Academic Progress Template (APT) Report

2024-2025

Academic Degree Program:
School Counseling

Department Head:
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The School Counseling Program requires 60 credit hours for completion of the Master of Education/Educational Specialist degree. This program enables graduates to become licensed school counselors in elementary, middle, and secondary schools and is accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) as well as the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Our unique program includes: training in social-emotional learning, including mindfulness-based interventions in schools with experienced faculty; emphasis on trauma-informed care in school settings; addressing the needs of special education populations; inter-professional collaboration training with seven school-based professions; and learning hands-on creative interventions for children and adolescents.

We offer small, experiential classes that rarely involve more than eight to ten students. Our dynamic and student-focused faculty members have been the recipients of national ACES awards, along with numerous other honors at the regional, state, university, college, and department levels. Students receive constant feedback and supervision throughout their training. We place great emphasis on personal and professional growth and the practical application of skills at our school-based community internship sites. School counseling students are placed at all three levels in K-12 settings throughout their practicum and internship experiences.

Our 60-credit hour curriculum fulfills all the coursework, practicum, and internship requirements in order to qualify as a Licensed School Counselor in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Therefore, 100% of the School Counseling graduates automatically qualify for licensure. All graduates were employed upon graduation this year.

This year's version of the APT is the CACREP mid0cycle report that was submitted and it includes data from the past three years. Below is the CACREP report.

James Madison University School Counseling Program
Comprehensive Stakeholder Feedback and Response Report

The JMU School Counseling program faculty use a variety of data sources to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and ensure continuous improvement. In alignment with accreditation standards, the faculty employ aggregate student assessment data to address key program objectives, including assessing student knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions. Additionally, the program regularly examines demographic and other characteristics of applicants, students, and graduates to ensure a diverse and effective student body. Data from systematic follow-up studies of graduates, site supervisors, and employers further inform the program's evaluation process, providing valuable insights into the long-term success and impact of the program.

The faculty also use these program evaluation data to drive informed program modifications, ensuring that the curriculum and training practices are responsive to the evolving needs of students and the broader field of school counseling. This report synthesizes these data points, providing a comprehensive analysis of the School Counseling program's strengths, areas for improvement, and recommendations for future enhancements based on the feedback collected from alumni, employers, supervisors, and demographic trends. A report on student achievement of academic program outcomes is available as a separate document.

Data included in this report:
1. Demographic information for applicants to the program and current students
2. Exit survey data summary and qualitative comments
3. Alumni survey data summary and qualitative comments
4. Site supervisor data summary and qualitative comments
5. Student rating of sites and supervisor data summary and qualitative comments
6. Employer survey data summary and qualitative comments

1. Demographic Information

Demographics have only recently (beginning Fall 2024) become available to our program through our Graduate School and they only provide us with applicant data. We submitted a request to the Interim Director of Graduate Admissions and she utilized the WebApp (CollegeNET) search engine to pull all demographic data on applicants from Oct 1 2023 – March 1, 2025. This was shared with us in a spreadsheet and we were able to cross reference the spreadsheet to delineate between applicants who were accepted to the program and those who were not.

Text describing the significance of the demographic information:

The demographic information offers important insights into both the **diversity of the applicant pool** and the **representation among current students** in the School Counseling (SC) and Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) programs. Several key points emerge from the data (

Gender Diversity
Currently, the gender break-down of population of the school counseling program is as follows: incoming cohort (20% male; 80% female); upcoming second year cohort (20% male; 80% female); and graduating cohort (25% male; 75% female). In general, the applicant pool (Table 1a) is overwhelmingly female (37 out of 47 applicants), which aligns closely with the gender breakdown of currently enrolled students (Table 1b: 37 female out of 47 total) as well as individuals in the field as practicing school counselors.

1. **Ethnic Representation**
   It is of note that the current non-White population of the school counseling program is as follows: incoming cohort (***50% non-White,*** including 3 African American, 1 Asian and 1 multiracial students); upcoming second year cohort (***12.5% non-White,*** including 1 Asian student); and graduating cohort (***25% non-White*** including 2 African American and 1 Latino student). While these numbers reflect a degree of ethnic diversity there may be more opportunities for targeted outreach to continue to diversify the student body.
2. **Geographic Origin**
   Most applicants (19 of 26 with available data) are from Virginia (which makes sense as we are a state-funded University), with smaller numbers from out-of-state (5) and international locations (2). While current geographic data for enrolled students isn't broken down in Table 1b, the strong in-state applicant base is important given that many counseling graduates serve local communities post-graduation. This in-state majority may contribute positively to regional workforce needs, but broader geographic recruitment could enhance cultural and experiential diversity.

Text describing changes, improvements, modifications as a result of the information.

Comparing applicant and student demographics helps assess equity in admissions. The similarity in racial/ethnic and gender proportions between applicants and admitted students

suggests that there is no major attrition of underrepresented groups between application and enrollment—an encouraging sign for inclusive admissions practices. However, with a predominantly female student body (and most often a predominately White student body, noting that this trend is not the case with the incoming cohort) the data still underscores the importance of continued efforts to recruit, support, and retain students from a wide range of backgrounds, including recruiting more men and non-binary students, as well as continuing to attract students from ethnically diverse backgrounds).

Table 1a. Demographic information of applicants to the SC program in most recent cycle (Sum 24). NOTE: The Graduate School only reports applicants, not accepted students.

Category	Breakdown	Count
In-State/Out-of-State	In-State (VA)	19
	Out-of-State (PA, WI, NC, NY, FL)	5
	International	2
Gender	Female (F)	37
	Male (M)	9
	Nonbinary/Gender fluid	1
Ethnicity	White (S)	34
	Black or African American (Q)	8
	Asian (T)	1
	Did Not Respond	1

Table 1b. Demographic information of current (admitted) students (SC & CMHC combined) NOTE: We report combined maser's level numbers in the CACREP Vital Statistics Annual Report.

