

REVIEW OF THE M.A., M.S., IN CLINICAL-COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY

Classification of Instruction Programs (CIP) Code: 42.2803
Counseling Psychology

Review Outcome. The Academic Planning Committee, as a result of this review process, finds the M.A., M.S. in Clinical-Counseling Psychology to be in Good Standing.

The Academic Planning Committee recognizes that many of the efforts and activities that led to the development of the self-study report were accomplished during the time period coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic. The Academic Planning Committee commends the faculty for the high levels of scholarly productivity during the current review period. Since fall 2012 (i.e., submission of the previous self-study report), faculty have produced 425 publications (e.g., peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters), 149 of which were co-authored with undergraduate and/or graduate students and 38 of which were co-authored with international scholars. In addition, faculty have given 517 professional conference presentations within the United States and 54 professional conference presentations outside the United States; of these, 411 were co-authored with undergraduate and/or graduate students, and 51 were co-authored with international scholars.

The committee commends the changes that the Department has made to its annual faculty evaluation processes. During fall 2019, faculty voted to alter the Department's Appointment, Salary, Promotion, and Tenure (ASPT) policies to better acknowledge diversity, inclusion, and safe environment efforts completed during the annual performance evaluations. The committee commends that statements regarding the integration of such efforts were developed in the three areas of evaluation (i.e., teaching, scholarly and creative productivity, and service) to render all faculty accountable for diversity, inclusion, and a safe environment.

The committee commends the community engagement and outreach efforts that have been sustained from the previous review period. The Psychological Services Center on campus provides assessment, intervention, and consultation services for the academic and social-emotional concerns of community members. These services provide opportunities for approximately 40 graduate-level students every year to receive supervised experiences in these areas. The Autism Place is located off campus and has been funded through grants from the State of Illinois to provide autism treatment services for children with autism and their families. These services provide training opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students in psychology, speech-language pathology, and education programs.

The committee commends the Department on hosting external speakers who present on topics regarding their research/scholarly and/or practice/clinical interests. During fall 2018, the Department organized a series of colloquia called The Extending Empathy project to provide a space to share ideas regarding empathy and to create a persistent, positive voice in the campus environment. Faculty, staff, and students from the Department, from other units on campus, and from other institutions have presented colloquia, many of which focus on issues surrounding diversity, inclusion, and safe environments.

The committee commends the Department for providing an online graduation ceremony in response to the COVID-19 pandemic during spring 2020. Faculty and staff noted the importance for graduating students to celebrate this event and organized the ceremony during which graduate faculty read the names of each graduating student and every student had the opportunity to say a few words to the attendees after their name was read. Given that faculty, staff, and students reported how moving the event was, the Department intends to hold similar graduation ceremonies for students at the end of each fall and spring semester.

The committee commends the program for the numerous activities that are completed to orient new students to the program and engage current students with the program. Students in their second year of completing the program are paired with an incoming student as part of a 'buddy/mentoring' network to enhance connection and communication among students. Prior to the beginning of the fall semester, the program hosts an orientation meeting for new students, and a social event then is held for all program faculty and students. At the beginning of the fall semester, the program coordinator meets with every incoming student to provide individual advisement and at the end of the fall semester, the program coordinator meets with all students to provide information regarding practicum placement options and to begin matching students with appropriate practicum sites. In addition, the program coordinator holds

monthly meetings to guide all students through the process of developing their master's theses or clinical competency projects.

Follow-up Report: Aspirational program analysis. The committee notes that the Department completed the comparator program analyses in which the program at Illinois State University was examined in relation to the similar programs offered at other public universities in the State of Illinois. The Department acknowledged that the aspirational program analyses were not completed prior to submission of the self-study report. The committee asks that the faculty complete these analyses in which they review similar programs regionally or nationally and use the findings to inform the program improvement initiatives that have been prioritized during the next review period. These initiatives should be those identified by the faculty for the program to pursue, and the selected programs should be those that already have implemented actions to achieve those identified initiatives. After reviewing the actions taken by the aspirational programs, faculty then should describe how the program at Illinois State University can achieve its initiatives and indicate any additional resources needed to do so. The committee requests that the Department of Psychology submit its aspirational program analyses as a follow-up report to the Office of the Provost by May 15, 2022.

