

University of Alabama at Birmingham

School of Education

Department of Human Studies

Counseling Program

2022-2023 State of the Program Report

Current Affiliated Faculty

Shannon McCarthy, Ph.D., *Assistant Professor, CACREP Liaison*

Matthew McKenzie, Ph. D., *Visiting Assistant Professor*

Dayna Watson, Ph.D., *Assistant Professor, Program Director*

Dwayne White, Ph.D., *Assistant Professor*

Yusen Zhai, Ph.D., *Assistant Professor, Director of the UAB Community Counseling Clinic*

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The UAB Counseling Program (CP) relies on data from various sources to inform programmatic decisions. Data are divided into two categories, including enrollment data and learning outcomes. Enrollment data are used to document trends in the characteristics of applicants, current students, and alums. Learning outcomes are used to assess whether students are indeed acquiring and demonstrating the knowledge, skills, and abilities targeted by the current curriculum. A detailed outline regarding the CP's assessment procedures is documented in the UAB Program Assessment and Evaluation Manual (available on the UAB Counseling Program website at <https://www.uab.edu/education/home/images/pdf/hs/cep-prog-eval-manual.pdf>). The purpose of the current report is to summarize program data to guide decision-making and program development and inform program stakeholders.

Enrollment Data

Enrollment data are collected via three sources: Admission/Application Data, Enrollment or Headcount Data, and Specialty Track Data. This total does not typically include certificate-only students, though those numbers are noted in the next table. Overall, enrollment peaked in the 2020-2021 academic year due to admission decisions made in spring 2020 when there was a program-high count of six faculty members. While applications remained steady, enrollment deliberately decreased in the 2022-2023 AY due to faculty decreasing to 5 full-time core faculty members (from 6 in 2020), and a need to stay within CACREP ratios for students to faculty.

Enrollment Data	
Academic	Count
Fall 2018	99
Spring 2019	106
Summer 2019	88
Fall 2019	111
Spring 2020	115
Summer 2020	95
Fall 2020	118
Spring 2021	136
Summer 2021	116
Fall 2021	125
Spring 2022	121
Summer 2022	95
Fall 2022	110
Spring 2023	112
Summer 2023	89

Each specialty also tracks student enrollment. A data review indicates that enrollment in the School Counseling (SC) track noticeably decreased in the past two academic years from 18 students in Fall 2021 to 10 students in Fall 2022. This was accompanied by a decrease in applications for the school counseling concentration, though CMH and MCF applications remain

steady. Faculty note the absence of a full-time school counseling faculty member from 2020-2022 as a factor affecting recruiting for that concentration. An increase in online school counseling programs may also be a contributing factor. Faculty will continue to monitor and discuss strategies concerning school counseling enrollment.

Substantial declines in summer enrollment can be observed because of the discontinuation of clinical coursework by SC students. This program policy was implemented due to an increasing number of districts transitioning summer school programs to an online format. As such, there were fewer opportunities for obtaining direct hours. The program also traditionally offers fewer courses overall in the summer semester.

Enrollment in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) steadily increased since Fall 2018, which also reflects increasing application numbers. Due to compliance with CACREP ratios, that number slightly decreased since the 2020-2021 peak.

The Marriage, Couples, and Family Counseling (MCFC) concentration, which began in Fall 2016, continued to grow steadily. This growth increased since the CMHC certificate was added in 2019 which allowed MCFC students to also take the CMHC courses as part of their program of study. The CMHC certificate was developed in response to feedback from students who were interested in the MCF concentration, but who wanted coursework in both MCF and CMH.

The CP does have some students (normally graduates of Counseling Programs, including UAB's) who are admitted just for completion of the MCFC and CMHC certificates, and those numbers are listed below. As the numbers illustrate, enrollment in these certificate-only options, particularly for the MCFC certificate, steadily increased.

	CMHC	SC	MCFC	MCFC Cert.- Only	CMHC Cert.- only
Fall 2018	66	23	8	2	
Spring 2019	72	21	11	2	
Summer 2019	62	12	10	4	
Fall 2019	76	22	12	1	
Spring 2020	80	22	12	1	
Summer 2020	63	16	9	7	1
Fall 2020	87	18	13	5	1
Spring 2021	96	19	21	7	1

Summer 2021	83	14	19	9	2
Fall 2021	81	18	26	5	1
Spring 2022	77	16	28	4	1
Summer 2022	63	11	21	8	1
Fall 2022	71	10	29	3	1
Spring 2023	74	9	29	4	1
Summer 2023	53	9	27	7	3

CMHC: Clinical Mental Health Counseling; SC: School Counseling; MCFC: Marriage Couples and Family Counseling; MCFC Cert.: Marriage, Couples, and Family Counseling Certificate; CMHC Cert: Clinical Mental Health Counseling Certificate

NOTE: The MCFC and MCFC Cert programs began Fall 2016. The CMHC Cert. program began Fall 2019 for internal students, and Summer 2020 for external certificate-only students.

