

## **Annual Report and Program Outcomes**

**2024-2025**

Academic Degree Program:  
Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Department Head:  
Dr. Robin Anderson

Assessment Coordinator/Program Director:  
Dr. Renee Staton

## **Clinical Mental Health Counseling Annual Report 2024-2025**

The official title of the program, based on the history of JMU, is School Psychology and Counselor Education Concentration in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. We refer to the program in this document as Ed.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. The program is housed in the Department of Graduate Psychology, which is a part of the College of Health and Behavioral Studies (CHBS).

### **Title/Type of Degree(s) Offered**

Master of Arts/Educational Specialist-Clinical Mental Health Counseling Concentration

### **Mission Statement of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program**

As members of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program of James Madison University, we have formed a dedicated learning community of faculty, staff, and students. We vary in abilities, age, class, gender, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, and place of birth, but we share a common vision of achieving a vitally important mission – transforming students into successful clinical mental health counselors.

Our clinical mental health counseling alumni are dedicated to providing competent, caring, and ethical services to diverse clients in public agencies, community programs, and private practices. Putting our principles into practice, we strive to create a caring community in which we can thrive personally and grow professionally. While many of our graduates work in rural communities in Virginia, many also serve in other communities across the nation. We invite our students to embark on a life-long journey of exploring new possibilities, refining their skills, and staying professionally current throughout their careers. We encourage them to support one another in the formidable task of facilitating the change process in individuals, couples, families, groups, and communities as licensed professional counselors. Finally, we challenge our graduates to advance the mental health counseling profession through service, research, innovation, advocacy, and training.

### ***Our Objectives***

The collective objectives of the Counseling Programs and specific objectives of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program are as follow:

- JMU Counseling Program graduates are able to take responsibility for embodying and practicing professional and ethical standards at the degree of mastery. Graduates are able to and hold themselves and colleagues accountable for practicing as ethical professional counselors.
- JMU Counseling Program graduates are able to work collaboratively and responsibly with colleagues, clients, and community members representing a variety of backgrounds and experiences. Graduates are able to recognize their own beliefs and values and embrace attitudes and practices of understanding, respecting, and competently addressing the beliefs and values of others.
- JMU Counseling Program graduates are able to apply developmentally appropriate counseling theories and techniques, which are ethically and culturally relevant, in the best interest of their clients.
- JMU Counseling Program graduates are able to provide developmentally appropriate career assessment and intervention strategies. Accounting for the clients' varying stages of career and educational development, program graduates employ relevant assessments and apply labor market trends.
- JMU Counseling Program graduates are able to provide evidence-based counseling service to diverse clients, grounded in principles of developmental competence, empathy, humanism, and

social justice. Program graduates are able to make decisions that are in the best interests of their clients.

- JMU Counseling Program graduates are able to employ relevant assessments related to clients and programs in their respective workplaces. Program graduates are able to assess clients for serious and foreseeable harm to self or others and/or abuse and neglect.
- JMU Counseling Program graduates are able to critically evaluate research related to core areas of counseling practice and use data-informed decision-making practices for program evaluation and management.
- JMU Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program graduates demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to address a wide variety of circumstances within the context of clinical mental health counseling. Applying evidence-based interventions for prevention and treatment of a broad range of mental health issues, graduates also demonstrate skills for interprofessional collaboration and advocacy.

## **Program Accomplishments**

### **Community Engagement**

*Community Engagement must include a community partner, where both parties are working toward identified needs and outcomes. Partnerships can fall on a continuum and may evolve over time as partnerships grow and change. Projects can overlap with Civic and/or Engaged Learning.*

*List existing community partnerships established by your department faculty (with or without a class component).*

Clinical Mental Health Counseling Ed.S. students provided over 4400 hours of support and consultation in providing mental health counseling to residents of Virginia, including over 1760 hours of direct service to clients.

### **Civic Engagement**

*Civic Engagement activities directly advance students' ability to participate effectively in a democratic society. These include consideration of democratic governments, policies, and principles, as well as civic dispositions and dialogue skills needed to deliberate and find common ground across differing views and values. Examples may include but are not limited to voting and voter education, deliberative dialogue, public discourse, or civic service activities.*

Dr. Renee Staton, in her role as Past-President of the Virginia Counselors Association Foundation, is an active member of the Virginia Counselors Association Legislative Lobbying and Public Affairs committee.

Dr. Michele Kielty is an elected member of the Staunton City School Board. According to Virginia law,

### Engaged Learning

*Engaged Learning practices are hands-on and experiential, involve exploration and guided reflection, and take place in a community of learners. Engaged Learning examples include, but are not limited to, educational practices such as collaborative projects in or out of the classroom, internships, global education, undergraduate research, and alternative learning opportunities.*

Clinical Mental Health Counseling Ed.S. students facilitated Building Cultural Humility workshops during the Spring 2025 semester and offered outreach mental health services in Staunton, Augusta County, and Harrisonburg.

Clinical Mental Health Counseling Ed.S. students completed the Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality training as well as Case Conceptualization training session with a local counselor to enhance their diagnostic and conceptualization skills (April 2025).