Category	Breakdown	Count
In-State/Out-of-State	In-State (VA)	
	Out-of-State (Not VA)	
Gender	Female (F)	37
	Male (M)	9
	Other (O)	1
Ethnicity	American Indian or Alaskan Native	0
	Asian	2
	Black or African American	8
	White	34
	Two of more	2

2. Student Exit Survey

Text describing the administration of the exit survey:

The student exit survey was distributed by email and Via a Canvas (LMS) Announcement). Reminders were sent three times and the survey was mentioned in class. Seven out of twelve graduating students responded to the survey. The survey link is here: https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=Izwz6cfK9EKZiVzuPUp5wNbBFZ7obCh MjnMUmtr5n9tUNzA3NFc0SUZZVUczVFVaVURGV045NkFHWCQlQCN0PWcu

The School Counseling program at JMU is highly regarded for its supportive faculty as well as its small cohort model, which fosters strong relationships and personalized attention. The program's in-person classes, workshops, and hands-on experiences were also highlighted as strengths. Survey results reinforce this, with students reporting high levels of preparedness, particularly in areas like mentoring (4.4) and clinical supervision (4.6), as well as academic/career advising (4.6).

Students did express a desire for more in-person classes and fewer Zoom sessions, particularly during the second year, as the quality of instruction was perceived to drop when doctoral students taught online. Additionally, while students rated their funding opportunities (4.0) and licensure preparation (4.0) as good, there is room for improvement. The accessibility of faculty was rated exceptionally high at 5.0, and program expectations were generally clear (4.4). Overall, students were very likely to recommend the program (5.0) and felt confident in their ability to transition into professional roles, with many praising the community and faculty support.

Text describing changes, improvements, modifications as a result of the survey information .

As students want more in-person classes and fewer Zoom sessions, especially in the second year, it must be noted that two of our five core faculty members were on leave this semester and one faculty member had a reassigned course, and it was therefore necessary to hire adjuncts. This will not be the case going forward in the future as all faculty will be back in place next year and we will not need to employ adjuncts for these courses. Funding opportunities are a bit beyond our control. At the same time, we try and network with offices on campus to promoted our students as graduate assistants. Additionally we have secured 100 percent paid internship opportunities for our student for the next academic year, which is highly unusual for school counseling programs. Licensure support is available via the JMU Education Support Center. Each year, a member of the ESC team visits the internship class to explain the process and the students have a clearly outlined document (https://www.jmu.edu/coe/esc/_files/applying-for-endorsements.pdf) about how to navigate the licensure process. They are aware of this from the time practicum begins. We will include this link in our handbook for the coming years. We will continue to maintain our faculty accessibility by maintaining office hour structures and open communication policies, continue to invest in community-building practices (we are planning for two cohort gatherings this coming fall) and will maintain our peer mentoring program. Because the exit survey is anonymous, it can be difficult to require the completion; however, we may capture more student voices if we took time to have students complete the survey during class time.

Table 2a. Student exit survey data summary (2024)

Question	Average
How prepared do you feel for your next step?	4.6
How prepared do you feel for licensure, certification, or other credentialing?	4.0
How effective was the mentoring you received as a graduate student?	4.4
How effective was the clinical supervision you received as a graduate student?	4.6
How effective was the academic/career advising you received as a graduate student?	4.6
How would you rate the funding opportunities available to you for graduate work?	4.0
How would you rate the accessibility of the faculty?	5.0
How well were program expectations were articulated to you?	4.4
How likely are you to recommend this program to someone else?	5.0

The questions were rated on a 5-point scale: 1 = Poor/Negative, 5 = Extremely Good/Positive. n = 5 students.

Table 2b. Student exit survey qualitative responses - verbatim (2024)

Question	Response
Strengths	*The staff within the School Counseling program, namely Joe LeBlanc and Michele Kielty, are what make this program stand out. The small cohort model plays a large role in this as well.*
	The major strengths of the program include: in person classes, support with funding (GA's and Rise Up Grant), hands on experiences and workshops, the small program size, the true care and concern from instructors and cohort members, and combined classes to get to know other cohorts as well.
	The faculty support, small cohort size, intimate class discussions, supervision
	One of the strengths is the supportive and engaging staff. They were always willing to help us understand, and every assignment was created with purpose. Another strength is that the setup of the program done very well. All of the classes build off, and they are appropriate for the time of year (practicum/internship). The program and staff are constantly finding ways to support students emotionally, financially, and academically for long-term success!
	Community building and meaningful relationships with professors and peers
Suggestions for Improvement	*My cohort's second year classes were unimpressive. Zoom classes and doctoral student professors was a major step down from the great in person classes and professors we had during our first year.*
	It would be great if there was more funding to retain excellent adjunct professors! It was less than ideal to have two doctoral interns both with online classes for our last semester.
	More in-person classes, less online classes
	Having more conversations early on about deadlines for EdS project & licensure.
Other Comments	*This program is great! My only regret is that we did not have more classes our second year with Joe or Amanda, or even Michele. I understand the personelle shortage and these individuals being spread very thin between other responsibilities, but they are those ones who really made these past two years special. Having zoom class with doc students in different states this last semester has been a bit of a bummer.*
	I have really enjoyed the program, and I feel prepared for my job next year! Professors have been very realistic and supportive throughout the program. I love that so many of them work to bring in speakers, go on field trips, bring workshops in, and do hands on activities in class. Thank you!
	This program has been so amazing. I loved spending two years at JMU. I feel so confident in my abilities to be a great school counselor thanks to the faculty and field experiences!
	This program was amazing. It was engaging, supportive, and inclusive. The staff and students worked hard to accomplish program goals and succeed long-term. I always felt comfortable in the spaces, and extremely supported by those around me.

