budget

\$2500 for travel (used for supervision travel)

\$1500 for teaching supplies

This budget is shared with all graduate programs in Behavioral Sciences, which include Counseling and Criminal Justice. This creates challenges to ascertain how much funding Counseling actually has to support programming. Office supplies are provided through the Behavioral Sciences budget.

Library Resources

See [library report](#).

Space/facilities

Full-time counseling faculty and classes are located on the 2nd floor of McKay. This location has been ideal for students, with the large parking.

The Counseling department shares the clinical lab room, McKay 224, with the Psychological Science Department as well as Human Services program. This space consists of two rooms which are divided by a one-way mirror. The clinical lab room has space to be set up as either an individual therapy session or a small group. Projectors aid in the ability of the class to hear the interaction in the other room, as well as the ability to record the sessions.

The program also utilizes four large filing cabinets located in the shared adjunct space. These cabinets are used to store testing equipment, licensure paperwork, and forms for the program. Adjunct faculty have access to the mail room and copy machine.

Equipment/materials

In addition to the clinical lab room detailed above, there are a few shared resources available for faculty. Specifically, testing supplies consist of two WISC kits, the BASC-3 assessments, as well as some historical testing supplies. There is also a DSM video which is shared between faculty and there is some space for shared teaching supplies. However, the courses at the graduate level are specialized such that many of the materials are applicable to just one course. For instance, Coun 8215 Lifestyles and Career Development utilizes career-specific measures that can be purchased by the program.

Assessment Measures

Cmh – Form 4

Fitchburg State University – Graduate Counseling Program Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Internship Evaluation by Field Site Supervisor

Student Intern: _____

Field Site: _____

Address: _____

Field Site Supervisor: _____

License #: _____

Position of Site Supervisor: _____

Dates Covered by This Evaluation: _____

This evaluation form is to be completed by the individual who is supervising the student counselor at the Internship Site. Please discuss the evaluation with the student before giving it to the supervising professor at the final on-site evaluation interview.

Instructions:

Please evaluate the Intern on each of the following competencies using the rating scale below. We recognize that each student is likely to demonstrate unevenness in his or her skill development. We are asking you to reflect those variations in your evaluation.

Rating Scale

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 5 – Outstanding | A rating of “5” is reserved for superior performance. |
| 4 - Above Average Competent | A grade of “4” reflects a competent counselor. |
| 3 – Average, Somewhat Competent | While the grade of “3” is passing, it implies a need for improvement. |
| 2 – Below Average, But Passing | |
| 1 – Failure | |
| N/O – Not Observed | |

<u>A. The Student's Counseling Skill</u>	5	4	3	2	1	N/O
1. Able to conduct an interview effectively	*	*	*	*	*	*
2. Demonstrates sensitivity to client	*	*	*	*	*	*
3. Facilitates clients' expressions	*	*	*	*	*	*
4. Focuses on clients as persons of worth	*	*	*	*	*	*
5. Focuses on content or problem	*	*	*	*	*	*
6. Initiates a working relationship	*	*	*	*	*	*
7. Communicates understanding and acceptance	*	*	*	*	*	*
8. Responds at an appropriate level when working with clients.	*	*	*	*	*	*
9. Able to organize and conceptualize case materials	*	*	*	*	*	*
10. Recognizes implication of case materials	*	*	*	*	*	*
11. Recognizes discrepancies and meaning of inconsistent information	*	*	*	*	*	*
12. Considers various approaches and their relevance	*	*	*	*	*	*
13. Willingness to work with broad range of clinical issues	*	*	*	*	*	*
14. Maintains awareness of the clients' readiness to change	*	*	*	*	*	*
15. Respects clients' confidentiality	*	*	*	*	*	*
16. Demonstrates awareness of clients' social and cultural background and their implications for the therapeutic relationship	*	*	*	*	*	*
17. Terminates a case professionally	*	*	*	*	*	*

<u>B. Student Counselor's Assessment and Appraisal Skills</u>	5	4	3	2	1	N/O
18. Able to utilize appropriate date and information methods (gathering procedures)	*	*	*	*	*	*
19. Able to utilize appropriate sources of data and information	*	*	*	*	*	*
20. Able to integrate and analyze clients' data/information	*	*	*	*	*	*
21. Able to utilize DSM 5 or similar diagnostic tool	*	*	*	*	*	*
22. Able to formulate treatment goals and plans	*	*	*	*	*	*
23. Able to help others understand and work with clients.	*	*	*	*	*	*
24. Able to conduct on-going assessment, utilize new information and conduct follow-up.	*	*	*	*	*	*

