

Wake Forest College Academic Program Evaluation Report  
Academic Year 2019-2020

Academic Program:	Counseling
Academic Department:	Counseling
Assessment Designee:	Ivers

**Program Mission and Goals**

Define the current mission and/or goals of the academic program. These should: (1) focus on student learning and (2) be drawn from and link directly back to the missions of the College and University.

**Mission Statement for the Department of Counseling:**

The Wake Forest University Department of Counseling prepares exemplary counselors and human services professionals to serve humanity – *pro humanitate*. We provide a rigorous intellectual climate and a supportive atmosphere for personal and professional development to a diverse student body in order to prepare professionals who...

- practice effectively and ethically
- value diligence and life-long learning
- excel as community leaders, advocates and practitioners
- possess a deep awareness of themselves and of their impact on others
- engage in the compassionate service of humanity to foster the wellness of people everywhere.

**Student Learning Outcomes & Related Measures**

Each academic program should have between 3 and 5 **intended Student Learning Outcomes** that align with the program mission. These might include knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors or values that will be developed in and exhibited by graduates of your academic program. Please note that each outcome must be evaluated using 2-3 different measures that may be direct or indirect, but must include at least 1 direct measure.

**Student Learning Outcome 1: Students will acquire knowledge and skills to practice ethically**

**Measure 1:** Student scores on the professional orientation and ethical practice portion of the National Counseling Exam.

**Measure 2:** Student scores on the final exam for CNS 780: Professional, Ethical, and Legal Issues in Counseling.

**Measure 3:** Supervisor evaluations of students' professional ethics in practicum and internships.

**Student Learning Outcome 2: Students will develop self-awareness and understanding of impact on others.**

**Measure 1:** Social and Cultural Diversity sub-score on the National Counseling Exam.

**Measure 2:** Student scores on crash analysis assignment in CNS 740.

**Measure 3:** Student scores on SOAP note assignment in CNS 747.

**Measure 4:** Supervisor evaluations of students' multicultural counseling competence in practicum and internships.

**Student Learning Outcome 3: Students will develop skills that are reflective of effective practitioners**

**Measure 1:** Student scores on second video recording in CNS 737 – Basic Counseling Skills

**Measure 2:** Student scores on first video recording in CNS 739 – Advanced Counseling Skills

**Measure 3:** Helping relationships sub-score on the National Counseling Exam.

**Measure 4:** Supervisor evaluations of students' counseling skills in practicum and internships.

**Findings**

Please enter the analyzed **findings** of your evaluation by Student Learning Outcome (you may simply copy and paste from above). The most powerful evaluations will explore the criteria that comprise the Student Learning Outcomes and, when available, include findings from multiple years.

**Student Learning Outcome 1: Students will acquire knowledge and skills to practice ethically:**

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**Measure 1: Student scores on the professional orientation and ethical practice portion of the National Counselor Exam**

Year	Subscale	N	Mean	National Average
Spring 2016	Pro. Ori. & Ethical Practices	15	23.8	20.96
Fall 2016	Pro. Ori. & Ethical Practices	14	23.29	22.10
Spring 2017	Pro. Ori. & Ethical Practices	37	23.29	21.65
Fall 2017	Pro. Ori. & Ethical Practices	14	20.29	21.03
Spring 2018	Pro. Ori. & Ethical Practices	27	23.93	21.77
Fall 2018	Pro. Ori. & Ethical Practices	11	22.36	20.95
Spring 2019	Pro. Ori. & Ethical Practices	46	22.61	20.95
Fall 2019	Pro. Ori. & Ethical Practices	12	21.08	18.82

- Minimum score: 0
- Maximum score: 29

**Measure 2: Student scores on the final exam for CNS 780: Professional, Ethical, and Legal Issues in Counseling**

Year	Subscale	N	Mean %
2016-2017	CNS 780 Final Exam	77	87.82%
2017-2018	CNS 780 Final Exam	88	93.26%
2018-2019	CNS 780 Final Exam	103	88.98%
2019-2020	CNS 780 Final Exam	88	88.69%