3. Alumni Survey
Text describing the administration of the survey.
Data for the Alumni Survey was collected via the Virginia Education Assessment Collaborative (VEAC). They VEAC is a growing partnership between Educator Preparation Programs (EPP) in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Their purpose is to provide a centralized assessment structure for Virginia Education Preparation Programs that standardizes and reduces the complexity of data collection for both the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). A survey was distributed in the Fall of 2023 to alumni from the last three graduating classes (2023, 2022, and 2021). Names of alumni were provided to the VEAC contact at JMU.

The School Counseling program at JMU is generally regarded positively by alumni, with high ratings for overall satisfaction (4.80) and their preparation for future roles. Students reported strong competency in areas such as professionalism and collaboration (averages ranging from 3.20 to 3.80 across different areas). Alumni also highlighted strengths in the program's faculty support, the small cohort size, and opportunities for hands-on learning. However, some areas for improvement were noted, including more focus on administrative skills, such as scheduling, data interpretation, and PowerSchool use, along with more tailored courses for school counselors. Alumni also suggested a need for better practicum placements in urban or diverse settings, as well as additional exposure to evidence-based curricula and teaching small groups.

Text describing changes, improvements, modifications as a result of the survey information

As alumni consistently reported lower scores in data use and accountability (e.g., Q7 and Q8). And requested more guidance on gathering, analyzing, and applying data in practice, we have begun to modify the assessment-oriented class (Psyc 600, Measurement and Statistics, and Psyc 607, Assessment Procedures in Counseling). An informal class survey this semester found that students received and practiced specific school-based assessment applications in Psyc 607, Assessment Procedures in Counseling. In the Psyc 600, Measurement and Statistics, class, we have more readings focused on school-based issues in gathering and analyzing data. We also practice with counseling-related scenarios to employ basic descriptive and inferential statistics via Excel – a program they are more than likely to see in schools. Our Psyc 751 class, which includes planning for the EdS project, also includes steps for data collection and analysis.
At times, alumni noted feeling underprepared in tools like PowerSchool, Excel, and scheduling systems. In reality, it is difficult to train students on these systems until they are in school buildings and students receive typically access to these systems while they are practicum and internship. We will consider having a mock session during Psyc 640, School Counseling, for student data and graduation tracking systems. Because student data is private, we cannot ask a guest to come into the class and show an actual PowerSchool screen, but a representative from PowerSchool may be able to zoom in as a guest. The Psychopathology course is now taught to the school counseling cohort exclusively and child and adolescent examples are centered in the course (this has not always been the case). As alumni expressed a desire for more training in

leading small groups and using SEL curriculum (e.g., Second Step, Zones of Regulation, Superflex), we will be discussing this feedback at our faculty retreat and requesting instructor modifications to the group course. While concerns were raised about limited urban placement opportunities, especially for students of color, we provide many opportunities for such placements (i.e. Harrisonburg City Schools, Waynesboro City Schools, Winchester Public Schools, and Staunton City Schools). Students who participated in the RISE UP grant were tied to rural school settings as a result of the requirement of the grant. Students were not required to be a part of this grant and chose to receive payment over being placed at an urban school. Moving forward (as the grant is over), we have many funded internship positions in urban schools settings, as mentioned earlier in this document. We will continue to celebrate strengths (as overall satisfaction was very high with a 4.80 average and faculty were widely praised for their support.

Table 3a. Alumni survey data summary (2020-2023)
Scale Information:
4= Exemplary; 3=Proficient; 2=Developing/Needs Improvement; 1= or Unacceptable
Higher values indicate more proficiency, and lower values indicate more unacceptability

How would you rate your preparation at JMU to:	RA1.1 Competencies	2023	2022	2021	2020
1. Effectively administers individual and group student appraisal and assessment	Applications of Data Literacy Data and Evidence for DEI	3.40	3.00	3.50	3.00
2. Engages in relevant professional activities such as professional organization membership, upholding professional standards, and maintaining credentials.	Professional and Ethical Standards	3.60	3.80	3.25	3.57
3. Fosters collaboration and teamwork within schools.	Collaborative Activities	3.60	3.80	3.75	3.57
4. Models school counseling professionalism, including legal and ethical considerations	Professional and Ethical Standards	3.80	3.60	3.50	3.71
5. Serves as a P-12 school leader, advocate, and change agent.	Collaborative Activities	3.40	4.00	3.50	3.33
6. Supports students by cooperatively working collaboratively with families and school personnel.	Collaborative Activities	3.40	3.40	3.25	3.43
7. Uses accountability data to inform decision-making.	Applications of Data Literacy Data and Evidence for DEI	3.20	3.40	2.75	2.43
8. Uses data to advocate for programs	Applications of Data	3.60	3.40	2.25	2.67

and students.	Literacy Data and Evidence for DEI				
9. Uses research and evaluation skills to improve school counseling program	Research and Methodology Data and Evidence for DEI	3.40	3.50	2.75	2.86
10. Effectively administers individual and group student appraisal and assessment	Applications of Data Literacy Data and Evidence for DEI	3.40	3.25	3.50	3.14
11. Advance the responsible and appropriate use of technology and software applications to facilitate academic, career and social/emotional achievement.	Applications of Technology	3.20	3.00	2.75	2.86
	Total Scale Mean (Q1-Q11)	3.45	3.47	3.16	3.14
	N	5	5	4	7
Overall, how satisfied are you with your preparation from JMU? (Likert scale questions added by JMU, 5 being highly satisfied)		4.80	4.80	4.75	3.71

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Table 3b. Alumni survey qualitative responses – verbatim (2020-2023)