### Leadership Development

*Leader and Leadership Development activities create opportunities for individuals or teams to identify, learn, grow, strengthen or reflect on the characteristics, skill sets, and behaviors that help people achieve a shared goal. Please provide examples of curricular and co-curricular student leader development activities as well as faculty and staff leadership development activities.*

Two Clinical Mental Health Counseling students were supported by The Office of Student Awards, Initiatives, and Research (STAIR) to offer professional conference presentations, and two additional students were provided mentorship and support to offer counseling conference presentations.

### Inclusive Excellence

*Describe how the Program supports inclusive excellence.*

Clinical Mental Health Counseling faculty serve as consultants with the Virginia Telehealth Network to expand supervision for interns and counseling residents working with minoritized and underserved population groups. All Clinical Mental Health Counseling faculty members have worked to enhance the accessibility and inclusivity of their pedagogy and instructional materials.

### ***Additional Accomplishments***

**Evans, A.M. and Hiatt, K.** JMU Graduate School Impact Award.

### ***Rankings and Recognitions***

#### **Positions of leadership in national or international organizations**

Evans, A.M. Governing Council Member, *American Counseling Association*.

Evans, A.M. Co-Chair, Emerging Leaders Program, *Association for Humanistic Counseling*.

#### **National or international awards received by faculty/staff/students**

Evans, A.M. *Award Recipient. Humanistic Leadership Award. Association for Humanistic Counseling.*

### ***Scholarly work, publications, service, etc.***

#### ***Publications***

Fleitas, K., **Evans, A.M.**, Palacios, F., & Kress, V. (2025). Liberatory anti-oppression in counselor education: Infusing action into pedagogy. *International Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 2(1), 75-85.

**Evans, A.M.**, Chalk, S., Green, D., Hornsby, T., Ramsay-Seaner, K., & \*Haskins, R. (2025). Cyberbullying as a method of discrimination among people of color: A mixed methods study. *Wisconsin Counseling Journal*.

**Grande, S. E. & Staton, A. R.** (2025). Authentic hope during troubling times. In L. Harrison, P. Mather, & S. Bah (Eds.), *Rehumanizing higher education: New directions for teaching and learning*. Wiley. DOI:10.1002/tl.20645

Green, D. A., **Evans, A. M.**, Litam, S. D., Hornsby, T., Boulden, R., Shannon, J., Ford, D. J., & Landrum, D. (2024). Racial identity attitudes and vicarious traumatization from undue police violence among Black Americans. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 3(4), 848-868. doi: 10.1188/08662605231198484.

**Hiatt, K., & Lim, J.** (in press). From multicultural competence to orientation: Supporting a similar shift in religion and spirituality. *Counseling and Values*.

Lim, J.\*, **Sturm, D., & Staton, R.** (2024). Application of relational cultural theory to Korean immigrant women in the U.S. *Journal of Asia Pacific Counseling*, 14(2), 95-112.  
<https://doi.org/10.18401/2024.14.2.6>

**Staton, A. R., Gilligan, T. D., & Kielty, M. L.** (2024). Interprofessional and community collaboration in gun violence prevention and intervention. In J. Herron (Ed.), *Impact of Gun Violence in School Systems* (pp. 155-176). Hershey, PA: IGI Global. 10.4018/979-8-3693-1706-8

### ***Scholarly Presentations***

\*Bryant, K., & **Staton, A. R.** (2024, November). Counselor Wellness: Building Resilience Through Autonomy in the Classroom. Session presented at the Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Biannual Conference, Dallas, TX.

**Evans, A.M., \*Hook, B., \*Foncha, D., \*Williams, M., \*Moore, D., \*Plowright, E., & \*Riso, C.V.** (*proposal accepted*). Neurodiversity: Applying humanistically oriented universal design to learning in counseling spaces. *Association for Humanistic Counseling*, Tampa, Florida.

**Evans, A.M., Goodman-Scott, E., Hiatt, K., & \*Oberweiser, C.** (2025). Neurodiversity: Applying universal designs in learning in counseling spaces. *American Counseling Association*, Orlando, Florida.

**Evans, A.M., Hiatt, K., Goodman-Scott, E., Cartwright, A., & \*Hughes, K.** (2025). The dismantling of DEI and health disparities: A call to allies. *American Counseling Association*, Orlando, Florida.

**Evans, A.M., Oberweiser, C., & Evans, B.** (2024). Shift in the therapeutic climate: Suggestions for counseling neurodiverse youth. *European Branch-American Counseling Association (EB-ACA)*. Heidelberg, Germany.

- \*Hughes, K., Anderson R., **Staton, A. R.** (2024, November). Psychedelics in the Counseling Room – A Matter of If, Not When? Session presented at the annual meeting of the Virginia Counselors Association, Portsmouth, VA.
- \*Jones, R., Lee, J. B., Timler, G., DePaolis, R., & **Staton, A. R.** (2024, December). Graduate Speech-Language Pathology Student Counseling Self-Efficacy Development: A Mixed Methods Collective Case Study. Paper presented for the 2024 American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Convention. Seattle, Washington. (Presented by R. Jones)
- \*Puryear, T., & **Staton, A. R.** (2024, September). Incorporating Harm Reduction Principles in Counselor Education: Case Activities. Session presented at the North Atlantic Region Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Biannual Conference, Atlantic City, NJ.
- Staton, A. R.**, & \*Hieber, J. (2024, November). Training and Supervision to Enhance Counselor Resilience and Wellness. Roundtable session presented at the Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Biannual Conference, Dallas, TX.