National Counselor Examination (NCE) Examination Results 2018-2023

Date of NCE	Number Tested	Number Passed	UAB Passage Rate	National Passage Rate
Fall 2018	7	7	100%	86%
				(2,782 test-takers)

Spring 2019	14	13	93%	90.6% (4,382 test-takers)
Fall 2019	4	4	100%	90.5% (2,190 test-takers)
Spring 2020	18	16	88%	83.9% (3,825 test-takers)
Fall 2020	10	9	90%	80.5% (4,235 test-takers)
Spring 2021	17	17	100%	80.7% (5,117 test-takers)
Fall 2021	10	10	100%	79.9% (9,969 test-takers)
Spring 2022	19	19	100%	63% (8,177 test-takers)

Fall 2022	7	7	100%	79%
				(3,151 test-takers)
Spring 2023	9	9	100%	80.7%
				(5,094) test-takers

As evidenced by this chart, UAB Counseling student pass rates remain consistently high for the NCE and are significantly above the national pass-rate, particularly over the past 2 years.

NOTE: The NCE is typically offered in the Fall and Spring each year.

Key Program Indicator: CPCE Examination Results (Non-Exit)

*The following results reflect scores from Fall 2022, Spring 2023, and Summer 2023 examinations. The CPCE is taken by each student the semester before beginning their clinicals which is generally during their last year of the program. The UAB scores and National scores represent those students who took the exam as a non-exit exam. The UAB internal Counseling Program pass rate for 2022-2023 was 82%. Of the 33 students who took the exam in this academic year, 27 passed on the first attempt; 6 did not. It should be noted that students may take the exam up to three times to pass, so these numbers may reflect multiple attempts by some students.

Fall 2022

Exam Section	UAB Results (Average Score) n=8	Fall 2022 National Results (Non-Exit) (Average Score)
Professional Counseling Orientation & Ethical Practice	12.74	9.96
Social & Cultural Diversity	9.41	8.15
Human Growth & Development	11.99	10.89

Career Development	10.98	10.41
Counseling & Helping Relationships	11.15	10.33
Group Counseling & Group Work	13.40	11.07
Assessment & Testing	11.91	9.59
Research & Program Evaluation	12.16	10.15
Total Score	93.64	80.56

CPCE Examination Results (Non-Exit) Spring & Summer 2023

Exam Section	Spring & Summer 2023 UAB Results (Average Score) n=25	2023 National Results (Non-exit) (Average Score)
Professional Counseling Orientation & Ethical Practice	11.94	10.83
Social & Cultural Diversity	11.24	9.18
Human Growth & Development	10.72	9.62
Career Development	10.93	9.57
Counseling & Helping Relationships	10.83	9.54
Group Counseling & Group Work	12.33	11.12
Assessment & Testing	10.22	9.53

Research & Program Evaluation	12.31	10.9
Total Score	88.9	80.31

From these data, it appears that UAB counseling students, on average, continue to score significantly above the national average for total score on the CPCE. UAB Counseling students appear to consistently demonstrate strong performances in Group Counseling & Group Work, Social & Cultural Diversity, and Research & Program Evaluation as compared to the national mean (more than 1.2 points higher on average). It should be noted that the above scores show a noted improvement in the Social and Cultural Diversity section from the previous two years.

Conversely, UAB student scores tend to fall a bit closer to the national means (within 1 point but no less than .5 higher) in Career Counseling and Counseling and Helping Relationships in Fall 22 scores only, and in Assessment and Testing in the spring and summer 2023 results only. UAB students did not fall below the national average in any categories in the 2022-2023 academic year. Counseling Program faculty will continue to monitor the scores for these areas in subsequent exams to see if an evaluation of the curriculum/texts used needs to occur in the future.