**Measure 3: Supervisor evaluations of students' professional ethics in practicum and internships.**

Year	CCS-R Criterion	Supervisor Responses	# and % of Responses ≥ Meets Expectations	Average Score
2017-2018	Professional Ethics	745	719 (96.5%)	4.56
2018-2019	Professional Ethics	963	936 (97.2%)	4.55
2019-2020	Professional Ethics	900	892 (99.1%)	4.73

- Scores range from 1 (harmful) to 5 (exceeds expectations)

**Student Learning Outcome 2: Students will develop self-awareness and understanding of impact on others.**

**Measure 1: Social and Cultural Diversity subscale score on the National Counseling Exam.**

Year	Subscale	N	Mean	National Average
Spring 2016	Social & Cultural	15	8.73	7.08
Fall 2016	Social & Cultural	14	8.93	8.47
Spring 2017	Social & Cultural	37	8.89	8.23
Fall 2017	Social & Cultural	14	7.15	7.30
Spring 2018	Social & Cultural	27	8.96	7.95
Fall 2018	Social & Cultural	11	7.55	7.25
Spring 2019	Social & Cultural	47	8.41	7.25
Fall 2019	Social & Cultural	12	2.83*	2.57

- Minimum score: 0
- Maximum score: 11
- \*Fall 2019 Range: 0-4

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**Measure 2: Student scores on Crash Analysis Reflection Paper in CNS 740**

Year	N	Average Rating
2017-2018	91	4.43
2018-2019	73	3.89
2019-2020	118	4.18

- Scores range from 1 (harmful) to 5 (exceeds expectations)

**Measure 3: Student scores on SOAP note assignment in CNS 747.**

Year	N	Average Rating
2017-2018	11	4.34
2018-2019	65	4.35
2019-2020	84	4.4

- Scores range from 1 (harmful) to 5 (exceeds expectations)

**Measure 4: Supervisor evaluations of students' multicultural counseling competence in practicum and internships.**

Year	CCS-R Criterion	Supervisor Responses	# and % of Responses ≥ Meets Expectations	Average Score
2017-2018	MCC	702	668 (95.2%)	4.37
2018-2019	MCC	963	874 (90.76%)	4.12
2019-2020	MCC	878	869 (98.98%)	4.53

- Scores range from 1 (harmful) to 5 (exceeds expectations)

**Student Learning Outcome 3: Students will develop skills that are reflective of effective practitioners**

**Measure 1: Scores on students' second video recording in CNS 737 – Basic Counseling Skills**

Year	N	Mean %
2014-2015	14	94.1%
2015-2016	92	89.19%
2016-2017	87	90.31%
2017-2018	117	91.22%
2018-2019	52	4.43*
2019-2020	97	4.61

- \*changed from average grade percentage to a five point scale with ratings ranging from 1 (harmful) to 5 (exceeds expectations)

**Measure 2: Scores on students' first video recording in CNS 739 – Advanced Counseling Skills**

Year	N	Mean%
2014-2015	16	89%
2015-2016	86	92.19%
2016-2017	87	95.22%
2017-2018	128	93.5%
2018-2019	53	4.44*
2019-2020	92	4.54

- \*changed from average grade percentage to a five point scale with ratings ranging from 1 (harmful) to 5 (exceeds expectations)

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**Measure 3: Helping relationships subscale score on the National Counseling Exam.**

Year	Subscale	N	Mean	National Average
Spring 2016	Helping Relationships	15	29.73	25.42
Fall 2016	Helping Relationships	14	25.57	25.43
Spring 2017	Helping Relationships	37	26.59	24.36
Fall 2017	Helping Relationships	14	22.43	23.19
Spring 2018	Helping Relationships	27	27.41	24.37
Fall 2018	Helping Relationships	11	23.45	23.25
Spring 2019	Helping Relationships	46	26.22	23.25
Fall 2019	Couns. & Helping Rel.	12	42.58*	39.00*

- Minimum score: 0
- Maximum score: 36
- \*Fall 2019 range: 0-56

**Measure 4: Supervisor evaluations of students' counseling skills in practicum and internships.**

Year	CCS-R Criteria	# of Supervisor Responses	Average Rating Range	Average Score
2017-2018	Skills Criteria	Between 627-713	Between 4.11-4.68	4.43
2018-2019	Skills Criteria	963	Between 3.60-4.55	4.18
2019-2020	Skills Criteria	Between 763-896	Between 4.17-4.8	4.53

- Scores range from 1 (harmful) to 5 (exceeds expectations)

**Interpretation**

Faculty **interpretation** of results should tell the story of student learning in the academic program, be based on the Findings, link directly back to the Student Learning Outcomes, and lead to the development of Action Plans. This section also should build on relevant content from interpretation sections of reports from previous years.

