



UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT CHATTANOOGA
COUNSELING PROGRAM

ANNUAL REPORT

2016

The primary purpose of the UTC Counseling Program is to train knowledgeable, competent, skillful professional counselors to provide services in both clinical mental health and school settings. This program is based on a developmental process of personal and professional wellness, emphasizing skill acquisition at early stages, progressing toward a strong theoretical and ethical foundation, and cultural competence in order to work with a variety of individuals.

Innovations

Compiling information on student presentations, supervisor feedback, and student growth/performance for the following academic year (2017-1018)

Beginning Fall 2016 the UTC Counselor Education program will implement LiveText for data collection as part of our commitment to continuous programmatic evaluation. LiveText is an online data management system that allows students, faculty, and supervisors to submit assignments and grade clinical performance in one location. We look forward to reviewing the data procured on this system to make data informed decisions regarding programmatic innovations as well as improvements to our course offerings. For more information about LiveText, please visit <https://www.livetext.com/>

Praxis Performance

The Praxis exam is used as one measure of competency in the state of Tennessee to determine eligibility for licensure as a professional school counselor. From the academic years 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2016-2017 shows a 100% pass rate for the 42 students who completed this exam. The institutional average for percentage of correct answers in the four test categories, Foundations, Delivery of Services, Management, and Accountability, were higher than both the state-wide and national averages of correct answers between 2012 and 2015. In 2016-2017 all categories, except Management, were above the state and national average.

CPCE Performance

The Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination is a standardized national exam that evaluates students' performance in the eight core competencies areas as required by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). Forty-eight UTC Counselor Education students have participated in the last five administrations of the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination. The program currently boasts a 95.83% pass rate, with 100% passing upon completing a second testing as needed. UTC's Counselor Education students consistently perform above the national mean when compared to other examinees taking the test as part of a programmatic exit exam. Faculty members carefully review students' performance on each of the exam sub-sections to review program curriculum and make modifications to courses as needed to improve students' learning and performance on this and other licensure exams.

Quotes from Exit Interviews

IDENTIFIED STRENGTHS

- “Having a core set of faculty created consistency in my experience. Evening classes are good for folks who are working.”
- “I really like getting the recordings evaluated by the site supervisors so that I could get feedback-it kept me in touch with her and it opened doors to lots of discussions on professional growth and study. It also helped to build rapport with my supervisor.”
- “I think it is really important for this program to continue the self-reflection. We did a lot of in class reflection as well as write reflection papers, and I learned a lot about myself because of this.”

IDENTIFIED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- “The leveling courses that are required for non-teaching students. They did not seem to relate to our program in an effective way. If a course like this is required I HIGHLY suggest a classroom management course for students without a teaching background. That is a weak area for school counselors and could greatly benefit from.”
- “Maybe doing shadowing in the seminar course would have been helpful.”
- “I would want supervision to be taken online and/or in a hybrid format. Having group supervision be a longer session”

SUPERVISOR/EMPLOYER SURVEYS

*Survey sent late August 2016 to current past supervisors and employers

Positives



100% of Supervisors/Employers have said that UTC Counseling students possess;

1. Knowledge and application of counseling theory and techniques.
2. Knowledge of the DSM-5.
3. Knowledge of, and sensitivity toward, diversity and multicultural issues.
4. Knowledge and ability to facilitate a group.

Negatives

1. Students seem to have been trained as generalists. They have not possessed specific knowledge or skills on handling special populations, but handle them from a general perspective. Offer a course on treating specialized populations or track programs that focus on autism spectrum disorder, LGBTQ, etc.
2. The one deficit that frequently comes up is the ability and benefit of challenging clients. Students at this stage of development seem to be fearful of challenging client's irrationality, discrepancies, etc.
3. I seriously think it's a mistake to require students to do their practicum at a middle school and longer, more intensive internship at elementary & high schools. Although any level can have their occasional crisis, the majority of "counseling" at the elementary level is little ones missing their moms and just learning to following basic rules. On the high school level, the counselors repeatedly tell me that they wish they could actually do counseling once in a while. The majority of their time is spent scheduling and testing. As a middle school counselor I'm sure I'm a bit prejudiced but at this level you have family issues that the kids are becoming mature enough to understand and need help dealing with (divorce, death, illegal activity in the home, etc.). They are also hitting puberty and the hormones are raging. Learning to deal with the body images, boyfriend/girlfriend issues, gossip, social media, etc. often leads to very emotional and even traumatic years. If you are interested in students learning how to "counsel" rather than test and schedule, middle school should be included in the intern requirements for the students.