Key Program Indicator: Counselor Competencies Scale (CCS)

Midterm and Final Evaluations for ECG 695, 696, and 697 AY 2022-2023

The Counselor Competencies Scale (CCS) is a Key Performance Indicator administered to all students in each semester of clinicals in ECG 695, ECG 696, and ECG 697. Clinical site supervisors complete the CCS for each student midway through the semester (the midterm evaluation), and at the end of the semester (the final evaluation). The CCS evaluates 32 clinical skills and professional dispositions through three sections (Primary Counseling Skills, Professional Dispositions, and Professional Behaviors). It has four categories: Unacceptable (score of 1), Near Expectations (score of 2), Meets Expectations (score of 3), and Exceeds Expectations (score of 4). Students are expected to have an average score of at least 3 on the CCS after each clinical semester.

2022-2023 AY CCS Average Scores

Course	Midterm Evaluation (Range 1.0-4.0)	Final Evaluation (Range 1.0-4.0)
ECG 695: Practicum II	3.168	3.252

ECG 696: Counseling Internship A	3.259	3.494
ECG 697: Counseling Internship B	3.591	3.712

As evidenced by the above chart, for the academic year 2022-2023, Counseling Program students scored above the Meets Expectations/Demonstrates Competencies category (3.0) for both the midterm and final evaluations for all three clinical courses. Each semester, students increased scores from the midterm to the final evaluation towards the Exceeds Expectations/Demonstrates Competencies category (4.0).

Key Program Indicators: Academic Assignments/ Exams in core curriculum:

In the UAB Counseling Program Evaluation and Assessment Manual, the Counseling Program identified assignments/exams in eight core courses as Key Performance Indicators (KPI). The scores for these assignments/exams are recorded for each student for each semester that the course is taught. For the 2022-2023 academic year, 100% of students passed these KPI assignments/exams.

Non-Academic Program Outcomes:

All students who graduated in the 2022-2023 academic year completed eight counseling sessions as a client before starting clinical courses. All students who graduated during this academic period completed 15 hours of approved counseling-related professional development training while enrolled in the UAB Counseling Program. At least half of these hours are completed through workshops and monthly seminars offered by the UAB Counseling Program's Zeta Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota, the international counseling honor society. All students who graduated in 2022-2023 completed the requirement of presenting at a counseling or related conference. Most students presented posters at the Alabama Counseling Association annual conference in Mobile in November 2022 during the graduate poster session.

Stakeholder Feedback/Survey Data:

The counseling program regularly conducts systematic follow-up studies of graduates, site supervisors, and employers of program graduates. New surveys were developed with faculty and administrator input and were disseminated to all three stakeholder groups. A summary of this data is below.

2022-2023 Site Supervisor Survey Results

1. Please rate the UAB practicum/internship students' abilities to do the following (Remember: you are responding based on your overall experience with UAB counseling students, not one particular student in mind):

#	Field	0 = Extremely Poor	1 = Below Average	2 = Average	3 = Above Average	4 = Excellent	Total
1	Develop collaborative relationships with colleagues	0.00% 0.00	0.00% 0.00	5.56% 1.00	22.22% 4.00	72.22% 13.00	18
2	Engage in evidence based practice	0.00% 0.00	0.00% 0.00	5.56% 1.00	27.78% 5.00	66.67% 12.00	18
3	Documentation practices	0.00% 0.00	0.00% 0.00	5.56% 1.00	27.78% 5.00	66.67% 12.00	18
4	Tendency to adhere and uphold program policies and procedures	0.00% 0.00	0.00% 0.00	5.56% 1.00	27.78% 5.00	66.67% 12.00	18

Total Responses	Minimum Value	Maximum Value	Average
18	2	4	3.625

2. “Please identify any gaps in knowledge or skill areas that you have noticed in practicum/internship students of the UAB Counseling Program”.

15/18 respondents responded to this question. 7 responses were variations of “N/A”, “none”, or “I saw no gaps”

A summary of other responses with identifying/specific information removed is below:

- There is a need for “ongoing growth concerning personal boundaries”
- “Professional dress”
- Took some time for adjustment to direct work and getting them to engage further with the clients
- A need for more experience with diagnosis
- Would like to see more experience with documentation and treatment plans
- Need more awareness of topics concerning clinical work with trauma
- A lot of pressure “to get hours” but not as much consideration from student or university regarding the needs of the site or the need for training...communication came mostly from student and not program.
- “I have been pleased with the quality of education that students display... I am training them on the use of Wiley Treatment Planners since most students don’t know how to use them”

3. “Please identify any strengths that you have noticed in practicum/internship students of the UAB Counseling Program.”

