

ASSESSMENT REPORT¹ 2022-2023

Degree Program: Counseling

Degree Program Level: Master of Arts (MA)

Program Mission

The mission of the NMHU Counselor Education Program is to train entry-level counselors who are prepared for positions in community service agencies as mental health counselors, in school systems as school counselors, and rehabilitation settings as rehabilitation counselors. We are committed to continuous improvement of quality and excellence that fosters critical reflection, integrates theory and practice, and promotes advocacy through a culturally responsive and inclusive approach.

Program Context

The NMHU Counseling Program is considered a distance education program as defined by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC): an academic program offered *in whole or in part* through distance education, regardless of whether a face-to-face, on-ground or residential option is also available (<https://www.hlcommission.org/General/glossary.html?highlight=WyJnbG9zc2FyeSjd>). The Program is predominantly delivered via real-time Zoom and faculty continue to explore the potential to return to some in-person, on-ground classes.

Table 1 below provides descriptive information for the students in the program. Of note, the average age of counseling students is **38.9 years old** as of the most recent semester enrolled (Fall 2022, Spring 2023, or Summer 2023). During Spring 2023, 195 total students were enrolled, 88 students (**45.1%**) enrolled full-time and 107 students (**54.9%**) enrolled part-time. **Hispanic-identifying students** make up the largest ethnic/descent population in the program, with **females** outnumbering males and non-binary students almost 5.5 to 1. The largest student center representation is **Rio Rancho, NM**.

Table 1. Counseling department demographic characteristics of all students enrolled in at least one semester during Fall 2022 + Spring 2023 + Summer 2023.

Reported Gender								
Female	Male	Non-Binary	Total					
213 (84.5%)	37 (14.7%)	2 (0.8%)	252					
Student Designated Center								
Las Vegas	Rio Rancho	Farmington	Santa Fe	Distance	Total			
16 (6.3%)	130 (51.6%)	42 (16.7%)	42 (16.7%)	22 (8.7%)	252			
Concentration								
CMHC	ClinRehab	Rehab	School	Dual	Cert	Total		
149 (59.1%)	24 (9.5%)	2 (0.8%)	63 (25.0%)	2 (0.8%)	12 (4.8%)	252		
Ethnicity								
Hispanic	White	Native American	African American	Asian/Pacific Islander	2 or More	International	Unreported	Total
97 (38.5%)	91 (36.1%)	29 (11.5%)	2 (0.8%)	2 (0.8%)	6 (2.4%)	6 (2.4%)	19 (7.5%)	252

¹ This report uses the template provided by the NMHU Outcomes Assessment Handbook

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME 1: To demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the knowledge base of the Counseling profession.

NMHU Trait Linked to Student Learning Outcome 1

4. Mastery of content knowledge and skills

First Means of Assessment for Outcome 1 and Interpretation of Results

The Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam (CPCE) used to be taken by each student in the first or second semester of their Internship (see Substantive Change 1 at the end of this report). This exam is a standardized exam constructed by the Center for Credentialing and Education (CCE), a branch of the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC). The CPCE measures students' mastery of eight areas of the counseling knowledge base.

The Counseling Department passing score on the CPCE is a raw score of 70 for the total score and a raw score of 9 for each area. Nationally, the average raw score for all CPCE exit exam scores during this time frame was 89.38 (N=657) for January 2022; 80.56 (N=629) for August 2022; and 85.70 (N=646) for January 2023. The lower raw score criterion for the NMHU counseling program was set with consideration of research outcomes from the counseling literature. Hartwig and Van Overschelde (2016) found that older adults scored lower, on average, than younger students. GRE-V score was the strongest predictor of CPCE content domains; as an open-access university, the NMHU counseling program does not require GREs. There is a serious lack of counseling literature that explores either ethnicity/descent background or English Language Learners as predictors of CPCE scores and the CCE does not provide this data.