\* Student presenter

### ***Workshops***

- Evans, A.M.** & Goodman-Scott, E. (October 28, 2024). *Counseling interventions and evidence-based treatment of children and youth: Addressing neurodiversity with neuro-affirming approaches*. American Counseling Association Child and Adolescent Certificate Program.
- Evans, A.M.**, Meixner, C., Hughes, K., \*Williams, M. & \*Hook, B. (2025). *Neurographic Mindfulness Activity*. Association for Humanistic Counseling Conference, Orlando, Florida.
- Hiatt, K. & Evans, A.M.** (January 2025). *Neuro-Affirming Psychological Safety*. Professional Learning Community (PLC). *James Madison University*.

**Hiatt, K.** (January 17, 2025). *Compassionate Supervision w/ Dr. Kenson Hiatt*. Guest interview on *The Humanistic Counselor* podcast. <https://www.podbean.com/ew/pb-sv2g6-17b6568>

\* Student presenter

### ***Service***

Evans, A.M. Proposal reviewer. *American Counseling Association Conference*.

Evans, A.M. Grant proposal reviewer. *Health Resources and Services Administration*. Scholarships for disadvantages student's program.

Evans, A.M. Reviewer. *James Madison University Research Journal*.

Evans, A.M. Scholarship reviewer. *Garden State Scholarship*. National Board of Certified Counselors.

Hiatt, K. Editorial board member. *Counseling and Values*.

Hiatt, K. Search Committee Member, C&S PhD Faculty Search (2024-2025).

Staton, A. R. Manager of the Harrisonburg/Rockingham Comprehensive Directory of Mental Health Services

Staton, A. R. Commonwealth of Virginia Adjunct Emergency Workforce Member

Staton, A. R. VCA Foundation Past-President

Staton, A. R. VCA Advocacy Committee Member

Staton, A. R. NBCC Examination Sensitivity and Bias Review Committee Member

Staton, A. R. JMU President's Commission on Prevention of Sexual Violence

Staton, A. R. JMU Domicile Appeals Committee

Staton, A. R. JMU International Learning Community Faculty Co-Advisor

Staton, A. R. JMU Tri-Alpha First Generation Scholar Steering Committee



## Program Outcomes for The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program

Our program welcomes a diverse student population and encourages applicants of different ages, from different social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds, and with different abilities and learning styles. The program provides the coursework necessary for students to become Licensed Professional Counselors in community mental health centers, community agencies, mental health facilities, and private practice settings. Accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the three-year, 60-credit-hour program leads to the awarding of both the Master of Arts and the Educational Specialist degrees. Graduates are also eligible to become Board Certified Counselors.

We offer small, experiential classes that often involve only eight to ten students. Students receive frequent feedback and supervision throughout their training. We place great emphasis on personal and professional growth and the practical application of skills at our on-campus practicum and community-based internship sites.

During the 2024-2025 academic year, 26 students were enrolled in the JMU Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program. The total number of graduates during this academic year was 7. In recent years, we have typically admitted nine or ten students into the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program each fall semester. Our full-time students complete the program in three years, and our part-time students usually complete the program in five years. Our completion rate for full-time and part-time students in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program for the graduating cohort was 100%, as it has been for the past several years.

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling program has received over 100 applications for the past two years, with applicants representing varied demographics (race, ethnicity, gender identity, socioeconomic status, etc.). Our faculty members desire to continue to seek a robust applicant pool that includes students with diverse backgrounds and experience. Since 2022, the director of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program has contacted undergraduate Psychology and Education departments at Historically Black Colleges and Universities in Virginia and surrounding states, as well as rural colleges and universities in Virginia, to share information about the program and recruit potential applicants. The faculty members agree that we will continue to reach out to colleagues in our geographic region and participate in graduate fairs whenever possible in order to attract a strong potential student body.

In addition to the JMU APT, in accordance with the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the JMU Clinical Mental Health Counseling program regularly assess our academic quality by:

- Evaluating our program mission and objectives;
- Completing an assessment of student knowledge, skills, and dispositions; and
- Evaluating our overall program effectiveness through surveys of students, alumni, and constituents

The CACREP standards were updated in 2024, resulting in changes to our assessment standards and procedures. Our new processes and expectations are integrated throughout this APT, with CACREP expectations noted in blue.

## CACREP – Evaluating our Program Mission and Objectives

As members of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program of James Madison University, we have formed a dedicated learning community of faculty, staff, and students. We vary in abilities, age, class, gender, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, and place of birth, but we share a common vision of achieving a vitally important mission – transforming students into successful clinical mental health counselors.

Our clinical mental health counseling alumni are dedicated to providing competent, caring, and ethical services to diverse clients in public agencies, community programs, and private practices. Putting our principles into practice, we strive to create a caring community in which we can thrive personally and grow professionally. While many of our graduates work in rural communities in Virginia, many also serve in other communities across the nation. We invite our students to embark on a life-long journey of exploring new possibilities, refining their skills, and staying professionally current throughout their careers. We encourage them to support one another in the formidable task of facilitating the change process in individuals, couples, families, groups, and communities as licensed professional counselors. Finally, we challenge our graduates to advance the mental health counseling profession through service, research, innovation, advocacy, and training.