Question	Response
Opportunities for Improvement	Using data to drive the program. What data is relevant and how to gather the data. More practice with classroom and small group lesson planning and implementation based on the data.
	I loved my experience at JMU. I have high skills in counseling, relationship building, and working with adolescents, However I did not get skills in administrative tasks including scheduling, excel sheets, how to use SEL systems or powerschool systems. As one of the only black school counselors to come out of this program in several years, it is very important to be mindful of where to place minority students. I had an intense experience at a rural county school- that ultimately helped me decide that a rural school like that would not be of benefit to me. Also allowing students to do practicums and internships in locations that benefit them. (such as Winchester was close to home, and could have benefited working at a city school there that could have turned into a job)
	I feel school counseling students need more understanding and practice with the following concepts: high school graduation requirements, mapping out a four year class plan, a deeper understanding of student behaviors as connected to mental health issues, more practice with how to listen to and talk with students with behavior challenges, how to understand and connect with DOE resources and leaders in the field to stay up to date on changes, and developing an open relationship with administration.
	My program was very thorough and prepared me well to advocate for comprehensive school counseling programs in public schools.
	More opportunities to work with online scheduling, I know that varies by placement for internships. However, more access to those things makes it easier to learn. I felt like my first year out of the program my boss was teaching me PowerSchool 101.
	Tailor the courses to School Counseling. Make courses like Statistics and Psychopathology relatable to school counseling through activities and content. The program would be more effective if it was not so focused on clinical counseling.
	I loved my time at James Madison University. I was treated incredibly well by all the staff and I truly felt supported. I would say that perhaps focusing on increasing diversity in graduate student admits would be good. I would also say have more instruction on how to teach and how to run small groups that you would actually do in a school setting. I would have liked to have more training on evidence-based curricula/programs and such (SecondStep, Superflex, Zones of Regulation, Coping CAT, etc.. More instruction on data and working with that. How to design, get, interpret, and use data and tests (pretests, post tests, t-test, etc.). How to read, understand, and critique academic research publications. How to conduct and publish research. These are not criticisms of the program.

	These are wish list items for consideration. The program at JMU and the faculty and staff were beyond amazing and I will always remember my time fondly. One of the best decisions of my life to have attended.
Other Comments	I'm more than "somewhat satisfied" with my experience in the SC program at JMU. Though there are some things that I think can bolster the program as stated above.
	Continue to keep the integrity of the program, and not let ""cancel"" culture impact that. Processing class was a life changing experience, and taught me how to be comfortable even in the uncomfortable
	Faculty is very knowledgeable and wonderfully supportive.
	Not something I would say for myself, but feedback I've heard from someone else in our cohort, has been more knowledge working with teachers/principals directly and handling different situations.
	Using real experiences in certain classes instead of role play was very helpful for the counseling piece. However, the reality is school counselors do way more than just counsel, and schools have psychologists, social workers, and contractors who provide these services to students. I also wished the program had classes that provided more opportunity to explore different levels of education. A lot of the content and examples were elementary, and we never learned to look at transcripts, what credits were, etc. Yes, that is not related to COUNSELING per se, but it is what school counselors do.
	Dr. [redacted], Dr. [redacted], and all the other faculty and staff were instrumental in the support and experience I had received from the program. It was profoundly positive and meaningful experience.

4. Practicum and Internship Site Supervisor Surveys

This section includes an analysis of feedback received for the James Madison University (JMU) School Counseling Program, organized by the key questions asked in the surveys provided. The responses cover supervisor feedback, for both practicum and internship experiences, via final evaluation of student forms during the timeframe of Fall 2021 to Spring 2024.

1. Feedback on JMU School Counseling Program's Curriculum: Strengths, Weaknesses, and Suggestions

Strengths
- Ethics and Counseling Skills: JMU students are often noted as well-prepared in ethical standards and counseling techniques. Supervisors frequently noted the focus on self-reflection, ethical practices, and general preparedness in school counseling.
- Positive Supervisor Relationships: Many supervisors expressed appreciation for the transparency, communication, and support provided by JMU's program, which they felt created a productive environment for hosting students.
- Strong Program Structure: The curriculum's rigor was commended, with specific mention of the Ed.S. degree's structure, which supervisors found beneficial in adequately preparing students for diverse roles within K-12 settings.

Weaknesses
- Behavior and Classroom Management: Multiple responses indicated a need for more training in behavior interventions, de-escalation, and classroom management, particularly for addressing challenging student behaviors at the elementary level.
- Project-Based Learning: One supervisor suggested including requirements for students to complete independent projects during internships, which could help students take more initiative in their roles.

Suggestions
- Special Education Knowledge: There is a recommendation for incorporating education courses on special education, behavior management, and classroom guidance, which would enhance students' abilities to work effectively in schools.
- Restorative Practices and Mediation: Introducing mediation or conflict resolution skills before placement was proposed as beneficial for student preparedness.

2. How is Hosting a JMU Student Beneficial to Your School Community?
- Additional Support for Students: Many supervisors noted that having a JMU student provided vital additional counseling resources, allowing more one-on-one sessions and enabling the main counselors to manage larger caseloads more effectively.
- Current Perspective and Fresh Ideas: Hosting students was seen as a way to bring new perspectives, updated counseling techniques, and fresh energy to the school, which benefited both students and staff.
- Mutual Learning Opportunity: Some supervisors highlighted the reciprocal nature of hosting an intern, where experienced staff could learn new trends and methods from the interns.

3. Was the Student Adequately Prepared for Their Expected Professional Development Level Prior to Placement?
- Generally Well-Prepared: Most responses indicated that JMU students were adequately prepared and able to take on their responsibilities quickly.
- Need for Practical Experience in Specific Areas: Some supervisors noted that, although students were generally well-prepared, additional training in areas like behavior and classroom management and crisis management could enhance their readiness for certain placements.
- Varied Skill Levels: Supervisors mentioned that while most students were proactive, a student or two relied more on supervisor guidance, indicating variability in readiness for session planning.

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4. Does JMU Have Reasonable Entry and Exit Requirements for School Counseling Students?
- Adequate Requirements: Most feedback affirmed that JMU's entry and exit requirements were suitable and aligned well with the demands of school counseling roles.
- Suggestion for Increased Direct Hours: One response suggested adding to the required number of direct service hours to ensure students gain sufficient practical experience.
- Additional Training in SEL and ASSIST as a Positive: Some supervisors appreciated that JMU provides ASSIST training for student crisis needs and recognized that JMU provides additional training on Social Emotional Learning (SEL) as an enhancement.