See Table 2. The percentage of NMHU students meeting the total score criterion on their first attempt was similar between the two academic years (71.4% to 73.2%). Across two academic years, the number of students meeting content domain criterion was highest in Group Counseling & Group Work and Professional Orientation & Ethics and the lowest domains were Social & Cultural Diversity, Counseling & Helping Relationships, and Assessment & Testing. However, the largest increases were in Assessment & Testing and Research and Program Evaluation. See Table 3. There are substantially different experiences of the CPCE for NMHU students of various ethnicity/descent backgrounds and the program is committed to examining this further.

For now, the program needs to examine the primary references of content and student mastery of content particularly for (in order of priority): Social & Cultural Diversity, Counseling & Helping Relationships, and Human Growth & Development. In the future with the reporting power of Tevera (see Substantive Change 2 at the end of this report), rather than using fixed CPCE raw-score criteria, the program will be able to account for the substantial variation in test difficulty across the different versions, as recommended by Hartwig and Van Overschelde (2016). Additionally, the NMHU program can contribute to much-needed data reporting for students of underreported ethnicity/descent backgrounds.

The NMHU counseling program prioritizes mastery of content and thus, allows students to retake the CPCE, and if criteria remain unmet, students take the Alternative Test (see asterick * below) managed by the Counseling Department. The Alternative Test is completed in a stress-free environment with no time limits. Students are able to use resources and take a rotating set of assessments until they meet a required score of 75% correct overall. The Alternative Test assesses the same areas as the CPCE.

Table 2. CPCE first-attempt results by concentration comparing F21-Su22 with F22-Su23.

Area		CMHC		School		Dual		ClinRehab		Total Students		
Academic Terms		F21-Su22	F22-Su23	F21-Su22	F22-Su23	F21-Su22	F22-Su23	F21-Su22	F22-Su23	F21-Su22	F22-Su23	% Change
1	Prof Couns Orient & Ethical Practice	21/28= 75.0%	34/42= 81.0%	4/7= 57.1%	23/30= 76.7%	N/A	½= 50.0%	3/5= 60.0%	8/8= 100%	31/42= 73.8%	66/82= 80.5%	+ 6.7%
2	Social & Cultural Diversity	17/28= 60.7%	25/42= 59.5%	4/7= 57.1%	8/30= 26.7%	N/A	½= 50.0%	2/5= 40.0%	5/8= 62.5%	25/42= 59.5%	39/82= 47.6%	- 11.9%
3	Human Growth & Development	22/28= 78.6%	30/42= 71.4%	4/7= 57.1%	21/30= 70.0%	N/A	½= 50.0%	2/5= 40.0%	4/8= 50.0%	29/42= 69.0%	56/82= 68.3%	- 0.7%
4	Career Development	22/28= 78.6%	32/42= 76.2%	4/7= 57.1%	25/30= 83.3%	N/A	½= 50.0%	2/5= 40.0%	7/8= 87.5%	29/42= 69.0%	65/82= 79.3%	+ 10.3%
5	Coun & Helping Relationships	21/28= 75.0%	27/42= 64.3%	3/7= 42.9%	16/30= 53.3%	N/A	½= 50.0%	2/5= 40.0%	6/8= 75.0%	28/42= 66.7%	50/82= 61.0%	- 5.7%
6	Group Coun & Group Work	22/28= 78.6%	34/42= 81.0%	6/7= 85.7%	23/30= 76.7%	N/A	2/2= 100%	2/5= 40.0%	8/8= 100%	32/42= 76.2%	67/82= 81.7%	+ 5.5%
7	Assessment & Testing	15/28= 53.6%	26/42= 61.9%	1/7= 14.3%	18/30= 60.0%	N/A	2/2= 100%	2/5= 40.0%	6/8= 75.0%	19/42= 45.2%	52/82= 63.4%	+ 18.2%
8	Research & Program Evaluation	20/28= 71.4%	33/42= 78.6%	5/7= 71.4%	23/30= 76.7%	N/A	2/2= 100%	0/5= 0%	7/8= 87.5%	28/42= 66.7%	65/82= 79.3%	+ 12.6%
CPCE Total Score		22/28= 78.6%	32/42= 76.2%	4/7= 57.1%	20/30= 66.7%	N/A	2/2= 100%	2/5= 40.0%	6/8= 75.0%	30/42= 71.4%*	60/82 = 73.2%*	+ 1.8%

Notes: Students meeting program criteria on first attempt/number of students assessed on first attempt = percent meeting criteria; Rehab Counseling has no data for F22-Su23 and comparison as the program is being sunsetted (see Substantive Change 4 at the end of this report). *This number does not reflect the number of students who remediate and then pass successfully.