## Program Learning Objectives

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- JMU Counseling Program graduates are able to provide evidence-based counseling service, including individual, group, and couple work, to diverse clients, grounded in principles of developmental competence, empathy, humanism, and social justice. Program graduates are able to make decisions that are in the best interests of their clients.
- JMU Counseling Program graduates are able to employ relevant assessments related to clients and programs in their respective workplaces. Program graduates are able to assess clients for serious and foreseeable harm to self or others and/or abuse and neglect.
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counseling. Applying evidence-based interventions for prevention and treatment of a broad range of mental health issues, graduates also demonstrate skills for interprofessional collaboration and advocacy.

Feedback from our 2025 exit survey of graduating students; alumni; and employers suggests that our students and constituents believe we are meeting our objectives and that our mission is currently relevant for clinical mental health counseling training programs.

## Course/Learning Experiences and Methods of Assessment

### CACREP - Assessment of Student Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions

Our learning objectives are drawn from the CACREP 2024 Standards and are mapped to the following courses and learning experiences:

Student Learning Objective, followed by corresponding CACREP Area	Courses/Experiences Mapped to the Objective	
	Introductory	Mastery
1. Professional and Ethical practice PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING ORIENTATION AND ETHICAL PRACTICE	KPI - Psyc 630 Midterm I - assessment is based on written product	KPI - Psyc 790 Counseling Sessions/Evaluations D – student is observed
2. Cultural competence and self-awareness B. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL IDENTITIES AND EXPERIENCES	KPI - PSYC 749 Semi-structured Interview D – student is observed	KPI - Psyc 668 I - assessment is based on written product
3. Developmentally appropriate approaches C. LIFESPAN DEVELOPMENT	KPI - Psyc 614 Midterm I - assessment is based on written product	KPI - PSYC 668 Simulation-Based Activity D – student is observed
4. Appropriate career counseling D. CAREER DEVELOPMENT	KPI - Psyc 669 Personal Career Journey (River Project) I - assessment is based on written product	KPI - Psyc 790 Counseling Session Evals D – student is observed
5. Evidence-based counseling E. COUNSELING PRACTICE AND RELATIONSHIPS	KPI - Psyc 661 Final Session Evaluation D – student is observed	KPI - Psyc 695 Case Presentation D – student is observed
6. Group work F. GROUP COUNSELING AND GROUP WORK	KPI - Psyc 665 Group Experience: Participation & Session Summaries	KPI - Practicum Process Group D – student is observed
7. Relevant assessment procedures	KPI - Psyc 710 Assessment Practice and Recordings D – student is observed	KPI - Psyc 607 - Personal Assessment Project I - assessment is based on written product

G. ASSESSMENT AND DIAGNOSTIC PROCESSES		
8. Research evaluation H. RESEARCH AND PROGRAM EVALUATION	KPI - Psyc 600 Program Evaluation Project I - assessment is based on written product	KPI: Psyc 800 Final Project I - assessment is based on written product as well as D – evaluation of interaction with faculty committee
9. Key clinical mental health counseling competencies	CACREP KPIs not identified; however: Psyc 695 and Psyc 790 case presentation evaluations and supervisor evaluation forms are assessed for this objective. These evaluations also cover multiple objectives associated with the CACREP Counseling and Helping Relationships standard Comprehensive exam - This rubric covers the 8 CACREP standards as well as the JMU CMHC standards Progress Reviews – The Progress Review form assesses students' dispositions regarding Professional and Ethical Behavior, Academic Behavior, and Professional Commitments of Clinical Mental Health Counselors	

## Desired Results

Objective	Instrument	Desired result	Justification for desired result
1. Professional and Ethical practice PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING ORIENTATION AND ETHICAL PRACTICE	Mastery KPI - Psyc 790 Counseling Sessions/Evaluations	100% of evaluation scores at level 3, indicating sufficient mastery, after faculty supervision and peer consultation	Combined faculty experience has indicated these pass rates are necessary for successful progress through the program and ultimately to suggest the student is prepared for post-graduation practice.
2. Cultural competence and self-awareness B. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL IDENTITIES AND EXPERIENCES	Mastery KPI - Psyc 668	95% of evaluation scores at level 3, indicating sufficient mastery, after faculty feedback	Recent research (Goodwin, Coyne, & Constantino, 2018) has highlighted the contextual demands for competence; therefore students are provided consultation as well as evaluation to ensure they meet this standard.
3. Developmentally appropriate approaches	Mastery KPI - PSYC 668 Simulation-Based Activity	95% of evaluation scores at level 3, indicating	The breadth of considerations students are expected to cover in this assignment are

