

## **Annual Graduate Department of Counseling and Interpersonal Relations Annual Assessment Report 2010-2011 Summary**

The *Annual Graduate Department of Counseling and Interpersonal Relations Annual Assessment Report 2010-2011 Summary* includes two salient sections: Course Evaluations from fall, spring and summer graduate courses and Program Evaluations which includes the Practicum and Internship Site Supervisor Program Evaluations, Graduate Student Exiting Interview results, Employer Evaluations, and Alumni Evaluations. This planned and ongoing evaluation of data from the 2010 to 2011 academic year has provided some feedback regarding ways program faculty and staff are serving students, clients, and personnel in cooperating agencies (e.g., employers, site supervisors), and the public site supervisors in excellent ways. This data also serves as helpful direction for future changes in the program.

The annual Course Evaluation data are provided to faculty and clinical supervisors at the completion of each semester. The department chair first reviews the course evaluations from all courses and then faculty and clinical supervisors are sent evaluations from their specific classes. Overall, the course evaluations reflect excellent work that the faculty and clinical supervisors are conducting. The students' feedback appears positive and students indicated that they are being challenged to grow and stretch.

The Practicum and Internship Site Supervisor Program Evaluations revealed helpful data regarding the quality of professionalism among students in their clinical experiences that site supervisors noted. Overall, site supervisors indicated that our graduate students doing clinical work conducted themselves with professionalism, reflect a strong theological understanding, have good communication skills, and have good interpersonal skills with clients. With regard to feedback by site supervisor suggestions about ways we can improve the program include more training regarding crisis intervention skills, best practice interventions, and less required paperwork. Recommendations regarding additional coursework included additional training for court ordered clients, increased familiarity regarding insurance reimbursement, and increased training regarding diagnosis.

The Graduate Student Exiting Interview results were extremely positive. Graduating students indicated that they were challenged and professionally prepared for clinical work, faculty were highly involved with students and students felt cared for by faculty, classes have a strong theological integration, the program holds a good emphasis on the personal and professional, and overall, students felt they belonged. With regard to ways graduating students felt the program could improve include the following: online classes are not preferred by some residential students, Psychopathology class should precede the students first clinical class which requires students to work with "real" clients, provide more program initiated social events, provide more clinical site possibilities, provide additional treatment planning training, and provide more balance with regard to the load of classes during a given semester.

The Employer Evaluation feedback is very limited. Only one employer responded to our survey despite the fact that employers were contacted on three different occasions by email and a prize was offered to employers that provided feedback. The chair has contacted other chairs from other

Christian, CACREP accredited programs to inquire about ways they have attempted to gain feedback from busy employers. These chairs also indicated a very low rate of responses by employers given their busy schedules.

Alumni were contacted on three occasions by email encouraging them to respond to the Alumni Evaluation survey. Alumni were offered prizes for the completion of surveys. Overall, the response from alumni was very positive. Eighty-eight percent of alumni agreed or strongly agreed that the program provided them with an in-depth content knowledge, one hundred percent strongly agreed that the program prepared them to enter the workforce as an professional counselor, one hundred percent strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the faculty support they received throughout the program, one hundred percent agreed or strongly agreed that they would rate their courses as “excellent” during my academic program, one hundred percent of alumni strongly agreed that they felt prepared to pursue further education following graduation, if they so choose to do so, and one-hundred percent of alumni agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend the program to others.

The results of the evaluation data from multiple sources and at multiple points during the program was presented to faculty at the completion of the spring semester. Themes that were seen in the various evaluations were discussed and an action plan was also discussed. Faculty was encouraged that overall the feedback was very positive and faculty were commended for work well done. For example, repeatedly, students and alumni stated that faculty poured themselves into the lives of students. The emphasis upon mentoring relationships with students by faculty will continue. Students, alumni and site supervisors noted that our students have good interpersonal skills within clinical situations. The faculty was encouraged as the emphasis on interpersonal competency is a distinctive of the program. This emphasis will continue. Repeated feedback by students, alumni, and site supervisors indicated that strong theological integration occurs throughout the program was discussed and as this is a distinctive of the program, faculty were glad that this distinctive is being emphasized and appreciated by students and alumni.

During the year end faculty discussion regarding evaluation data, faculty also discussed possible changes to the program. First of all, course evaluations and graduating student evaluations as well as some site supervisors indicated that it would be helpful to offer the Psychopathology prior to students beginning their first clinical experience in the community. As a result, faculty determined that this was a wise suggestion and this change in sequence of classes will occur in fall 2011. One student expressed a desire for more sites. Efforts to increase the number of sites were underway during fall 2010 and spring 2011 as the Clinical Coordinator contacted potential sites and site supervisors. Five additional sites were added to the site list which includes, an addictions treatment center, a sexual offender treatment facility, a church counseling center, a center for the homeless, and veteran affairs. Despite the fact that the college is situated in a small town, efforts will continue to develop relationships with potential site supervisors. Students coming from diverse geographical areas are also encouraged to develop connections with potential sites in order to continue to increase the number of sites for students. Finally, the issue of developing greater balance with regard to course requirements for students was discussed. Due to the change from a fifteen week semester to two eight week sessions, at the completion of the fall, spring, and summer sessions, faculty will review whether a greater balance in course requirements is being achieved.