Recommendations. The Academic Planning Committee thanks faculty and staff of the M.A., M.S. in Clinical-Counseling Psychology program for the opportunity to provide input regarding the program at Illinois State University through consideration of the submitted self-study report. The following committee recommendations to be addressed within the next regularly scheduled review cycle are provided in a spirit of collaboration with psychology faculty and staff. In the next program review self-study report, tentatively due October 1, 2028, the committee asks the program to describe actions taken and results achieved for each recommendation.

Continue to monitor potential changes regarding program accreditation options. The committee recognizes that the program prepares students for licensure as Professional Counselors and as Clinical Professional Counselors in the State of Illinois, but graduates of the program must submit their transcripts for review when applying for licensure because accreditation has not been available for programs at the master's level. Although all graduates who have applied for licensure in Illinois have had their coursework approved and have been eligible to complete the licensing examination, such accreditation would alleviate the need for this additional review and approval. Given that the American Psychological Association's (APA) Commission on Accreditation currently is working toward accrediting master's degree programs in health service psychology, which includes both clinical psychology and counseling psychology, the committee notes that obtaining such accreditation could be beneficial for the program and its students.

Continue to monitor the curriculum regarding student progress and licensure options. The committee acknowledges that although the State of Illinois requires that the minimum number of program credit hours needed for licensure is 48, many states require 60 credit hours as a minimum number for licensure. Because of this, many students have worked with the program coordinator to determine additional elective courses to complete 60 credit hours and enhance license portability. Although the committee appreciates the work completed by the program coordinator to assist students in doing this, completing additional courses beyond the requirements extends students' time-to-degree and may negatively impact such program statistics. Given that negative impacts like these are based on student selection and are not reflective of the program, the committee notes that considering the addition of credit hours to the program requirements or formalizing options that include additional credit hours can assist with monitoring students who select to complete more credit hours and more appropriately reflect time-to-degree and other statistics.

Continue to infuse diversity and inclusion throughout the curriculum and program. The committee recognizes the work that the Department has completed to incorporate more diversity within the curriculum, such as the faculty's commitment to expand the diverse content as part of all required courses. The committee also acknowledges the Department's efforts to support diversity, inclusion, and safe environments among students, faculty, and staff through the establishment of the Diversity Task Force of Graduate Students in Psychology and The Extending Empathy project. Given that additional opportunities for infusing diversity and inclusion within the program were identified in the self-study report, such as working to launch the Diversity Task Force of Graduate Students in Psychology again, the committee notes that such work is important because of the exposure this will provide to students in the program. Student learning regarding diversity and inclusion can be informed by program

assessment efforts and could include the consideration of program goals regarding diversity, inclusion, and safe environments.

Continue to track program alumni and monitor their successes. The committee acknowledges the mechanisms that the Department has developed to track alumni, such as holding an Alumni Day Award ceremony and reception/dinner as part of the University's Homecoming celebration, supporting the School Psychology Institute Day, and inviting alumni to return to campus and present colloquia for students, faculty, and staff. The committee also recognizes the establishment of an Alumni Relations Committee in the Department to manage such activities. Given that stakeholder feedback is important for program assessment, the committee notes that administering an alumni survey similar to the survey that was developed for the undergraduate program, as well as administering an exit survey for graduating students, can provide further insights on strengths and areas for improvement for faculty to consider.

Continue to implement and refine the student learning outcomes assessment plan. The committee recognizes faculty for their work to implement the assessment plan during the current review cycle. Given other initiatives identified by the Department, such as further infusing diversity and inclusion with the curriculum, the committee notes that continued examination of student learning can both inform these initiatives and provide a more holistic perspective on student learning in the program. In addition, consistently gathering feedback from multiple stakeholders, developing mechanisms for using this feedback among other gathered information, and indicating how this information has been used to inform program changes will assist in supporting student learning throughout the program.