**Student Learning Outcome 1: Students will acquire knowledge and skills to practice ethically.**

We have used the Professional Orientation and Ethical Practices subscale of the National Counselor Exam (NCE) since 2016-2017 as a measure of students' knowledge of and skills to practice counseling in an ethical manner. Prior to our use of the NCE, we used a popular comprehensive exam called the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam (CPCE). Logistical challenges in administering the CPCE to on ground and online students required that we make the switch to the NCE. In the previous seven academic years for SLO 1, measure 1, students in our masters of counseling program have scored above the national average for CACREP programs with the exception being the fall 2017 administration of the exam. In that administration, our students' average score was below the national average for CACREP programs. In 2019, NBCC, the administrator of the National Counselor Exam stopped reporting CACREP National Averages and now just reports national averages. As such, we have had to modify our benchmark slightly. **Benchmark:** On average our graduating class scores at or above the national average. This year, in both the spring 2019 and fall 2019 administrations of the NCE, our students, on average, scored above the national average for the professional orientation and ethical practices subsection of the NCE, which meets our benchmark.

For measure 2, we analyzed students' scores on their final examination in CNS 780: Professional, Ethical, and Legal Issues in Counseling. This is the fourth time we have used this

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measure to evaluate our students' acquisition of knowledge and skills to practice ethically. Based on the importance of this outcome, the **benchmark** we have set for this measure is an average of a B, or no lower than an average percentage grade of 82.5%. Results this year (88.69%) decreased slightly from last year's average of 88.983 but exceeded our benchmark, indicating students are developing knowledge of professional, ethical, and legal issues pertinent to counseling competence.

For measure 3, we examined site and university supervisors' evaluations of students' professional ethics. We collected this information from the professional ethics criterion on the Counseling Competencies Scale – Revised (CCS-R). University and site supervisors for students in practicum and internships completed midterm and final evaluations of students in practicum and internships using the CCS-R. The CCS-R uses a scale from 1 (harmful) to 5 (exceeds expectations). It also allows supervisors to indicate “unable to observe.” Between Summer 2019 and Spring 2020, supervisors rated students 900 times on the professional ethics criterion of the CCS-R. The average supervisor rating of students' adherence to ethical guidelines was 4.73 which is between meets expectations (4) and exceeds expectations (5), as well as above last year's average of 4.55. This is a crucial indicator of this student-learning outcome, as it occurs during students' clinical training when students are applying what they have learned in community sites and schools with actual clients. As such, the **benchmark** we have set for this measure is an average of 4 (meets expectations). Similar to the past two year, results this year indicate that our students meet and exceed our expectations in terms of their adherence to ethical guidelines outside of the classroom with actual clients. In fact, of the 900 site and university supervisor evaluations in AY19-20, only 8 were below a 4 (meets expectations). Moreover, all 8 ratings below a 4 were rated as Near Expectations (3).

### **Student Learning Outcome 2: Students will develop self-awareness and understanding of impact on others.**

Similar to SLO 1, measure 1, because we are not able to administer the CPCE to all students in our counseling program, four years ago, we changed the measure for SLO 2, measure 1, to the social and cultural diversity subscale of the NCE. We compared our students' average score on this subscale to that of the national average for students who graduated from CACREP-accredited programs. However, for 2019, NBCC did not disaggregate CACREP-accredited programs from other counseling programs. For the Spring 2019 and fall 2019 administrations of the NCE, our students, on average, scored above the national average. These results meet our **benchmark**, to ensure, on average, that our graduating class scores at or above the national average.