15/18 respondents responded to this question. A summary of responses with identifying/specific information removed is below:

- “(Student) has shown excellent maturity, counseling skills, empathy, assessment, treatment planning, tracking of progress, adaptability, and cultural sensitivity”
- “Outstanding all around ability to engage with clients, assess needs and goals, collaborate, challenge and support clients”
- Students are eager to learn and get experience
- Students are adaptive, and open to learning and developing their counseling skills
- Students have a high level of professionalism
- “Strengths are definitely ability to work in both the medical model using EBT and addressing symptoms and the deep therapeutic model”
- Students are prepared to learn from supervision
- (Student) asked questions when she was unsure and also set boundaries on what she did and did not feel comfortable doing.
- “Rapport building, flexibility in scheduling, cultural competency”
- “The student has an understanding of counseling theories/approaches and establishes great rapport with their patients”
- “(Student) has been able to form a good working relationship with the staffs”

2022-2023 UAB Counseling Program Alumni Survey

Q1 - Please indicate your feelings on the following:

#	Question	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total
1	This program has prepared me for managing legal, ethical, and professional issues associated with counseling	16.67%	1	83.33%	5	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	6
2	This program has prepared me to apply knowledge of human growth and development to work effectively with	16.67%	1	66.67%	4	16.67%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	6

	developmental issues of student/clients											
3	This program has familiarized me with counseling theories and facilitated the development and application of a personal theoretical model to my counseling practice	16.67%	1	66.67%	4	0.00%	0	16.67%	1	0.00%	0	6
4	This program has provided sufficient information for understanding the importance of test reliability and validity and how to select, administer, and interpret assessment instruments	16.67%	1	83.33%	5	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	6
5	This program has familiarized me with group theories and methods and prepared me to conduct group counseling	20.00%	1	80.00%	4	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	5
6	This program has prepared me for working effectively with diverse clientele (e.g., differences in race/ethnicity, abilities, socioeconomic class, culture, and gender)	16.67%	1	66.67%	4	0.00%	0	16.67%	1	0.00%	0	6
7	This program has provided the	0.00%	0	33.33%	2	50.00%	3	16.67%	1	0.00%	0	6

	necessary knowledge for me to conduct effective career counseling with clients											
8	This program has prepared me to use interviewing and counseling skills to develop a therapeutic relationship and execute effective counseling interventions	16.67%	1	83.33%	5	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	6
9	This program has prepared me to develop collaborative relationships with colleagues	16.67%	1	83.33%	5	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	6
10	In comparison to co-workers, I was just as prepared or more prepared to learn and adapt to the policies and procedures at my place of employment.	16.67%	1	66.67%	4	0.00%	0	16.67%	1	0.00%	0	6

Respondents	Minimum	Maximum	Average
6	2 (disagree)	5 (strongly agree)	3.87

Q2 - Please discuss areas of strength for the program:

A summary of responses with identifying/specific information removed is below:

- Legal and ethical preparation
- Strong in the area of diversity counseling and unlearning our biases
- The many placement opportunities that are open to UAB students
- Professors that show genuine interest in the students personal and professional growth and help to facilitate this growth.

- Great supervisors and assistance during the internship period.
- Strong preparation for comps (CPCE) and licensure exams.
- Communication: “consistent emails and meetings to ensure students are in the loop and on track.”
- Strong preparation in basic counseling skills

Q3 - Please discuss areas where you believe the program can show improvement

A summary of responses is below:

- Better preparation for navigating the licensure processes including timeline for applying for licensure post-graduation, completing documentation, etc.
- Would like to see more emphasis on a wider variety of theories
- Social justice counseling and multicultural topics should be more thoroughly woven throughout the program.
- The practicum and internship components of the program could use improvement – especially the selection of sites, and monitoring sites throughout the clinical experience
- Would like to see more examples of School Counseling Classroom Guidance Lesson examples and practice, a better understanding of school curriculum, and more information concerning common acronyms and teams school counselors will be a part of

2022-2023 UAB Counseling Program Employer Survey Report

- Q1 - As an employer, your feedback is essential for the UAB Counselor Education Program. Please take a few moments to respond to the questions below based on your own experiences working with our students. Please rate the UAB practicum/internship students abilities to do the following:

#	Field	0 = Extremely Poor	1 = Below Average	2 = Average	3 = Above Average	4 = Excellent	Total
1	Develop collaborative relationships with colleagues	0.00% 0.00	0.00% 0.00	0.00% 0.00	100.00% 1.00	0.00% 0.00	1
2	Engage in evidence based practice	0.00% 0.00	0.00% 0.00	0.00% 0.00	0.00% 0.00	100.00% 1.00	1
3	Documentation practices	0.00% 0.00	0.00% 0.00	0.00% 0.00	0.00% 0.00	100.00% 1.00	1
4	Tendency to adhere to and uphold program policies and procedures	0.00% 0.00	0.00% 0.00	0.00% 0.00	0.00% 0.00	100.00% 1.00	1

Total Responses	Minimum Value	Maximum Value	Average
1	3	3	3.75

There were no responses to the two short answer questions.