C. LIFESPAN DEVELOPMENT		sufficient mastery, after faculty feedback	purposefully designed to allow faculty to assess understanding of content.
4. Appropriate career counseling D. CAREER DEVELOPMENT	Mastery KPI - Psyc 790 Counseling Session Evals D – student is observed	100% of evaluation scores at level 3, indicating sufficient mastery, after faculty supervision and peer consultation	Combined faculty experience has indicated these pass rates are necessary for successful progress through the program and ultimately to suggest the student is prepared for post-graduation practice..
5. Evidence-based counseling E. COUNSELING PRACTICE AND RELATIONSHIPS	Mastery KPI - Psyc 695 Case Presentation D – student is observed	100% of evaluation scores at level 3, indicating sufficient mastery, after faculty supervision and peer consultation	Combined faculty experience has indicated these pass rates are necessary for successful progress through the program and ultimately to suggest the student is prepared for post-graduation practice.
6. Group work F. GROUP COUNSELING AND GROUP WORK	Mastery KPI - Practicum Process Group D – student is observed	100% of evaluation scores at level 3, indicating sufficient mastery, after faculty supervision and peer consultation	Combined faculty experience has indicated these pass rates are necessary for successful progress through the program and ultimately to suggest the student is prepared for post-graduation practice.
7. Relevant assessment procedures G. ASSESSMENT AND DIAGNOSTIC PROCESSES	Mastery KPI - Psyc 607 - Personal Assessment Project I - assessment is based on written product	95% of evaluation scores at level 3, indicating sufficient mastery, after faculty feedback	Opportunities to exhibit skill in administering and evaluating formal assessment results vary in students' practice opportunities (Psyc 695 Practicum and Psyc 790 Internship), depending on client need. Faculty rely on evaluations of this project to determine sufficient levels of mastery for progression in the program

8. Research evaluation H. RESEARCH AND PROGRAM EVALUATION	Mastery KPI: Psyc 800 Final Project	100% of all evaluations at level 3, indicating mastery, after committee consultation and feedback	Opportunities to exhibit overt skill in research evaluation vary in students' practice opportunities (Psyc 695 Practicum and Psyc 790 Internship), yet are necessary for determination of best practice in counseling. Faculty therefore rely on evaluations of the project to determine levels of mastery that suggest students can generalize research evaluation skills beyond literature review to the actual determination of appropriate interventions.
9. Key clinical mental health counseling competencies	CACREP KPIs not identified; however: Psyc 695 and Psyc 790 case presentation evaluations and supervisor evaluation forms are assessed for this objective. Comprehensive exam - This rubric covers the 8 CACREP standards as well as the JMU CMHC standards Progress Reviews – The Progress Review form assesses students' dispositions regarding Professional and Ethical Behavior, Academic Behavior, and Professional Commitments of Clinical Mental Health Counselors	For all of the following, 100% of all evaluations at level 3, indicating mastery, after committee consultation and feedback	Combined faculty experience has indicated these pass rates are necessary for successful progress through the program and ultimately to suggest the student is prepared for post-graduation practice.

## Data Collection

Objective	Instrument	Sample Size	Timepoint	Motivation
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1. Professional and Ethical practice PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING ORIENTATION AND ETHICAL PRACTICE	KPI - Psyc 790 Counseling Sessions/Evaluations	7	At completion of 790, typically during students' 3 <sup>rd</sup> year	Students will not graduate without demonstrating sufficient mastery in internship. They are highly motivated.
2. Cultural competence and self-awareness B. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL IDENTITIES AND EXPERIENCES	KPI - Psyc 668	9	At completion of Psyc 668, typically students' 2 <sup>nd</sup> year	This assignment is one evaluation that contributes to the overall evaluation of a required course. Students are usually fairly motivated to earn an A in the course.
3. Developmentally appropriate approaches C. LIFESPAN DEVELOPMENT	KPI - PSYC 668 Simulation-Based Activity	9	At completion of Psyc 668, typically students' 2 <sup>nd</sup> year	This activity is one evaluation that contributes to the overall evaluation of a required course. Students are usually fairly motivated to earn an A in the course.
4. Appropriate career counseling D. CAREER DEVELOPMENT	KPI - Psyc 790 Counseling Session Evaluations D – student is observed	7	At completion of 790, typically during students' 3 <sup>rd</sup> year	Students will not graduate without demonstrating sufficient mastery in internship. They are highly motivated.
5. Evidence-based counseling E. COUNSELING PRACTICE AND RELATIONSHIP S	KPI - Psyc 695 Case Presentation D – student is observed	9	At completion of Psyc 695, typically students' second year	Students will not progress in the program without demonstrating sufficient mastery in practicum.
6. Group work F. GROUP COUNSELING AND GROUP WORK	KPI - Practicum Process Group D – student is observed	9	At completion of Psyc 695, typically students' second year	Students will not progress in the program without successfully participating in and co-facilitating the practicum process group.
7. Relevant assessment procedures G. ASSESSMENT AND DIAGNOSTIC PROCESSES	KPI - Psyc 607 - Personal Assessment Project I - assessment is based on written product	9	At completion of Psyc 607, typically students' 2 <sup>nd</sup> year	This project is one aspect that contributes to the overall evaluation of a required course. Students are usually fairly motivated to earn an A in the course.

8. Research evaluation H. RESEARCH AND PROGRAM EVALUATION	KPI: Psyc 800 Final Project	7	At completion of Psyc 800, typically students' 3 <sup>rd</sup> year	Students will not graduate without demonstrating sufficient mastery in the development, writing, and presentation of their EdS project. They are highly motivated.
9. Key clinical mental health counseling competencies	Comprehensive exam	9	At completion of Psyc 695, typically students' 2 <sup>nd</sup> year	Students will not progress in the program without demonstrating sufficient mastery in practicum. Students will not progress in the program without demonstrating appropriate dispositions. Students receiving unsatisfactory skills are assisted with faculty feedback and remediation plans.
	Progress Reviews	26	Every semester	

## Validity Evidence

The program faculty members take a hermeneutic approach to comprehensive exam and other student evaluation ratings and therefore group consensus is required prior to the reporting of final ratings. For this reason, we do not calculate inter-rater reliability.