Summary and Recommendations

Overall, JMU's School Counseling Program is positively viewed by supervisors, particularly for its curriculum's strengths and student preparedness. However, there are actionable areas for improvement, especially in behavior and classroom management training. The program discussing survey results with the curriculum committee and may revise one course to incorporate more behavior and classroom management strategies. A workshop in restorative practices has been incorporated into the curriculum.

We do include behavior and classroom management experiences and practices in Psyc 640, School Counseling and Psyc 641, Prevention and Intervention in Schools; however, because students are not yet engaged in actual classrooms, the learning may not be as readily accessible. As a result of this feedback, we plan to use some of our upcoming budget to fund an extra workshop to be provided by a current or former classroom teacher who can provide expanded training in behavior and classroom. The Psyc 642, Issues and Trends in K-12 Education, course has specific content and assignments related to learning about Special Education and there is a KPI assignment dedicated to researching best practices for disabilities. Students can be encouraged to collaborate with special education teachers during internship and the behavior and classroom management experience workshop can also be designed to include differentiation related to student behaviors and learning. This past year, we incorporated. Day-long restorative practices workshop by a Certified RP practitioner and school counselor and will invite her to provide this workshop on a yearly basis. Ideas for providing refresher sessions on things like suicide risk assessment, tiered interventions, and classroom-

based SEL can definitely be incorporated into practicum and internship classes and the faculty will discuss ideas for doing do. Finally, we will consider creating opportunities for supervisors and students to engage in shared ideas and emerging practices in unique ways.

5. Student survey of sites and supervisors

Text describing the administration of the survey.

At the end of practicum and each internship experience (total of three times per student), students complete a site survey. This happens each semester.

Text describing the results of the survey
The last three years of quantitative and qualitative student feedback were analyzed. Quantitative data is shown below, in chart form, and then summarized. Themes from qualitative comments are also provided:

Table 5a.

5. Please rate your site experience on the following dimensions:

	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Responses	Average
Opportunities for counseling experiences							0.0
Count	0	0	4	12	53	69	
Row %	0.0%	0.0%	5.8%	17.4%	76.8%		
Supervision							0.0
Count	0	1	6	8	55	70	
Row %	0.0%	1.4%	8.6%	11.4%	78.6%		
Staff support							0.0
Count	0	0	4	17	49	70	
Row %	0.0%	0.0%	5.7%	24.3%	70.0%		
Atmosphere							0.0
Count	0	1	5	19	44	69	
Row %	0.0%	1.4%	7.2%	27.5%	63.8%		
Facility (space, materials, resources)							0.0
Count	0	1	7	24	37	69	
Row %	0.0%	1.4%	10.1%	34.8%	53.6%		
Professionalism of staff							0.0
Count	0	0	6	16	47	69	
Row %	0.0%	0.0%	8.7%	23.2%	68.1%		
Inservice training							0.0
Count	0	3	9	19	38	69	
Row %	0.0%	4.3%	13.0%	27.5%	55.1%		
Overall quality of internship site							0.0
Count	1	0	7	12	49	69	
Row %	1.4%	0.0%	10.1%	17.4%	71.0%		
Totals							0.0
Total Responses						70	

Table 5b.

6. Please rate your site experience on the following dimensions:

	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Responses	Average
Quality of Overall Supervision Count Row %	0 0.0%	1 1.4%	3 4.3%	13 18.8%	52 75.4%	69	0.0
Sense of Support Count Row %	0 0.0%	1 1.4%	1 1.4%	12 17.4%	55 79.7%	69	0.0
Assistance with Administrative or Technical Aspects Count Row %	1 1.4%	0 0.0%	4 5.8%	15 21.7%	49 71.0%	69	0.0
Knowledge of the Issues Faced in the Context of your Internship or Practicum Count Row %	0 0.0%	1 1.4%	3 4.3%	11 15.9%	54 78.3%	69	0.0
Instilling Sense of Professional School Counselor Identity Count Row %	0 0.0%	3 4.3%	2 2.9%	9 13.0%	55 79.7%	69	0.0
Reliable and Clear Communication Count Row %	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	7 10.1%	8 11.6%	54 78.3%	69	0.0
Challenge Appropriate to Developmental Level of Intern Count Row %	0 0.0%	2 2.9%	3 4.3%	12 17.4%	52 75.4%	69	0.0
Totals Total Responses						69	0.0

As you can see in Table 5a, the internship site experience was rated very positively across nearly all dimensions. Opportunities for counseling experiences received especially high marks, with 76.8% of respondents rating this as *Excellent*. Supervision was similarly strong, with 78.6% giving it an *Excellent* rating. Ratings for staff support were also favorable, with 70.0% selecting *Excellent*, indicating strong day-to-day guidance and encouragement.

The overall atmosphere was positively received, with 63.8% marking it *Excellent* and 27.5% as *Good*, showing that most interns felt welcomed and comfortable at their sites. Similarly, facility quality (including space and materials) had strong ratings, with 53.6% rating it *Excellent* and 34.8% as *Good*. The professionalism of staff also earned high praise, with 68.1% rating it *Excellent*.

Inservice training was slightly less favorably rated compared to other areas, with 55.1% giving it an *Excellent* rating and a notable 4.3% selecting *Poor*, suggesting some variability in training experiences. Finally, the overall quality of the internship site was rated as *Excellent* by 71.0% of respondents, reinforcing the overall strength of the internship placements.

An examination of Table 5b, shows that interns reported overwhelmingly positive experiences in key areas related to supervision and professional development. Quality of overall supervision was rated as *Excellent* by 75.4% of respondents, with similar praise for sense of support, which received the highest *Excellent* rating at 79.7%. The same high level of satisfaction (79.7%) was noted for both the site's ability **to** instill a sense of professional school counselor identity and for knowledge of issues relevant to the internship or practicum, reflecting strong mentorship and contextual awareness.