For measure 2, we analyzed students' performance on their *Crash* reflection paper, which is the first assignment related to culture and diversity that our students submit in the program. We administer this assignment in CNS 740: Professional Orientation. For the assignment, students watch the film, *Crash*, and write a reflection paper based on self- and cultural awareness prompts. Instructors evaluate students' cultural awareness based on their reflection papers using a conventional rubric that has scores from 1 (harmful) to 5 (exceeds expectations). The average rating of the 118 students who were evaluated on this measure in AY 19-20 was 4.18, up from 3.89 last year, and between meets expectations and exceeds expectations. The **benchmark** that we set for this measure is that students, on average, will meet expectations with a score of 4 (meets expectations) or higher. Based on this year's results, on average, our students met the benchmark. However, because of last year's score that fell below the

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benchmark, we will continue to monitor students closely as they progress through the program and receive different assessments relative to their cultural development.

For measure 3, we examined students' performance on their SOAP note assignment in CNS 747: Cultures and Counseling. Similar to the previous measure, for the SOAP note assignment, instructors rated students on this student learning outcome using a conventional rubric with scores from 1 (harmful) and 5 (exceeds expectations). Students' average rating on this assignment was 4.4 (n=84). The **benchmark** we set for this measure is a 4 (meets expectations). This average rating is slightly higher than last year's rating and exceeds our benchmark of 4 (meets expectations). We believe students' collective and average performances on this assignment demonstrate their ability to apply cultural knowledge and skills to develop culturally sensitive case conceptualizations and treatment plans.

For measure 4, we analyzed site and university supervisors' evaluations of students on their "multicultural competence in a counseling relationship." More specifically, this criterion measures students' ability to demonstrate respect for culture (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, spirituality, religion, sexual orientation, disability, social class) and awareness of and responsiveness to ways in which culture interacts with the counseling relationship. Similar to SLO 1, measure 4, the multicultural competence in counseling criterion is an item on the CCS-R, which we use as site and university supervisors' midterm and final evaluations of students in practicum and internships. From Summer 2019 to Spring 2020, there were 878 supervisor responses to this criterion. Impressively, 98.98% of the supervisor ratings on this criterion in AY19-20 were equal to or above a 4 (meets expectations). Only nine ratings fell below a 4 (meets expectations). Most of these were a 3 (near expectations). The average student rating for multicultural competence in counseling was 4.53, an increase from last year's average rating of 4.12. The **benchmark** for this very important measure is a 4 (meets expectations). Based on these results, it appears that our students individually and collectively continue to demonstrate the requisite cultural knowledge and skills in their work with culturally diverse clients at their practicum and internship sites.

### **Student Learning Outcome 3: Students will develop skills that are reflective of effective practitioners:**

For measure 1, students complete a basic counseling skills class which focuses on skills that help them become effective practitioners. The course is preparatory to their practicum and internship courses. For their final assignment, students record themselves performing basic counseling skills in a 30 minute mock counseling session. As part of the assignment, they also complete a self-reflection paper in which they assess what they're doing well and areas in which they would like to improve. Similar to previous years, for this measure, students were only evaluated on their counseling skills performance, not their self-assessment paper. Moreover, a few years ago, in an effort to reduce random noise associated with grade percentages, we implemented a conventional rubric that uses a five point scale from 1 (harmful) to 5 (exceeds expectations) to assess this measure. As such, Measure 1 uses the average skills rating of students. On average, counseling students (n=97) received a rating of 4.61 on their basic counseling skills, up from 4.43 the previous year. This indicates that, in AY19-20, on average, students met or exceeded expectations related to basic counseling skills. Our **benchmark** for this assignment is a 4 (meets expectations). The score of 4.61 demonstrates that our students are learning the foundational skills that are necessary to be

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effective practitioners, including building rapport, expressing empathy, and gathering client information effectively and efficiently.

With regard to measure 2, students complete an advanced counseling skills class that expands upon the skills learned in Basic Counseling Skills and Techniques. We are not the only program that offers an advanced counseling skills courses; however, we are the exception rather than the norm. Thus, this course demonstrates our commitment to counseling skills development above what is required by state licensure boards and our accrediting body. Similar to the basic counseling skills courses, students in the advanced counseling skills course complete a video recording in which they demonstrate their basic and advanced counseling skills. Last year, rather than use average grade percentages as we did in previous years, we transitioned to using a conventional rubric on a five point scale from 1 (harmful) to 5 (exceeds expectations). For the 2019-2020 academic year, students' average skills rating was 4.54 (n=92). This indicates that, on average, our students met or exceed expectations in their demonstration of basic and advanced counseling skills. Our **benchmark** for this assignment is 4 (meets expectations).