Face validity is assumed with site-supervisor and university-supervisor evaluations of students in practicum and internship. This is due to the fact that evaluation items are drawn from the CACREP Clinical Mental Health Counseling standards (beginning Fall 2024), which are the standards by which our program is evaluated and accredited. Further, the CACREP standards are the basis for the design of our courses and our students' evaluations across the curriculum. Construct validity applies to the standards, as experts in the field determine the CACREP accreditation standards.

Construct validity is also maintained as faculty expertise results in deep knowledge of the field and its associated standards. With some exceptions, the faculty who teach courses associated with the objectives identified here are core faculty, who are licensed mental health providers with doctoral level training in our field of expertise. Core faculty members teach courses that are aligned with their professional experience and expertise and therefore have sufficient training and competence to assess levels of student mastery. In cases in which core faculty members are not available to teach these courses, we employ adjunct faculty members who are specifically chosen for their training and experience related to the course content.

Further, all core faculty members gather at the end of each semester to evaluate every student's professional dispositions and our key clinical mental health counseling competencies via our Progress Review process. Although one faculty member, at a minimum, provides qualitative comments for a student, often one or more additional faculty members will draft comments as well. The comments are



consolidated in our Progress Review meeting, and we discuss our respective evaluations prior to collaborating to complete the student's Progress Review form.

Similarly, two faculty members evaluate our students' comprehensive examination materials individually and enter the student's defense meeting with their own comments and observations.

After the student's presentation, faculty discuss their respective evaluations and collaborate to complete the student's rubric. Our combined evaluations continue to assist us in determining the validity of the specific measures used in our program assessment.

## Results

Historical results are not reported here, as our Objectives and Measures have been updated according to the 2024 CACREP standards.

Objectives	Actual Result	Interpretation
1. Professional and Ethical practice A. PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING ORIENTATION AND ETHICAL PRACTICE	100% at level 3 of KPI - Psyc 790 Counseling Sessions/Evaluations	We feel confident in our ability to help students learn the core competencies associated with professional and ethical practice.
2. Cultural competence and self-awareness B. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL IDENTITIES AND EXPERIENCES	97% at level 3 of KPI - Psyc 668	We continue to offer students the opportunity to assume active advocacy roles in response to on-campus and state-wide DEI and anti-racism initiatives. We understand that these competencies take time and reinforcement to master and are satisfied with these results. Further, in 2023, the CMHC counseling faculty members began administering the Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (MCKAS) to all incoming students. We will administer the scale again at the completion of the students' third year in the program and plan to continue to administer the scale every fall to each incoming cohort. Our expectation is that the data from this process will help inform our teaching and supervision efforts.
3. Developmentally appropriate approaches C. LIFESPAN DEVELOPMENT	97% at level 3 of KPI - PSYC 668 Simulation-Based Activity	These results are as expected.

4. Appropriate career counseling D. CAREER DEVELOPMENT	100% at level 3 of KPI - Psyc 790 Counseling Sessions/Evaluations	These results are as expected.
5. Evidence-based counseling E. COUNSELING PRACTICE AND RELATIONSHIPS	100% at level 3 of KPI - Psyc 695 Case Presentation	Students typically score in our desired range regarding this domain. Our course work and our case conceptualization workshop emphasizes evidence-based practice.
6. Group work F. GROUP COUNSELING AND GROUP WORK	100% at level 3 of KPI - Practicum Process Group	Students receive ongoing support and supervision in the practicum process group, as well as in their practicum group supervision, so these results are as expected.
7. Relevant assessment procedures G. ASSESSMENT AND DIAGNOSTIC PROCESSES	95% at level 3 of KPI Psyc 607 - Personal Assessment Project	We had an adjunct faculty member teach this course this year and feel these results are consistent with our expectations for this objective.
8. Research evaluation H. RESEARCH AND PROGRAM EVALUATION	100% at level 3 of KPI: Psyc 800 Final Project	These results are typical for our students' performance in the EdS project.
9. Key clinical mental health counseling competencies	100% pass rate on comprehensive exams, after faculty feedback, consultation, and remediation as needed 100% satisfactory evaluations on all Progress Review standards after faculty feedback, consultation, and remediation as needed	Students typically score in our desired range regarding this domain, although it is not uncommon for students to receive support and developmental feedback and assignments regarding their comprehensive exam process. Our curriculum reinforces these competencies, and students receive feedback each semester from our combined faculty committee regarding their progress reviews.

## Results Dissemination

Our accrediting body requires the following regarding "Evaluation of the Program":

*Counselor education program faculty create an annual report for entry and doctoral (if applicable) levels that includes: a) a summary of the program evaluation results, including achievement of academic quality indicators; b) subsequent curriculum modifications and program improvement informed by program evaluation; and c) any other significant program changes. 4. The annual report is published on the program website in a location accessible to the public.*

Therefore, the major results from the APT report are made accessible on our program website, in addition to other data we collect for our CACREP report, such as site evaluation information, exit survey data, and employment and graduation rates.

Our report is also shared with the counseling program faculty, our department head, our Advisory Board, and made available to students and other counseling constituents via our program website.

#### Additional Information

We had no formal student remediation processes this year, all 2<sup>nd</sup> year students successfully completed the comprehensive exam process, and all 3<sup>rd</sup> year students successfully presented at the Graduate Psychology Symposium.

