

**PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOME (PLO) 3:  
PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR DISPOSITIONS  
ANALYSIS AND REPORT  
Spring 2019**

Program Learning Outcome (PLO) 3: Students in the master's degree programs (CMHC, RC, and SC) within the Department of Counseling and Human Services at the University of Scranton will:  
“Demonstrate master's level professional counseling dispositions.”

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The second systematic assessment of PLO 3 was conducted in Spring of 2019. The “*Professional Counseling Student Disposition Forms*” for students completing their internship experience during the fall semester of 2015 through spring of 2018 were analyzed ( $N = 149$ ). The “*Professional Counseling Student Disposition Form*” measures student performance across eleven domains: 1) Commitment to Wellness; 2) Commitment to Learning; 3) Academic Competencies; 4) Clinical Competencies; 5) Professional Identity; 6) Personal Maturity; 7) Responsibility; 8) Interpersonal Skills; 9) Communication Skills; 10) Problem Solving; and 11) Stress Management. These eleven dispositions are derived from the department's “*Fitness for the Profession of Counseling*” document contained in every student's Program Manual. This document forms the foundation for student evaluation at multiple stages within the master's degree programs. It is used for the Pre-practicum application process, the department's annual student performance discussions, student remediation and retention planning, and to evaluate student dispositions at the conclusion of their internship experiences. Summative evaluation scores are completed at the conclusion of each student's internship experience using a scoring sheet listing each domain (see Appendix A). All domains are scored using a 4-point likert scale.

Data from six semesters of student work (Fall2015-Spring2018) was inputted and evaluated using Excel. Results include individual domain scores for the entire sample that are also disaggregated by program [CMHC ( $n = 72$ ); RC ( $n = 24$ ); and SC ( $n = 53$ )].

## RESULTS

The 4-point likert scale for the “*Professional Counseling Student Disposition Form*” is included here: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1 = Does not meet expectations**
- 2 = Partially meets expectations**
- 3 = Meets expectations**
- 4 = Exceeds expectations**

Results are included in Table 1 (below). Areas of note are presented in the “Recommendations” section followed by an “Action Report” section to document the department’s ongoing “Closing the Loop” activities. Additionally, in order to begin to see trends overtime, Table 1 also includes the aggregated data from the previous report. Although comparisons should be made with caution due to the difference in sample size. The 2015 report was only completed on one semester of student data which involved 16 students.

**Table 1: F15-S18 Professional Counseling Student Dispositions for Internship Completers  
(Aggregate and by Program)**

	#	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8	D9	D10	D11
CMHC	72	3.26	3.23	3.78	3.29	3.31	3.39	3.46	3.24	3.20	3.12	3.13
RC	24	3.64	3.90	3.77	3.72	3.72	3.77	3.70	3.64	3.72	3.86	3.80
SC	53	3.26	3.39	3.43	3.24	3.35	3.36	3.31	3.33	3.31	3.22	3.25
<b>Aggregate</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>3.39</b>	<b>3.56</b>	<b>3.66</b>	<b>3.42</b>	<b>3.48</b>	<b>3.48</b>	<b>3.54</b>	<b>3.40</b>	<b>3.41</b>	<b>3.40</b>	<b>3.39</b>
<b>Aggregate S15 Report</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3.19</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>3.56</b>	<b>3.41</b>	<b>3.63</b>	<b>3.66</b>	<b>3.66</b>	<b>3.44</b>	<b>3.31</b>	<b>3.38</b>

**Column Labels:** D1 = Commitment to Wellness; D2 = Commitment to Learning; D3 = Academic Competencies; D4 = Clinical Competencies; D5 = Professional Identity; D6 = Personal Maturity; D7 = Responsibility; D8 = Interpersonal Skills; D9 = Communication Skills; D10 = Problem Solving; D11 = Stress Management

Means in all categories across all programs for internship completers met or exceeded the “*Meets expectations*” rating of “3.” Across all categories the aggregate mean scores ranged from 3.39 to 3.66 indicating strong competencies across all categories and no significant areas of concern. Highest means for the overall sample were found in the following Domains: D3- Academic Competencies ( $m =$

3.66); D2- Commitment to Learning ( $m = 3.56$ ); and D7- Responsibility ( $m = 3.54$ ). The lowest means for the overall sample existed in Domains D1- Commitment to Wellness ( $m = 3.39$ ); D11- Stress Management ( $m = 3.39$ ); D10- Problem Solving ( $m = 3.40$ ); and D8- Interpersonal Skills (3.40).

It should be noted that three students with plans to complete the internship experience during this analysis period did not meet minimal expectations for a number of the domains on the disposition form. These students did not successfully complete internship. The Program Director and the Chair of the Department initiated a remediation plan for these particular students. One option of the plan can require the students to repeat internship in the future.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS and UPDATES**