With regard to measure 3, we compared our students' Spring 2019 and Fall 2019 scores on the helping relationships subsection of the NCE with those of students from other counseling programs. Results indicated that, on average, our students scored above the national average for both administrations of the exam. This subscale consists of questions related to common counseling skills, techniques, and theoretical principles. Our **benchmark** for this measure is to meet or exceed the national average for counseling programs. We met this benchmark for both administrations of the NCE.

For measure 4, we examined site and university supervisors' evaluations of students on the skills criteria of the CCS-R. The CCS-R has items with scores ranging from 1 (harmful) to 5 (exceeds expectations). The skills items on the CCS-R include the following: nonverbals, encouragers, questions, reflections of content, reflections of feeling, summarizations, reflections of meaning, confrontation, goal-setting, focus of counseling, empathy and caring, and respect and compassion. Site and university supervisors completed the CCS-R for midterm and final evaluations of students' skills as well as their professional dispositions. For each skills criterion, there were between 763 and 896 ratings by supervisors. Average criteria ratings on the skills items of the CCS-R ranged from 4.17 to 4.8 (up from 3.6 to 4.55 the previous year) with an average rating across skills items of 4.53, which is an impressive increase from last year's average of 4.18. The **benchmark** set for this measure is a 4 (meets expectations). The average rating of 4.53 indicates that, across counseling skills, site and university supervisors believe our students are meeting and, in many cases, exceeding expectations regarding counseling skill delivery. This is important because these ratings indicate students' use of counseling skills with actual clients at their practicum and/or internship sites. Last year, the average rating of Confrontation was between near and meets expectations (3.6). This year, every counseling skill received an average supervisory rating above a 4 (meets expectations). Confrontation remains the lowest rated skill, but the average was 4.17 this year.

### Action Plans

Please provide specific plans for *continuous improvement* of the Academic Program that are the clear result of the evaluation process. Each proposed **Action Plan** should include a clear description of the changes/improvements that will be made, the proposed timeline for implementation of the plan, and the individual(s) responsible for implementing the plan. The impact of Action Plans will be presented in reports submitted in subsequent years.

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**Short-Term Action Plans**

**Student Learning Outcome 1: Acquire knowledge and skills to practice ethically:**

Our students, on average, demonstrate knowledge and skills to practice ethically. This is true for knowledge-based assessments, such as the final exam in CNS 780 and the NCE subscale of professional orientation and ethics, as well as for applied knowledge and skills measures, such as the supervisor ratings of students' adherence to ethical guidelines. A little over two years ago, in the Fall 2017 administration of the NCE, our students, on average, scored lower than the CACREP national average on the professional orientation and ethical practice subscale of the NCE. In response to this concerning result, we met as a faculty and staff to discuss appropriate actions. First, we discussed ways in which we could add rigor to our online and on campus curricula to ensure our students receive the breadth and depth of knowledge necessary in all subject areas. Second, a committee was set up to explore resources that students could use to prepare for their licensure exams. I am grateful that, for the past two academic years, AY 2018-2019 and AY 2019-2020, all but one of our students passed the NCE and, on average, received scores above the national average.

More work needs to be done, however. We plan to continue to meet as a faculty to discuss ways to maintain and improve our students' knowledge and skills to practice ethically. It is paramount that professional counselors behave in the most professional and ethical manner. One development that we voted on and unanimously approved was a course sequence change to our online program that would allow us to offer CNS 780: Legal and Ethical Issues earlier in students' program. There are some logistics that we need to work out in relation to this development, so a specific timeframe for its implementation has been pushed back. However, we are excited about how it will influence students' praxis of ethical counseling in their clinical courses and beyond. The online program committee, which is comprised of Louise Schatz, Dr. Nations, Dr. Forti, and Dr. Ivers will meet in early fall to develop an implementation plan. Moreover, as mentioned in previous actions plans, we will continue to stay abreast of current and new legislation pertaining to legal and ethical mental health practice, and help our students do the same. The onus for staying abreast of legal and ethical issues rests with all faculty members; however, those who consistently teach the legal and ethical courses, including Drs. Jamie Crockett and Isabel Farrell, will take the lead on this.