Table 3. CPCE results by ethnicity/descent comparing F21-Su22 with F22-Su23.

Hispanic		White		Native American		Afr Amer, Asian/Pac, 2 or more, International, Unreported		Totals	
F21-Su22	F22-Su23	F21-Su22	F22-Su23	F21-Su22	F22-Su23	F21-Su22	F22-Su23	F21-Su22	F22-Su23
7/14= 50.0%	20/30= 66.7%	15/16= 93.8%	31/35= 88.6%	3/6= 50.0%	2/7= 28.6%	5/6= 83.3%	7/10= 70.0%	30/42= 71.4%	60/82= 73.2%

Note: Students meeting program criteria on first attempt/number of students assessed on first attempt = percent meeting criteria

Second Means of Assessment for Outcome 1 and Interpretation of Results

All NMHU Counseling program concentrations are now accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). Part of the process of accreditation was developing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in each of the eight areas. In addition to total and content area score results on the CPCE, KPIs serve as the second means of assessment for Outcome 1.

See Table 4. Between F21-Sp22 and F22-Su23, KPIs underwent revision to improve assessment. A new system for data collection was implemented during Fall 2022 and four KPIs were revised during Spring 2023. Beginning Fall 2023, the program will shift from the CACREP 2016 Standards to the 2024 Standards (see Substantive Change 3 at the end of this report). Beginning in Spring 2024, the combination of faculty training and the use of Tevera (see Substantive Change 2 at the end of this report) is expected to increase the amount of meaningful data related to KPIs. Between F21-Sp22 and F22-Su23, the Counseling program implemented improvements related to KPIs. During F21-Sp22, raw scores and percentages were reported. Beginning F22-Su23, raw scores were converted into standard scores using the rubric: 1=Pre-competency, 2=Competency, 3=Exceeds Expected Competency, X=Incomplete or Withdrawal. This decision was made to create more meaningful comparisons across KPIs (see Substantive Change 6 at the end of this report).

Table 4. KPI results comparing F21-Su22 with F22-Su23.

	AREA	KPI	F21-Sp22	F22-Su23
1	Prof Couns Orient & Ethical Practice	KPI: Ethical Dilemma Analysis Purpose of KPI: Applies ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling.	46/48= 95.8%	51/51= 100%
2	Social & Cult Diversity	KPI: Experiential Learning Excursion Purpose of KPI: Articulates awareness of the impact of heritage, attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences on an individual's view of others.	25/25= 100%	41/44= 93.2%
3	Human Growth & Dev	KPI: Developmental Analysis Purpose of KPI: Demonstrates knowledge and application of human growth & development in ethical and culturally relevant strategies in counseling.	51/55= 92.7%	48/49= 98.0%
4	Career Dev	KPI: Personal Career-Focused Assessment Purpose of KPI: Demonstrates knowledge and application of career development, analyzing data and using data in counseling.	46/46= 100%	50/53= 94.3%
5	Coun & Help Relation	KPI: Compare & Contrast Theory Paper Purpose of KPI: Demonstrates knowledge demonstrate knowledge and application of ethical and culturally relevant strategies in counseling.	40/42= 95.2%	43/45= 95.6%
6	Group Coun & Work	KPI: Self-Assessment of Group Facilitator Purpose of KPI: Demonstrates knowledge and application of group counseling and group work.	38/38= 100%	57/58= 98.3%