- 1) The department should continue to engage in discussions about the ways that students are actively developing the dispositions of Commitment to Wellness ( $m = 3.39$ ), Problem Solving ( $m = 3.39$ ), Stress Management ( $m = 3.40$ ), and Interpersonal Skills ( $m = 3.40$ ) as these represented the lowest overall scores across the 11 domains. However, it should be noted that these are relative lows that do *not* drop below the “*Meets expectations*” rating of “3.” To meet student needs in this area, Dr. Ben Willis developed an elective course COUN 584- Wellness Counseling. (This course focuses on understanding what wellness is, how wellness can benefit people's lives, and how counselors can work towards greater wellness in their clients' and own lives. This course provides a deeper look into different aspects of wellness and how people can experience and live in greater states of personal wellness.) The course has generated a lot of student interest and has an enrollment of 17 for its first run in Fall of 2019.
- 2) Previous recommendations to consider incorporating longitudinal analysis of student progress across these domains by using the “*Professional Counseling Student Disposition Form*” at earlier

junctions in students' programs as the department moves to develop strategies for the additional formative assessment work that is required by the 2016 CACREP Standards have been met. We are now beginning to collect *formative* data with this form prior to the first clinical experience of Practicum as well as this *summative* data post second clinical experience of Internship. It will be important to track both sets of data in future reports to best understand if the programs are truly providing a developmental process to assist with formation of Professional Counseling Dispositions.

- 3) A systematic plan has been developed to collect internship evaluation forms for data analysis during future PLO 1 assessment cycles. This recommendation was reviewed and with the tremendous support of the Dean's office we are now using the VIA platform to collect data for future reports. It will be important to monitor this process for effectiveness and accuracy.
- 4) Continue to monitor.

### **ACTION REPORT**

- 1) Preliminary working draft sent to Standards Work Group via e-mail for preview and subsequent discussion at an upcoming meeting (5/15/19).
- 2) The Assessment Action Committee discussed the report on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019. The group discussed scoring only on whole number scores or if using .5 scores are appropriate on these rubrics. The committee decided to have a conversation about this and to work out a clearer rubric to describe what composes each of the four numbers for each disposition. We determined that some students were being inputted twice when they took internship more than once and had a discussion about this. We decided that only interns who are completing their last semester of internship will have their data entered into Via to record their summative disposition evaluation. The program directors will talk with the university faculty supervisor about which interns need to have their data inputted each semester.
- 3) The Department voted to accept the PLO report.

- 4) On October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019, we discussed the first recommendation about how to help students to improve and further develop Commitment to Wellness and Stress Management.
- a. We expressed a desire to have all students think, understand, and experience wellness concepts and components and then discussed potential places to add this into the program. We discussed having an outside meeting to provide this information as well as where to put it into course(s). We discussed adding wellness and/or stress management assessment in 509 Professional Issues, 563 Crisis intervention, Practicum, and Internship. We also discussed that this data is coming from internship supervisor's evaluation of this area and influences the scores that are reported. We discussed that we can look for assessments to measure this and talk about them in another meeting.
- 5) On November 21, 2019, the Assessment Action Committee reviewed all of the recommendations for this program outcome and discussed possible ways to make changes. The committee decided to make changes to the student portfolios that are turned in throughout the program.
1. Add a self-assessment of the Fitness for the Profession to each portfolio submission
  2. Add subcomponents to the areas of the Fitness for the Profession (~5 per area to be more specific) that would also be rated
  3. Have narrative that discusses why they rated themselves the way that they did
  4. Discussion of the growth areas and problem areas and include specific examples of what they did
  5. Add artifacts to the portfolio that can connect to the different areas
- a. There was discussion about next steps, and changes to the program manual and graduate catalog possibly, having a sub-committee work on the language of these changes, and specific policies of what this means and what is done when the policies are not followed.
  - b. There was discussion about a retreat to discuss policy changes. There was discussion about thinking about what policies need to be discussed and when the retreat would be.

## Appendix A

*Professional Counseling Student Disposition Form***University of Scranton****Professional Counseling Student Disposition Evaluation Form**

(This is to be completed by the university supervisor)

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Program (please circle): Clinical Mental Health Counseling    Rehabilitation Counseling    School Counseling

Purpose (please circle):    Initial    Pre-Practicum    Post-Practicum    Internship

## Rating Key:

**1 = does not meet expectations** (*This rating indicates minimum competency in a particular area(s) of development has not been met*)**2 = partially meets expectations** (*This rating indicates that there is still some growth needed in a particular area(s) of development.*)**3 = meets expectations** (*This rating is typical of beginning level counselors with respect to development*)**4 = exceeds expectations** (*This rating indicates development that is superior to that which is considered typical*)

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Commitment to Wellness</b> Pursues wellness as a lifestyle	1 2 3 4 NA	
<b>Commitment to Learning</b> Lifelong learning; seeks new knowledge and understanding	1 2 3 4 NA	
<b>Academic Competencies</b> Demonstrates knowledge of core areas	1 2 3 4 NA	
<b>Clinical Competencies</b> Forms effective working relationships	1 2 3 4 NA	
<b>Professional Identity</b> Identifies professional role and function and integrates this as a person	1 2 3 4 NA	
<b>Personal Maturity</b> Ability to balance personal and professional self-awareness	1 2 3 4 NA	
<b>Responsibility</b> Accountable and fulfills commitments	1 2 3 4 NA	
<b>Interpersonal Skills</b> Establishes and maintains positive interpersonal relationships	1 2 3 4 NA	
<b>Communication Skills</b> Verbal, non-verbal, written, listening for varied audiences and purposes	1 2 3 4 NA	
<b>Problem Solving</b>	1 2 3 4 NA	

Defines problem, develops and implements solution		
<b>Stress Management</b> Identifies sources of personal stress and develops effective coping behaviors	1 2 3 4 NA	

Additional Comments:

Faculty Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Member Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_