<u>C. The Student Counselor's Information and Referral Skills</u>	5	4	3	2	1	N/O
25. Knowledge of information sources	*	*	*	*	*	*
26. Able to help clients and other accumulate, integrate and interpret information pertinent to expressed needs	*	*	*	*	*	*
27. Knowledgeable of available programs and/or referral sources	*	*	*	*	*	*
28. Able to make reasonable and effective referrals	*	*	*	*	*	*

<u>D. The Student Counselor's General Communication Skills</u>	5		4		3		2	1	N/O
29. Able to convey information orally	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
30. Able to convey information in written form	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
31. Able to communicate effectively with clients	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
32. Able to communicate effectively with colleagues	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
33. Able to communicate effectively with supervisor	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<u>E. The Student Counselor's Professional Skills</u>	5	4		3		2		1	N/O
34. Personal appearance (neatness, appropriate dress, etc.)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
35. Able to maintain appropriate boundaries (clients, colleagues, supervisor, etc.)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
36. Able to operate in a legal and ethical fashion in interactions with clients, colleagues and others	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
37. Ability to be honest and accurate in self-evaluation	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
38. Openness to growth and learning	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

<u>F. Other Site-Specific Skills</u>	5	4	3	2	1	N/O
Blank	*	*	*	*	*	*
Blank	*	*	*	*	*	*

Please comment on the student counselor's potential for continual growth:

It is the goal of every internship to prepare students for entry level counseling employment. Given economic and/or organizational constraints, if you were able to do so, would you recommend employment to this intern as a counselor in your agency?

Yes _____ No _____

Have you discussed this evaluation with the student counselor?

Yes _____ No _____

Mid-Term Evaluation Date: _____ Grade to Date: _____

Final Evaluation Date: _____ Recommended Final Grade _____

FSU Graduate Grading System: Numerical Grade Letter Grade

4.0	A
3.7	A-
3.5	a-/b+
3.3	B+
3.0	B
2.7	B-
2.5	b-/c+
2.3	C+
2.0	C
0.0	F

Additional comments:

Signature(s) of Internship Supervisor(s) Title Date

Signature of Internship Professor Title Date

Signature of Student Title if Applicable Date

Signature of Mediator (only if needed) Title Date

Fitchburg State University

Clinical Skills Rubric

This form can be used for self-evaluations, supervisor evaluations, and peer feedback.

Candidate Name: _____ Date: _____ Course: _____

Evaluator Name: _____ Circle: Self Supervisor Peer Faculty

Raters: Please put N/A in the qualitative feedback column if a counseling skill is not applicable to the experience being reviewed.

Counseling Skill	Rating Descriptions				Qualitative Feedback
	1 - Unsatisfactory	2 - Needs Improvement	3 - Proficient	4 - Exemplary	Comment
Structure: <i>Was the beginning of the session appropriately structured? Was direction for the session provided?</i>	Demonstrates ineffective ability to structure, focus, and provide direction of the session.	Demonstrates inconsistent ability to create structure, focus, and provide direction of the session.	Demonstrates the ability to create structure, focus, and provide direction of the session.	Demonstrates consistent ability to effectively create structure, focus, and provide direction of the session.	Comment
Preparedness: <i>Was the counselor appropriately prepared for the session?</i>	Demonstrates no forethought or preparation for the session.	Demonstrates limited forethought or preparation for the session.	Demonstrates forethought and preparation for the session.	Demonstrates thorough forethought and preparation for the session.	Comment
Counseling Relationship: <i>Did the counselor establish rapport with the counselee to set the stage for a positive counseling relationship? Has the counselor demonstrated existing rapport with the counselee?</i>	Demonstrates ineffective ability to develop and deepen the counseling relationship. Does not convey respect, warmth, authenticity, and congruence.	Demonstrates limited ability to develop and deepen the counseling relationship. Does not consistently convey respect, warmth, authenticity, and congruence.	Demonstrates the ability to develop and deepen the counseling relationship. Adept in conveying respect, warmth, authenticity, and congruence.	Demonstrates a consistent ability to develop and deepen the counseling relationship. Excels in conveying respect, warmth, authenticity, and congruence.	Comment
Empathy: <i>Did the counselor display empathy toward the client?</i>	Demonstrates limited ability to express empathy through	Demonstrates inconsistent ability to express empathy through	Demonstrates empathy toward the client through	Demonstrates without exception empathy toward the client through	Comment

	verbal and nonverbal behavior.	verbal and nonverbal behavior.	verbal and nonverbal behavior.	verbal and nonverbal behavior.	
--	--------------------------------	--------------------------------	--------------------------------	--------------------------------	--