Program Changes/Considerations as a Response to Stakeholder Surveys/Feedback:

In response to the above survey feedback, the UAB Counseling program has initially focused on the following areas:

1) Clinical placement and clinical experiences

As Clinical Placement Coordinator, Dr. Windham created three new PowerPoint/video presentations that serve as orientation and training for incoming clinical students, site supervisors, and university instructors. These presentations will be disseminated at the beginning of each semester and will also be placed in instructors' Canvas pages so that students can review each presentation. Dr. Windham also arranged for electronic submission of student and site supervisor contact information so that this is more centralized for the clinical placement coordinator and clinical instructors. Counseling program faculty are currently developing a more streamlined and consistent process for student information and orientation near the beginning of the start of the clinical experience, as well as when students first apply for clinicals. Counseling faculty are also discussing having clearer and more consistent guidelines for clinical instructors regarding watching tapes and giving feedback in clinical courses. As realignment approaches for the 2024 CACREP standards, faculty continue to discuss possible changes to the clinical placement process.

2) Training on documentation and treatment planning

Program faculty have identified courses where documentation is currently discussed and are reviewing the amount and depth of that content. Faculty are planning to insert more structured information and resources regarding documentation and treatment planning into each clinical course.

3) Post-graduation licensure process

Faculty identified that the licensure/certification process for each concentration is covered in ECG 612, the Professional Orientation course, in initial advising sessions, and in Zeta seminars. While this topic is also supposed to be covered in clinical courses, program faculty plan to ensure that more formal information regarding these processes is discussed in each clinical course. Faculty also plan to consider other ways to formally present this information such as in recorded presentations available to students, more formal program presentations for clinical students of each concentration, etc.

Faculty Changes in 2022-2023 academic year:

The UAB Counseling Program hired Dr. Heather Windham as a school counseling specialist full-time core faculty member starting in August 2022. Dr. Windham also served as the new Clinical Placement Coordinator during this academic year. The other full-time program faculty in academic year 2022-2023 consisted of Dr. Shannon McCarthy, Assistant Professor, CACREP Liaison, Dr. Dayna Watson, Assistant Professor, Program Director, Dr. Dwayne White, Assistant Professor, and Dr. Yusen Zhai, Assistant Professor, Director of the UAB Community Counseling Center.

A faculty search was conducted for a non-tenure-track MCF faculty member, but it did not result in a hire.

School of Education Administrative Changes in 2022-2023:

In spring of 2023, the UAB School of Education welcomed their new Dean, Dr. Teresa Taber Doughty. Before coming to UAB, she served as Dean of the College of Education at the University of Texas at Arlington, and she also spent 17 years on the faculty at Purdue University as both a professor of special education and as an Associate Dean. Read more of her bio here <https://scholars.uab.edu/18237-teresa-taber-doughty>

CACREP Updates:

The MCF concentration received the full 8-year CACREP accreditation in summer 2023 after initially receiving a two-year accreditation. All concentrations will be up for reaccreditation in 2026 so that they can be on the same 8-year cycle together.

Other Program Changes/Events (based on student and faculty feedback, program outcome data, etc.)

For the 2022-2023 academic year, based on student and faculty feedback, the UAB Counseling Program reinstated the in-person interview protocol for applicants for the first time since 2019. The in-person protocol allows for applicants to take part in an evaluated group activity that was not possible to replicate online. This provided faculty with an additional data point to use in admissions decisions.

Based on school counseling student feedback, for the 2022-2023 academic year, Dr. Windham started a monthly seminar and speaker series for school counseling students. Local school counselors and school counseling administrators spoke to a group of school counseling students on a variety of topics. This also served as a time for Dr. Windham to update students on any counseling program updates, school counseling issues, etc. and allowed school counseling students to create more of a specialized community in the UAB Counseling Program.