7	Assessment & Testing	KPI: Review of Instruments Purpose of KPI: Demonstrates demonstrate knowledge and application of assessment and testing, analyzing data and using data in counseling.	44/46= 95.7%	37/41= 90.2%
8	Research & Prog Eval	KPI: Action Research Proposal Purpose of KPI: Analyzes and uses data in counseling.	41/54= 75.9%	44/48= 91.7%
Specialty AREA CMHC		KPI: Advocacy Project Purpose of KPI: Demonstrates knowledge and application of clinical mental health counseling.	28/29= 96.6%	29/29= 100%
Specialty AREA ClinREHAB		KPI: Case Report and Presentation Purpose of KPI: Demonstrates knowledge and application of clinical rehabilitation counseling.	7/7= 100%	2/3= 66.7%
Specialty AREA REHAB		KPI: Job Analysis Purpose of KPI: Demonstrates knowledge and application of rehabilitation counseling.	4/4= 100%	3/3= 100%
Specialty AREA SCHOOL		KPI: RAMP Application Review Purpose of KPI: Demonstrates knowledge needed to design and evaluate school counseling programs using a developed model (i.e. ASCA).	16/17= 94.1%	13/15= 86.7%

Note: Number of students meeting Competency criteria/reported total number of students submitting KPI = percentage of students meeting Competency criteria

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME 2: To demonstrate the effective use of counseling skills.

NMHU Traits Linked to Student Learning Outcome 2, First Means of Assessment

1. Critical and reflective thinking skills
2. Effective communication skills
3. Mastery of content knowledge and skills

First Means of Assessment for Outcome 2 and Interpretation of Results

Internship evaluations are completed by the student's Internship Site Supervisor at the end of each semester in which the student is enrolled in the Internship. The evaluations assess 18 areas of professionalism and the effective and appropriate use of essential counseling skills.

It is important for students to be evaluated by counseling professionals outside the counseling faculty. This helps to ensure that students perform not only to expected knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSA's) standards of the counseling faculty, but also to the standards of professionals practicing in the counseling field. Students are monitored throughout field experiences by both Site Supervisors and Counseling Faculty Supervisors with routine communication among them. End-of-the-semester Site Supervisor Evaluations confirm that interns are performing to standards expected in the field and that situations of concern are addressed expeditiously and on an individual student basis as needed, resulting in high success rates.

Table 5. Internship Site Supervisor Evaluations Fall 2022 + Spring 2023 + Summer 2023

Internship I	Internship II
33/34 = 97.1%	47/49 = 95.9%

Note: Number of students meeting Competency criteria/reported total number of students evaluated = percentage of students meeting Competency criteria

NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 2, Second Means of Assessment

2. Effective communication skills
4. Mastery of content knowledge and skills

Second Means of Assessment for Outcome 2 and Interpretation of Results

The Counseling Department uses a Dispositions Assessment based on important dispositions in the Counseling profession. This assessment helps students to identify strengths and areas for improvement. The Dispositions Assessment assesses Empathy, Genuineness, Acceptance, Open-Mindedness, Cognitive Complexity, Psychological Adjustment, Competence, and Sensitivity to Issues of Diversity using a four-point scale.

Students self-assess with faculty input during COUN 6050 Essential Skills, and Internship Supervisors assess during Practicum, Internship I and Internship II. Beginning F22-Su23, raw scores were averaged and converted into standard scores using the rubric: 1=Pre-competency, 2=Competency, 3=Exceeds Expected Competency, X=Incomplete or Withdrawal. This decision was made to create more meaningful comparisons across KPIs (see Substantive Change 6 at the end of this report). Site Supervisor Dispositions Assessment confirms that the vast majority of interns have developed dispositions expected in the counseling field and that student dispositions of concern are addressed expeditiously and on an individual student basis.

Table 6. Students meeting target criteria for dispositions Fall 2022 + Spring 2023 + Summer 2023.

Time Points	Fa22-Su23
COUN 6050 Essential Skills	96.8%
Practicum	100%
Internship I	97.0%
Internship II	97.7%

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME 3: To demonstrate the appropriate application of a counseling theory to a specific problem.

NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 3

1. Critical and reflective thinking skills
2. Effective communication skills
3. Effective use of technology
4. Mastery of content knowledge and skills

First Means of Assessment for Outcome 3 and Interpretation of Results

The student verbally gives a case presentation (Capstone) during Internship II. The Capstone consists of: 1) a brief demographic description of the intern's client, 2) a brief diagnostic description of the presenting problem, 3) an overview of the theoretical approach used by the intern, 4) the treatment plan, 5) a summary of the sessions, and 6) the treatment outcome. Each intern's Capstone is assessed using the following scale: 1 = Pre-competency, 2 = Competency, 3 = Exceeds Expected Competency, X = Incomplete or Withdrawal. All but one student met or exceeded the Competency criterion for the Capstone.

Table 7. Students meeting target criteria for the Capstone Fall 2022 + Spring 2023 + Summer 2023.

Pre-Competency	Competency	Exceeds Expected Competency	Incomplete or Withdrawal	# Meeting Competency/Total Assessed
1	44	4	0	48/49= 98.0%

Counseling Department Goal Completion

Table 8. Counseling Department Goals from 2020-2021 Report

2020-2021 Goals	2022-2023 Results	Related 2023-2025 Goals
Attain full 8-year CACREP Accreditation. Follow-up report to CACREP due Oct 2022; address eight identified standards of concern	Goal fully met (CACREP accreditation granted through 2029). CACREP Liaison and Assessment Coordinator roles formalized	Maintain data collection, analysis, interpretation, improvements, and annual CACREP reporting. Work to delegate more responsibilities from Department Chair and investigate potential for Program Director.
Grow program with certificates in substance use disorder, psychological trauma, child and adolescents, marriage and family therapy, vocational evaluation.	Goal continues; insufficient faculty and staff resources to complete	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revise school counseling certification to align more with concentration 2. For rehab certification, consider removing rehab internship requirement for those who have had internship and explore the possibility of inviting social work/other clinical fields to certification for those who have had internship 3. Explore substance abuse certification with no internship requirement for individuals who have already had an internship
Develop counseling clinics for our practicum students at all sites (RR, SF, FM and LV). Explore partnerships with Social Work and Psychology.	Goal continues	Proposal for LV counseling clinic approved by NMHU Board of Regents and now moves for consideration by the state
Use data from KPI Area 2: Social and Cultural Diversity to improve program.	Goal continues; the program received a grant for Spirituality Competency Training in Graduate Mental Health (SCT-MH) and is considering integration into the core curriculum	Faculty teaching COUN 6110 Cultural Diversity & Social Justice course have adopted a Terminology Exam
Improve/further develop Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	KPIs and their rubrics were revised for Areas 1, 6, 7, 8; faculty began including CPCE preparation into core courses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Faculty will implement exam preparation activities for students prior to the CPCE 2. Dispositions will be added to Dispositions Assessment related to professionalism

Data-Driven Substantive Changes During Fall 2022, Spring 2023, and Summer 2023

1. The decision was made to require all students to take the CPCE/CRCE during the Practicum semester and to recommend the NCE be taken during the Internship semester.
2. The decision was made to adopt the use of Tevera for program data management, including clinical experiences data management. The contract between Tevera and NMHU was signed in August 2023.
3. Faculty met to review the 2024 CACREP Standards Final Draft to determine if formal feedback needed to be sent. Faculty to begin aligning syllabi during fall 2023.
4. Due to very low numbers, accreditation standards moving to 60 credit hours, and greater career benefit of the Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling concentration, the decision was made to sunset and teach out the Rehabilitation Counseling concentration, in favor of the continuation of the Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling concentration.
5. The Program of Study (POS) and Program Roadmap were updated (moved Assessment to the first year in the full-time POS, and Group and Essential Skills to the second year in the full-time POS).
6. Converted all assessment scores for KPIs to a standard scale: 1 = Pre-competency, 2 = Competency, 3 = Exceeds Expected Competency, X = Incomplete or Withdrawal in order to make comparisons across KPIs.
7. The Internship Handbook was reviewed and updated.
8. The decision was made to encourage students to take the Alternative test as a study aid during Practicum before the CPCE and to ask the Center for Teaching to develop a test-taking skills module in Brightspace.

References

- Hartwig, E. K. & Van Overschelde, J. P. (2016). Most likely to succeed: Exploring predictor variables for the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination. *Counselor Education & Supervision, 55*, 294-309.