### Use of Results for Learning & Developmental Improvement

#### CACREP - Evaluating Overall Program Effectiveness

Based on several surveys of students and constituents, as well as the assessment of student learning reported above, the counseling faculty members are proposing the following actions for the 2025-2026 academic year.

#### Exit Survey Results

The program director administers the exit survey to all graduating students during the spring semester, requesting that students complete the survey and encouraging them to meet with any core faculty if they have additional comments or would like to reflect on their experience in the program. Core faculty then discuss the findings of the survey at their annual retreat and counseling faculty meetings, outlining potential action steps to build on identified strengths and address identified weaknesses.

The student exit survey data highlights a generally positive perception of the graduate program. Students expressed strong satisfaction with the mentoring, clinical supervision, and faculty accessibility, with particular emphasis on the program's supportive environment and hands-on learning experiences. The program's adaptability to students' professional interests and the strength of the cohort community were also consistently praised. Students reported a high likelihood of recommending the program to others, underscoring their satisfaction. However, preparedness for licensure, certification, or credentialing was identified as an area for potential improvement, as students felt less confident in this regard compared to other aspects of their preparation.

Qualitative feedback further reinforces the strengths of the program, noting faculty support and the relevance of coursework. Suggestions for improvement included offering more virtual graduate assistant opportunities for those with out-of-area internships and clearer planning for interdisciplinary classes. Students also expressed a desire for more engagement across cohorts and additional practice with telehealth to stay current with industry trends. Some students felt unprepared for certain program requirements, such as the E.d.S, COMPS, and Spring Symposium, and suggested more direct communication and clarity on these expectations. Despite these suggestions, students were overwhelmingly thankful for their experience, with many describing it as transformational and expressing strong recommendations for future students.

Recent program modifications, based on feedback received in 2024, include:

- Students are now required to complete CAMS training, which involves understanding and responding to explicit suicidal ideation, during their first semester;
- Trauma-informed counseling and supervision (Psyc 760) are addressed throughout the curriculum.
- A module, created by an LPC who works in Emergency Department settings, has been added to the curriculum to help students further understand approaches to working with clients who experience significant mental illness;
- Resources have been added to several classes to provide information on the application of emerging therapies
- The faculty member who teaches the Counseling Process course now completes a skills checklist for each student prior to their progression on to the Practicum course.

### Alumni Survey Results

The alumni survey is administered to all alumni for whom contact information is available. When interpreting the results, faculty note that some alumni are referencing their experience in the program as long as 20 years ago, so when considering the recommendations they work to keep in mind the changes that may have occurred in recent years that make some comments less relevant. Core faculty discuss the findings of the survey at their annual retreat and counseling faculty meetings, outlining potential action steps to build on identified strengths and address identified weaknesses.

The alumni survey data reveals a generally positive assessment of the graduate program, with alumni reflecting on both strengths and areas for improvement. The quality of instruction and advising received was consistently praised, with alumni noting the faculty's dedication to student growth and professional development. Experiential learning, small cohort sizes, and strong faculty-student relationships were highlighted as significant strengths. Alumni also valued the personal growth fostered by the program, noting that the structure of the curriculum, particularly its focus on case conceptualization and experiential learning, contributed to their counseling identity development. However, alumni expressed concerns about the adequacy of licensure exam preparation, with some feeling underprepared for the examination and lacking confidence in areas like psychopathology and diagnosing. Additionally, while the quality of practicum and internship experiences was generally positive, there were suggestions for better preparation for real-world employment, especially in community mental health settings.

Qualitative responses also indicated a desire for further curriculum development, particularly in trauma-informed care and specialized counseling approaches such as EMDR, DBT, and IFS. Alumni noted the increasing importance of understanding social media's impact on mental health and the need for a more diverse and inclusive curriculum that integrates emerging trends like sexual health, menopause, and mental health challenges related to political and social shifts. Many alumni highlighted the value of the program in preparing them for clinical mental health roles, though some suggested that the program could improve its focus on preparing students for the diverse realities of working in under-resourced and high-stress environments. Despite these suggestions, alumni overwhelmingly reported satisfaction with their overall preparation, with many feeling well-equipped for their roles in counseling and advocating for greater emphasis on advocacy and diversity in future program iterations.

### Practicum and Internship Site Supervisors Survey Results

The clinical coordinator administers site supervisor surveys at the end of each semester, along with an expression of gratitude to the supervisor for their support of JMU clinical mental health counseling practicum students and interns. All site supervisors are invited to attend the annual Graduate Psychology Spring Symposium, in which interns present on their capstone project and/or internship experience. Core faculty discuss survey findings and suggestion from site supervisors at their annual retreat and counseling faculty meetings, outlining potential action steps to build on identified strengths and address identified weaknesses.

The JMU Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program has been highly beneficial to internship sites, with employers noting that students bring high-quality work and effective counseling skills to their roles. Interns are appreciated for their preparedness, especially in establishing rapport and maintaining a non-judgmental, empathetic presence with clients. Sites highlight the strong therapeutic skills demonstrated by interns, including effective listening, reflection, and multicultural awareness, which exceed typical entry-level expectations. Sites also benefit from the added capacity to provide intensive interventions and enhanced community services through the involvement of interns. Employers also acknowledge the student-centered, collaborative environment that JMU fosters, noting that the students tend to establish positive relationships with their training sites, which facilitates both student growth and ethical gatekeeping.