**Student Learning Outcome 2: Develop self-awareness and understanding of impact on others:**

Cultural competence, of which self-awareness is an important aspect, is a complex, multifaceted construct, the attainment of which is a lifelong endeavor. As such, we have intentionally chosen measures that address students' multicultural counseling competence (MCC) at three different points during the program. Cultural competence is introduced and initially assessed at the beginning of the program in CNS 740 (Crash Analysis Assignment). Multicultural competence is strongly reinforced a little later in the program in CNS 747: Cultures and Counseling (SOAP note assignment). Lastly, it is assessed at the practical application stage of students' development – clinical courses, namely practicum and internships (MCC item of CCS-R). This allows us to evaluate students' progress using multiple measures at multiple points during the program.

Students performed above the benchmarks for all four of the measures of SLO 2. Last year, the Crash Analysis benchmark was not achieved. Our response to that was to assess how we



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introduced students to content relative to culture and diversity at the beginning of our program, namely in CNS 740. This year, instructors' average ratings of students' cultural competence relative to the Crash Analysis met expectations. We will continue to monitor students' early exposure to and development of cultural competence and discuss ways to facilitate MCC development.

Faculty will continue to discuss ways to help students develop the skills necessary to work effectively with culturally diverse populations. At our faculty retreat, our diversity and inclusion committee, led by Dr. Clarke, will introduce a Call to Conversation-type service in which faculty discuss diversity and inclusion in the classroom, as well as other topics related to cultural competence. We also will continue to implement, monitor, and revise the departmental diversity action plan that we ratified three years ago. This includes, among other things, steps to increase our recruitment of culturally diverse faculty and students, and to cultivate a community of inclusion.

### **Student Learning Outcome 3: Develop skills that are reflective of effective practitioners:**

Students are performing at or above the benchmarks set for all four measures of SLO 3, indicating that our program facilitates the development of skills that are reflective of effective practitioners. We continue to reap the benefits of our work two year ago of implementing a uniform skills rubric in all clinical courses, including CNS 737, CNS 739, practicum, and internships. To do this, we used a software program called Chalk & Wire for our clinical courses that included a graduated form of the rubric that we use in CNS 737 and CNS 739. The use of this software helped us to track, more effectively, skill development across clinical courses, which turned into measure 4 of this SLO. Now, all of our skills measurements are on the same 5 point scale. Our goal for this year is to continue to monitor students' skill development from basic counseling skills through internships. We also will focus on ways to increase students' ability to demonstrate therapeutic confrontation effectively. Confrontation was the lowest rated counseling skill this year, and it was between near and meets expectations last year.

### **Long-Term Action Plans**

We have implemented a system for monitoring student-learning outcomes that follows students' development of knowledge and skills throughout the curriculum. We have the capacity now to evaluate students on each of our program objectives and student learning outcomes at three points in their program using multiple measures. This will allow us to be more intentional and effective in our use of data to inform changes in our curriculum. One strategy that we hope to rollout is a monitoring of track-specific (i.e., CMHC, School) objectives and learning outcomes. Having a yearly track evaluation, along with the APERs, will help us monitor more closely how each track is performing, as well as identify areas that need to be improved.

In the next 4-6 years, if trends continue, we will need to bolster our efforts to help students develop their ethical knowledge and skills, cultural awareness, and counseling skills for work in integrated behavioral health contexts as well as with non-traditional modalities, such as telemental health. This will include learning to work with professionals whose ethical codes and training philosophies differ in notable ways from that of a counselor. It also will mean developing skills and techniques (brief interventions, motivational interviewing) that are common in behavioral health contexts. Additionally, it means understanding legal statutes and

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ethical principles and best-practices specific to distance counseling. Distance counseling, if done ethically and professionally, holds promise for bridging a mental health access gap for underrepresented groups, such as for individuals in rural communities, individuals with disabilities, and people with health vulnerabilities.

We will continue to develop our addiction track. This will include two new courses focused on addiction, including a third skills course and a treatment planning course. It also entails the department chair's appointing a coordinator for the Addictions track, developing track-specific objectives and an evaluation plan, as well as student learning outcomes. In addition, we will continue our CACREP application for the addictions track. Once it is approved, we will market it to prospective students.