As a requirement of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the Counselor Education program provides an annual report to its stakeholders to discuss program status and potential changes based upon data collected in the previous academic year. The below report is a summary of program modifications in the 2018-2019 academic year, which has been voted on and approved by the faculty of the Counselor Education Program. Data for this report was collected in multiple ways: by reviewing demographic data for applicants, current students and program graduates; alumni, alumni's' employers, and site supervisor surveys; individual course student learning outcomes (SLOs) and key performance indicators (KPIs); as well as ongoing discussion between program faculty, students, and the State of New Mexico.

Summary of Program Evaluation Results

Data from program applicants, current students, and graduates demonstrate that the Counselor Education Program is largely female (which reflects the larger field of Counselor Education). Racial and ethnic distributions across applicants, current students, and graduates reflect the demographics of the State of New Mexico, with students predominately identifying as Hispanic, White, or multiracial, with about 10 percent of students identifying as Native American or American Indian.

Alumni and employer surveys were sent in the Fall 2018 semester, but the response rates were low (some with no responses after multiple attempts, and one survey with a single response). The surveys that were received did speak highly of the program, with the notable exception of the human development course, which is taught in the Educational Psychology Program. Site supervisors spoke highly of the Counselor Education program during core faculty internship site visits, and numbers of approved internship placement sites increased in the past year.

As for SLOs and KPIs, when faculty reviewed aggregate data, students scored very highly across each of the areas of SLOs and KPIs. In the fall retreat, however, faculty noticed an over-reliance on knowledge KPIs, and fewer identified KPIs based around skills and dispositions. As such, some KPIs were modified in this last year to measure student outcomes across multiple measures and data points to include measures based on knowledge, dispositions, and skills to ensure students’ development across each of...
these three areas over the course of their academic program. At the completion of the academic year, the Counselor Education faculty reviewed this change and discussed its success in more holistically measuring students' progress and development.

Subsequent Program Modifications

In relation to SLOs and KPIs, most of these measures remained the same this year, as each appeared to adequately measure student progress, and it was determined there was no need to change course instruction to meet the spirit of CACREP SLOs. However, there was a change with the placement of MA KPI 2.F.2.c. in the multicultural core area. The decision was to shift a KPI to the required COUN 581: Sexuality in Counseling and Psychotherapy course (required for both Clinical Mental Health and School Counseling specialties) as it appeared the case study assignment in this course would more appropriately measure students' development in this area than the previous placement of the KPI. This also assured that students' knowledge in multiculturalism also included issues of gender and sexuality, which were not always as comprehensively explored with the previous KPI.

As the response rates were low for alumni and alumni employer surveys, the program has explored new ways to increase response rates. To do so, the program will test run requiring students in their last semester of study to take the alumni survey confidentially when they turn in their "Intent to Graduate" form, which is required by the Office of Graduate Studies at the University of New Mexico. This will assure that all program graduates will complete the survey and provide more comprehensive feedback than the program is currently receiving from alumni.

Another program modification following the alumni survey, the Counselor Education faculty discussed the low score for the human development course, which is currently taught by the Educational Psychology Program. The Counselor Education faculty discussed ways to respond to this feedback, such as integration of the Family and Child Studies Human Development course, as university policy does not allow for the Counselor Education program to duplicate existing university courses.

Other Substantial Program Changes

Some program modifications also occurred from either faculty discussion or discussion with the State of New Mexico. One program-related change was to alter course numbering for three doctoral courses: COUN 514: Supervision of Counseling Services, COUN 620: Advanced Multicultural, and COUN 620: Consultation. The courses number COUN 620 attends to a special topics course, which can only be taken once by university rules. The Counselor Education Program was unsure why these ongoing courses were taught so many semesters with a topics course number and decided to put curricular forms through the university to provide these courses with set numbers. Once approved, we expect the advanced multicultural course to have the course prefix of COUN 636. The consultation course in counseling will have the course prefix of COUN 646. Finally, the faculty also discussed the legacy of having the supervision course with a 500-level course number, which reflected MA-level education. To change this, a curricular form was also submitted to change the course prefix of supervision from COUN 514 to 626. These curricular forms are at the last stage of the university approval process, and we hope to see this change in the UNM Course Catalog within the next academic year.
Further, in discussions in the last few years with the State of New Mexico, the Counselor Education faculty learned that the state is now re-interpreting a state statute about educational exemptions to not include Counselor Education’s supervision of students’ clinical experiences. As such, the state is now requiring UNM (and other institutions) to have persons with independent practice licenses in the state supervise students, both onsite as well as within university supervision (practicum and internship). As such, the Counselor Education Program at UNM made the decision to only have independent practice providers teach practicum and internship courses at the master’s and doctoral levels to remain consistent with CACREP and state regulations. At the beginning of the academic year, only Drs. Goodrich, Keim, and Rifenbary had that status, and so some adjunct faculty were also employed to ensure all courses had appropriate coverage. At the end of the year, an additional faculty member received her independent practice license, Dr. Kelley Holladay, which opens up new degrees of freedom for core faculty to teach practicum and internship courses. The College of Education also supported the Counselor Education Program by providing a one-time increase in base pay of $2500 for any faculty member to achieve independent practice licensure status.

Also related to clinical placements, the program made the shift to require all new doctoral students to take their COUN 630: Advanced Practicum course in the Manzanita Counseling Center versus allowing doctoral students fulfilling this first clinical experience offsite. This change was made to ensure that faculty would have a good understanding of doctoral students’ clinical skills before they were sent into the community and provide opportunities for feedback and growth early in the doctoral career. This also parallels the longstanding tradition of all MA COUN 590: Practicum students first participating in our on-campus training clinic prior to engaging in internship offsite.

Student feedback has also been solicited about course experiences, through end of course surveys as well as in an open feedback session between students and the department chair. Following these communications, the program made the decision to shift some courses that were offered exclusively online to include fully face-to-face offerings so as to improve students’ experiences. This academic year, COUN 516: Crisis, Disaster, and Trauma Counseling and COUN 521: Clinical Mental Health Counseling were taught fully face-to-face, as opposed to fully online, as in the past few years. Students appeared to appreciate this course offering shift. Doctoral student feedback also shifted the program to ensure that new faculty had opportunities to teach doctoral courses, so that doctoral students had greater opportunities to interact with new faculty and learn of their research. As such, Drs. Holladay and Howells taught doctoral courses for the first time in the spring semester to ensure doctoral students and new faculty could have this experience.

These are a summary of the program evaluation and modifications in the UNM Counselor Education Program for the 2018-2019 Academic Year.

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