While the students perform well in client interactions, there are some areas for improvement. Employers have suggested that students would benefit from additional training in risk assessment (e.g., suicide risk, self-harm, mania, psychosis), and more confidence and skills in diagnosis, clinical interventions, treatment planning, and documentation. A common challenge mentioned by multiple sites was the difficulty in shifting from working with college students to handling higher-acuity cases with clients from a wide range of backgrounds. Employers also indicated that clinical documentation and understanding the functionality of clinical systems were areas where students often lacked experience. Despite these challenges, sites found students well-prepared overall and praised their willingness to learn, adaptability, and strong work ethic throughout the internship experience.

### [Student Survey of Sites and Supervisors Results](#)

The clinical coordinator and practicum instructor ask practicum and internship students to complete a survey of their site and supervisor at the completion of the practicum and internship experience. Core faculty discuss the findings of the survey at their annual retreat and counseling faculty meetings, outlining potential action steps to build on identified strengths and address identified weaknesses.

The Practicum/Internship experiences for students in the Counseling & Supervision Ph.D. program at James Madison University have been generally positive, with ratings remaining high across multiple years. The overall site quality received strong ratings, consistently ranging from 4.0 to 5.0 in areas such as counseling experience, supervision, staff support, and professionalism. The overall ratings for supervision and professionalism of staff were particularly strong, consistently earning scores of 4.5 or higher. However, some areas showed slight variability, especially in facility quality and in-service training, where ratings fluctuated between 3.9 and 4.7. In the most recent year (2025), there was a noticeable dip in the in-service training category, which received a rating of 3.9, suggesting a potential area for improvement in offering consistent, high-quality training during the internship experience.

Qualitative feedback revealed a mix of strengths and areas for growth. On the positive side, many students expressed appreciation for the supportive environment and the balanced supervision they

received, with one intern highlighting the exceptional supervision at their site, particularly the combination of challenge and support. However, some students noted stressful conditions due to lack of administrative support and disorganization, which detracted from their overall experience. While some students struggled with individual supervisor support, they appreciated the ability to seek guidance from other clinicians and peers at the site. These comments reflect a need for improved organizational support at certain sites to complement the strong interpersonal and clinical experiences students gain. Overall, the feedback indicates that the program excels in providing valuable learning opportunities, though there are areas where enhanced administrative and training support could further strengthen the internship experience.

### Employer Survey Results

All alumni are asked to share the JMU Employer Survey with their current employers. Core faculty discuss the findings of the survey at their annual retreat and counseling faculty meetings, outlining potential action steps to build on identified strengths and address identified weaknesses.

Graduates of the Counseling program at JMU have been highly praised by their employers for their strong counseling skills, ethical behavior, and overall performance. Employers highlighted graduates' ability to provide compassionate, client-centered care, utilizing techniques such as unconditional positive regard, active listening, and maintaining strong professional boundaries. These qualities were particularly valued, with employers noting that graduates are well-equipped to handle the responsibilities of professional practice in a variety of settings.

While graduates excelled in clinical skills and professionalism, some employers suggested opportunities for improvement in areas such as multicultural competence and awareness of relevant practice issues, which could benefit from further development. Additionally, some employers recommended adding business-oriented classes to the curriculum to better prepare graduates for the practical aspects of running a private practice. Despite these suggestions, employers expressed high satisfaction with the program and would confidently recommend JMU graduates to other employers, underscoring their readiness for the field and the strong foundational training they received.

Based on the above, our Planned Program Adjustments include:

- Replacing our current “Pizza Process” advising lunches with professional development lunches that include:
- Intentional advising on programmatic expectations, such as EdS project, symposium, Psyc 695 and Psyc 790
- Preparing for professional practice and job-seeking
- Emphasizing throughout the curriculum specific skills and approaches for
- Working with clients who are significantly mentally ill, including de-escalation
- Application of models such as DBT
- Requiring analysis and creation of “policy recommendations” related to the ethical use of social media (Psyc 760), as well as assignments to create fact sheets and guidance recommendations for K-12 and higher education administrators related to the potential impact of social media on children, adolescents, and young adults’ mental health (Psyc 614).

Further, core faculty are also discussing at our annual retreat various ways to support internship site supervisors through consultation and shared training opportunities. In our orientation to internship meeting, faculty are working to ensure that interns understand the varied levels of support that different internship sites provide, and that they enter their internship sites with a clear sense of the site's expectations.

## Use of Results for Assessment Improvement for 2025-2026

<b>Change</b>	<b>Anticipated timeline for implementation</b>	<b>Reason(s) for change</b>
Integrate evaluation of program objectives into feedback gathered from CMHC Advisory Board	Fall 2025	Our advisory board feedback is not currently documented in a formal manner.
Formalize assessment timeline for the CMHC program to ensure CACREP compliance	Summer 2025	The assessment timeline will ensure all faculty understand their respective roles and responsibilities and will assist our efforts to develop a comprehensive/holistic assessment process
Encourage faculty to include supporting comments and feedback into KPI rubrics as relevant	Fall 2025	We believe this change will add helpful detail to our assessment data, enabling us to make needed adjustments to our curriculum in a timely manner.