Support for administrative and technical aspects was rated *Excellent* by 71.0% of interns, showing strong organizational backing. Reliable and clear communication also scored well, with 78.3% giving it an *Excellent* rating, suggesting consistency and clarity in interactions. Lastly, the dimension of providing developmentally appropriate challenges received 75.4% *Excellent* ratings, highlighting a thoughtful match between tasks and intern readiness.

A review of qualitative comments from students is shared here and all comments are listed at the end of this section.

The qualitative analysis reveals overall high satisfaction, especially in relation to supportive supervision and rich experiential learning. However, a few sites revealed challenges related to intern inclusion and balance of responsibilities. This summary aims to highlight patterns, guide future placements, and support ongoing site partnerships. Key Themes and Findings are below:

1. Supervisory Support as a Cornerstone of Success
Most interns identified the quality of supervision as the single most important factor in their experience.
- Several highly praised supervisors: (i.e. Kim M., Jimmy M., Katie, Lawrence, Anne, Andrea, and Sharon).
- Students valued supervisors who were:
  • Accessible and knowledgeable
  • Willing to challenge and encourage autonomy
  • Inclusive and affirming of interns as professionals

2. Hands-On Opportunities and Autonomy
Interns expressed deep appreciation for practical, immersive experiences, including:
- Leading individual and group counseling sessions
- Participating in IEP, eligibility, or academic planning meetings
- Leading classroom guidance lessons
- Designing and implementing original activities

3. Welcoming Site Cultures
Students frequently noted welcoming staff and school communities:
- Many sites fostered a strong sense of belonging and collaboration.
- Students felt treated as part of the team and were respected as developing professionals.

4. Growth in Professional Identity
Most interns concluded their placements with increased confidence, feeling ready to enter the field:
- Appreciation for diverse student populations
- Mastery of counseling tools and strategies
- Development of their own professional voice

5. Areas for Improvement

A few students reported issues that limited their learning:

- Underutilization: a report of feeling like an "assistant" rather than a trainee.
- Overburdened supervisor: Resulted in lack of structure or inconsistent feedback.
- Isolation: A few felt excluded from meaningful work or school culture.
- Burnout spillover: Some supervisors' fatigue subtly impacted morale.

ALL COMMENTS HERE: (I don't think we should include these but I am leaving them in case you need them)

I loved my time at Riverbed Elementary School. The school atmosphere was great and very welcoming. Kim was amazing and supported me in multiple ways in order for me to grow as a school counselor.

Site was awesome, I loved the students and they challenged me in ways I never thought passible. Mrs. Strite's organization, hard work, and knowledge also fostered an environment of growth and learning. Mrs. Strite challenged me but also allowed a safe space for me to process and learn. She was a kind and caring supervisor while also pushing me to be my best.

Great experience!

Tim was a great supervisor but the overall MMS experience was less than desired. The admin are not always open to giving interns pportunities, the counseling secretary does not give a very welcoming feel for myself or students. I wasn't given many opportunities ounseling or groups because Tim and the other counselor are so overwhelmed with doing things like scheduling, study studies, and admin tasks that have been left to them. It might be a good place for practicum since it's a less involved site but it doesn't give a lot opportunity just because everyone is so overwhelmed and over-extended

Kim Muraskin is absolutely fantastic! She took me under her wing and showed me the ins and outs of River Bend Elementary. Kim pushed me outside of my comfort zone and encouraged my connections with students. I have had so much fun and have learned so much from Kim during my time with her. She truly is an amazing school counselor!!

Aimee was wonderful! Such a pleasure working with her!

The site really gave me great opportunities to work with students in different settings. I got experience in classrooms, individual and some eligibility meetings as well. I think it helped me see the whole picture and things that could come up in a day of the life of counselor.

Best supervisor EVER

I am so fortunate to have had practicum experience at WHS. I loved the trust, collaboration, and plethora of knowledge that this opportunity provided me with! This supportive, hands-off, experience allowed me to grow both in my confidence and skills as a school counselor. I will definitely miss my time at Waynesboro!

Ottobine was an excellent experience and my supervisor had so much to do with it being so great. I truly learned so much.

Harrisonburg High School is an excellent internship site. I had many opportunities that challenged me and provided me the learning experiences to set me up to be a professional school counselor. The diverse school setting is like no other. The school counselors and school counseling staff at HHS are all wonderful especially my supervisor (Christy). Everyone always ade sure I was supported and felt like I belonged. I am grateful for all of the experiences I gained from Harrisonburg High School.

Wonderful experience! I love this school and Anne is amazing!

My supervisor and the experiences were amazing at this school. We struggled with support from the administration which gives a new level of challenge to the whole experience. I will miss this place dearly.

I will forever be thankful for this internship experience. The amount of support Jimmy was able to provide was everything I could have asked for. I have been able to learn so much about this career and I am now more excited than ever to be a school cour

The site and supervisor were so welcoming and I was offered and allowed many counseling opportunities, as well as group and guidance class leading. I really enjoyed my work with the students and collaboration with other staff and my supervisor.

I had a great time at NFMS! Andrea was an extremely hands-on supervisor with so much knowledge to share! I will definitely miss m

I absolutely loved working with Kelly. I always felt supported, but was given the space to work as independently as I needed. She helped me gain the confidence to challenge myself with a wide array of students and issues.

HHS is a wonderful site. I am very sad to go. The entire school counseling team was very warm and welcoming. They made me feel a part of the team and definitely set the bar high for my next school. There are so many resources available at HHS. I am grateful for all of the experiences I had at HHS.

It was difficult to find my place while sharing a site, but overall I ended up enjoying my experience at East Rock

I did not feel supported at this site. I was rarely included and was not set up well to meet with students. I was often left alone and did not feel like a valued member of the team.