	1 - Unsatisfactory	2 - Needs Improvement	3 - Proficient	4 - Exemplary	Qualitative Feedback
Interventions: <i>How well did the counselor employ appropriate interventions for the client and their problem?</i>	Demonstrates ineffective counseling techniques and/or skills incorrectly applied throughout.	Demonstrates narrow range of counseling skills and/or skills incorrectly applied at times.	Demonstrates the ability to appropriately utilize a range of counseling skills.	Demonstrates a strong ability to effectively and appropriately utilize a wide range of counseling skills.	Comment
Vocabulary Level: <i>Was the vocabulary used be the counselor appropriate for the person being counseled?</i>	Demonstrates limited ability to use developmentally appropriate language.	Demonstrates inconsistent ability to use developmentally appropriate language.	Demonstrates the ability to use developmentally appropriate language.	Demonstrates consistent ability to use developmentally appropriate language.	Comment
Pacing: <i>How well paced was the session? Did the counselor allow time for the client</i>	Demonstrates limited ability to pace the session (rushed or slow at times), does not allow sufficient time for the client to respond, and does not use silence effectively.	Demonstrates inconsistent ability to pace the session (rushed or slow at times), may not allow sufficient time for the client to	Demonstrates ability to pace the session appropriately, allows sufficient time for the client to respond, and uses silence effectively.	Demonstrates strong ability to pace the session	Comment

<i>to respond and allow for silence when appropriate?</i>		respond, and/or does not use silence effectively.		appropriately, allows sufficient time for the client to respond, and uses silence effectively.	
Culturally Appropriate: <i>Did the counselor provide culturally appropriate counseling?</i>	Demonstrates no understanding of counselee's cultural background and/or responds inappropriately according to client's background.	Demonstrates limited understanding of counselee's cultural background and/or responds inconsistently according to client's background.	Demonstrates understanding of counselee's cultural background and responds accordingly.	Demonstrates strong understanding of counselee's cultural background and responds accordingly.	Comment
Presentation to Class: <i>Was the presentation to class appropriate and thoughtfully prepared?</i>	Demonstrates no preparedness and/or highly off-topic content. Exhibits no self-reflection skills.	Demonstrates limited preparedness and/or off-topic content. Exhibits limited self-reflection skills.	Demonstrates preparedness, well-planned, on-target content. Exhibits self-reflection skills.	Demonstrates excellent preparedness, well-planned, on-target content. Exhibits strong self-reflection skills.	Comment

Candidacy Paper Rubric Template

Criterion (Score 0 if element is absent)	Below Expectations (1)	Meets Expectations (2)	Exceeds Expectations (3)	Score
Relevance of Career Goals	Paper does not demonstrate a clear direction for the student's career, or reflects an orientation/goals for a different field	Paper demonstrates a clear direction for their career with beginning personal reflection	Paper demonstrates a clear direction with strong personal reflection	*
Potential Success in Forming Effective Counseling Relationships	Lacks a clear connection between personal characteristics/background and how these characteristics will assist the student/candidate in working with others	Some connections are made between personal characteristics/background and how these will assist the student/candidate in working with others	Strong connections are made between personal characteristics/background and how these will assist the student/candidate in working with others	*
Respect for Cultural Differences	Lacks understanding of how to address and/or demonstrate respect for different cultures. Possible approaches are vague (e.g., learn more)	Some awareness of how to demonstrate respect for different cultures. Some analysis of one's own culture is also included	Paper clearly identifies an understanding of one's own culture as well as specific approaches (and examples) of how to demonstrate respect	*
Aptitude for Graduate-Level Study as assessed by:	*	*	*	*
Written Communication	Written work needs to be more clearly presented and/or multiple grammatical errors	Written concepts are clear. Occasional grammatical errors	Written concepts are clearly presented and at a high level of professional writing. Few grammatical errors	*
Depth of Analysis	Paper overall reflects a lack of personal reflection. Statements are superficial and vague	Some personal reflection demonstrated. Some specifics in statements are provided	Paper includes both strong personal reflection and specifics	*
Integration of Academic Material	Few academic citations used overall or an entire section may lack academic citations	Some academic material used for establishing rationale. Includes citations for all areas	Strong use of academic material, demonstrating unique connections to the source	*

			Total	
--	--	--	-------	--



Counselor Work Sample: Client Rubric

Graduate Student: _____ ID:@ _____ Date: _____

Instructions: Provide a score using the following evaluation criteria.