I feel more prepared than ever to start my next chapter as a school counselor and I can thank Jimmy Miller for that. He was able to provide the best amount of support and shared the most helpful tips!

My experience at JWE has been beyond amazing! Katie has been a huge help and has provided me with so many opportunities for hands-on experiences. She has been so knowledgeable and helpful when I asked questions or needed help in certain situations. She is truly a wealth of information! This has been the best internship experience by far and I am so thankful to have been placed he

Andrea is a very supportive supervisor and allowed me many opportunities for counseling and supported me in developing my own group counseling. The environment was really encouraging and the staff was great and welcoming.

Lawrence was an amazing supervisor to work with. He granted me many opportunities to take risks and enhance my learning experi

Sara McLaughlin was wonderful and taught me so much! I was constantly exposed to real life counseling experience (i.e., meeting one on one with students, attending IEP meetings, completing a classroom guidance lesson, academic meetings, etc.) I feel as though I have a greater sense on what counseling looks like at the high school level. The other staff and counselors at S DHS were also very supportive and welcoming of me.

Overall, Harrisonburg Highschool gave me a lot of experience in handling crises and supporting students with academic/career need My only wish is that I could have had more SEL-focused experiences, but the support and guidance I received on-site was extremely helpful. I loved my supervisor and the rest of the counseling team at HHS for all the feedback and for supporting my growth as a cou

Anne, my supervisor, has been immensely supportive and has done such a amazing job scaffolding my experience. I feel both supported and challenged.

Sandy, along with the whole staff at ERHS, have been amazing to work with.

Wilson Middle School has a very supportive staff that collaborates well together. I was given opportunities to meet with students and create a group for 6th grade girls. My supervisor allowed me to be involved in everything that came up and supported me immensely during my time there.

Personally, I really enjoyed River Bend Elementary School as a site placement for internship! I had lots of autonomy to learn as well as supervision when needed. This placement provided me with many opportunities and made me feel ready to enter the workplace! Kim Muraskin was wonderful overall!

Best site ever, continue to send interns to Shenandoah County, their level of support is fantastic

I was supervised off-site by Whitney Kinkead and Robin Zombro who were fantastic. Emily Pace did an excellent job helping me on-site at Stone Spring!

I really enjoyed working with Sandy and the rest of the team at East Rock!

I really enjoyed my semester here at BMMS with Kristi. She is so knowledgeable and was always willing to challenge me to step outside of my comfort zone.

East Rockingham High School has an amazing counseling department and is very inclusive. They gave me opportunities to be involve in many different aspects of the job. I really enjoyed my time here and would recommend it greatly.

I personally really enjoyed my time at Wilson Middle School. I found that switching supervisors from past interns allowed for me to different perspective of what it looks like to be a school counselor at a new school and the challenges that may bring along with how work through those obstacles. I also had the opportunity to work through a breadth of middle school experiences during my time he Overall, a great experience.

This was an excellent placement! I would recommend that JMU continues to send interns here because I had such an incredible exp and I learned so much.

I had a great experience at TAHS with Sharon Cunningham. The counseling office was a positive and supportive environment. I also felt a good balance of autonomy and support / ability to ask questions and receive advice when I needed it.

I had a mixed experience at my River Bend elementary school internship. While I appreciated my site supervisor, for example, when Kim helped organise transportation for me when I had car troubles, I sometimes felt like more of her assistant or relief staff than her trainee or colleague. There were multiple occasions (even within the first couple of weeks) where I'd be thrown into leading class guidance lessons and managing the behaviors of particularly rowdy/disruptive classes without her present (as she took care of other issues or went to meetings). There were also times when she'd disappear for extended periods of time, meeting with teachers/students/parents while I twiddled my thumbs. Compared to my previous middle school internship at WMMS, I felt like a colleague and collaborator, as my old supervisor (Anne Page) would ask for my input on things and intentionally include me in her meetings, sessions, and errands. At RBES, there was often an excessive amount of downtime, and the atmosphere, unfortunately, very gossipy. I observed multiple occasions of faculty members, including my supervisor, bad-mouthing kids and other school staff (calling kids feral or fellow staff members useless - all while the counseling door was wide open). Moreover, confidentiality was not really adhered to, and client information was passed around freely (and often negatively and judgmentally instead of collaboratively). Overall, I am grateful for the experience.. I enjoyed working with many of the students there and getting to see their unique perspectives coming from a rural background. However, I want to be transparent: There were elements of the internship that lacked professionalism and had me wishing there were more impactful ways I could support the students in the school. I'll takeaway that it was a great learning experience.

Overall, I enjoyed my experience at SDE. I felt like I was able to expand on my counseling skills at the elementary level, and I felt ready when the time came to take on more responsibilities. I started by teaching an activity, then a class, and then creating a lesson start to finish. The students and staff were wonderful. I can walk away with more tools and resources for this level than when I started at the beginning. Some constructive feedback to keep in mind would be that my site supervisor did seem slightly burnt out. There were some times of negativity, but it was never directly towards me, just towards the profession. It was structured in a way of advice, but with a more negative lining. While I was able to brush it off, I just want this to be kept in mind for the future. Again, I enjoyed my internship here and this was never directed at me, but I just wanted to make it known.

Text describing changes, improvements, modifications as a result of the survey information.

Student evaluation of their sites were overwhelmingly positive. We plan to continue our strong emphasis on university/K-12 partnerships and to continue to be present in local schools via site visits and community service opportunities. In order to continue to improve student experiences, we will continue placing students at site that were highly rated. Any "red flag" issues are taken seriously and we simply do not re-use sites that have substantiated complaints attached to them. While we do provide a specific online training and onboarding experience to supervisors, we will consider sponsoring open peer support and supervision opportunities for supervisors. Faculty members often present on preventing burnout in schools; however, there will be times where our assistance and intervention are not enough and we will need to avoid spaces where supervisor burnout is becoming a significant challenge for our students (this is a national concern in K-12 education).