3 Comprehensively Meets Standard Meets expectations for standard; is confidently and consistently meeting the standard; needs little, if any, support/guidance.	2 Meets the Standard Meets expectations for standard; needs occasional minimal support.	1 Does Not Meet Standard; Needs Further Development Does not consistently meet minimal expectations for standard; often needs support to perform at acceptable level.	N/O Not able to observe. This must be addressed with the student.
--	--	--	--

Process Item	3	2	1	N/O	Comments:
a. Contextual Factors	*	*	*	*	comment
a) Provides a client/student history with an emphasis on relevant factors that relate to the presenting problem.	*	*	*	*	comment
b) Notes contextual factors such as client/student-counselor interactions, environmental factors, individual needs, strengths and barriers.	*	*	*	*	comment
b. Counseling Goals	*	*	*	*	comment
c) Identifies counseling goals and provides rationale.	*	*	*	*	comment
d) Goals written in a positive frame identifying what will happen.	*	*	*	*	comment
e) Concrete, observable SMART goals (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-bound)	*	*	*	*	comment
c. Assessment Plan	*	*	*	*	comment
a) Description of assessment strategies and dates for review. (Items to be assessed can include behaviors or academic indicators, such as grades, GPA, attendance, college/career readiness)	*	*	*	*	comment
d. Counseling Plan	*	*	*	*	comment
a) Descriptions of interventions used.	*	*	*	*	comment
b) Interventions used are developmentally appropriate.	*	*	*	*	comment
e. Decision Making	*	*	*	*	comment
c) Description of client/student progress evaluation	*	*	*	*	comment
d) Description of adjustments or interventions.	*	*	*	*	comment
f. Outcomes and Analysis	*	*	*	*	comment
e) Use of assessment data to track client/student behavioral changes.	*	*	*	*	comment
f) Use of assessment data to communicate with client /student.	*	*	*	*	comment
g. Reflection and Self Evaluation	*	*	*	*	Comment
g) Analysis of the relationship between interventions and client/student's achievement of counseling goals and objectives	*	*	*	*	Comment

Process Item	3	2	1	N/O	Comments:
h) Evidence of how you will apply knowledge to improve future counseling skills	*	*	*	*	Comment
h. Format					
i) Cover page includes your name, program of study, program advisor, field site, field site supervisor, Fitchburg State University site supervisor, and date submitted.	*	*	*	*	Comment
j) Table of Contents: List all sections and attachments, number of pages, charts, graphs, and attachments (all substantiating material).	*	*	*	*	Comment
k) References and credits: Works Cited page, in-text citations, and correct use of APA style.	*	*	*	*	Comment
l) Respect client/student confidentiality	*	*	*	*	Comment

Counselor Work Sample: Client Rubric pg. 2

This section to be completed after consultation between with the Field Site Supervising Practitioner and the Fitchburg State University Practicum Supervisor:

Overall Effectiveness of the Counseling Plan on Student Learning/Academic Success PK-12

3 Strong positive impact on student learning based on pre/post assessments. Plan resulted in measurable, positive change in academic/technical, workplace readiness, or personal/social development.	2 Limited positive impact on student learning based on pre/post assessments. Plan resulted in some measurable, positive change in academic/technical, workplace readiness, or personal/social development, but falls short of the plan goals.	1 No positive impact on student learning based on pre/post assessments. Plan did not result in any measurable, positive change in academic/technical, workplace readiness, or personal/social development.
--	---	--

	3	2	1	Comments:
a. Counseling practicum student achieved the goals of the counseling plan.	*	*	*	Comment
b. Counseling Plan interventions effectively impacted student learning and academic success.	*	*	*	Comment

Signature: _____ Date: _____
Fitchburg State University Practicum Supervisor