6. Employer Survey

Text describing the administration of the survey.

Data for the Alumni Survey was collected via the Virginia Education Assessment Collaborative (VEAC). They VEAC is a growing partnership between Educator Preparation Programs (EPP) in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Their purpose is to provide a centralized assessment structure for Virginia Education Preparation Programs that standardizes and reduces the complexity of data collection for both the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). A survey was distributed in the Fall of 2023 to alumni from the last three graduating classes (2023, 2022, and 2021). Names of alumni were provided to the VEAC contact at JMU.

The School Counseling program at JMU is well-regarded by employers, with high ratings for students' professionalism and collaboration in school settings. Employers reported solid preparation for students in areas like student appraisal (3.50), professional activities (3.50), and collaborative teamwork (4.00), with most of the ratings consistently in the mid-range (3.50) or higher across years. Alumni's ability to use data to inform decision-making and advocate for programs (3.50) was also positively noted. However, some areas showed opportunities for growth, particularly in research and evaluation skills (3.50) and technology use (3.50). The overall readiness of students to impact their roles was rated highly (4.50), showing that students are prepared for advanced counseling roles, though some employers noted time management concerns in specific cases.

Employers expressed satisfaction with the program and highlighted specific students as strong advocates for their roles, demonstrating strong organizational skills and a quick learning curve in counseling tasks. Students were seen as valuable additions to schools, with particular praise for those who excelled even in large, high-stress environments.

Text describing changes, improvements, modifications as a result of the survey information.

A few employers noted concerns with task completion and time management in high-stress environments. One way we do address this is to help students plan and prepare for success in grate school, which also an intense work environment. We will plan to add a segment on time on time management and workflow strategies, prioritizing tasks, and using digital planning tools to our orientation that occurs in August. Another recommendation was to strengthen research and evaluation skills, which was addressed above. Specifically, An informal class survey this semester found that students received and practiced specific school-based assessment applications in Psyc 607, Assessment Procedures in Counseling. In the Psyc 600 (Measurement and Statistics) class, we have focused the curriculum and assignments on the following: 1) engaging critically with scholarship and evidenced-based literature (article critique and literature review assignments), 2) practicing skills related to data analysis (in-class scenarios), and 3) designing a school-based program evaluation (readings and final project).
It was also noted that we could expand training in technology applications. One way to do this would be to invite a representative from PowerSchool into our Psyc 640, School Counseling, class. We have also built an exploratory assignment (a "scavenger hunt") into Psyc 695 (Practicum), which has students engage with and ask intentional questions about programs and tools like PowerSchool. Another idea is to require at least one technology-enhanced project

(e.g., digital needs assessment or SEL resource hub) to be used in the students' Ed.S. projects. As employers consistently rated collaboration and ethical professionalism highly (3.50–4.00) and there was qualitative praise for advocacy and relational skills, we will continue to reinforce this strength with continued experiential learning, peer consultation, and role-play around ethical dilemmas, and maintain focus on real-world ethical scenarios involving teamwork with administrators, teachers, and families. In the end, employers rated overall readiness to impact roles rated 4.50 in 2022 and 2023 and employers described students as strong additions to school teams. We will continue to foster our strong partnerships with school divisions and seek feedback from employers

Table 6a. Employer survey data summary
Scale Information:
4= Exemplary; 3=Proficient; 2=Developing/Needs Improvement; 1= or Unacceptable
Higher values indicate more proficiency, and lower values indicate more unacceptability

How would you rate the preparation at JMU to:	RA1.1 Competencies	2023	2022	2021	2020
1. Effectively administers individual and group student appraisal and assessment	Applications of Data Literacy Data and Evidence for DEI	3.50	3.50	3.00	3.50
2. Engages in relevant professional activities such as professional organization membership, upholding professional standards, and maintaining credentials.	Professional and Ethical Standards	3.50	3.50	2.00	4.00
3. Fosters collaboration and teamwork within schools.	Collaborative Activities	4.00	3.50	2.00	4.00
4. Models school counseling professionalism, including legal and ethical considerations	Professional and Ethical Standards	3.50	3.50	3.00	3.50
5. Serves as a P-12 school leader, advocate, and change agent.	Collaborative Activities	3.50	3.50	2.00	4.00
6. Supports students by cooperatively working collaboratively with families and school personnel.	Collaborative Activities	3.50	3.50	3.00	4.00
7. Uses accountability data to inform decision-making.	Applications of Data Literacy Data and Evidence for DEI	3.50	3.50	3.00	3.50
8. Uses data to advocate for programs and students.	Applications of Data Literacy Data and Evidence for DEI	3.50	3.50	3.00	3.50
9. Uses research and evaluation skills to improve school counseling program	Research and Methodology Data and Evidence for DEI	3.50	3.50	2.00	3.50
10. Effectively administers individual and group student appraisal and assessment	Applications of Data Literacy Data and Evidence for DEI	3.50	3.50	3.00	4.00

11. Advance the responsible and appropriate use of technology and software applications to facilitate academic, career and social/emotional achievement.	Applications of Technology	3.50	3.50	3.00	3.00
	Total Scale Mean (Q1-Q11)	3.63	3.58	2.67	3.74
	N	2	2	1	3
Overall readiness to impact in advanced role (Likert scale questions added by JMU, 5 being highly ready)		4.50	4.50	3.00	4.33

Table 6b. Employer survey qualitative responses – verbatim

Question	Response
Additional Feedback about Student	She is a great advocate for students!
	Very organized. Strong skills with relating to students and quick at learning scheduling and other preparatory items for students (college oriented, vocational, etc.).
	Ms. [redacted] is in her second year of school counseling at [redacted] and third overall. She has come a long way, however, time management has been a concern relating to completion of tasks in a timely manner to focus on student need. She has done an outstanding job this semester as she is the only counselor with 445 students.
	She is an awesome addition to our building. We are lucky to have her!