



UNIVERSITY *of*
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L A F A Y E T T E[®]

**Department of
Counseling**

**Clinical Mental Health
and
School Counseling
Counselor Education Program**

2024-25 Annual Evaluation Report



Letter from Department Head

Greetings Alumni, Professional Counselors, and Friends of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette Counseling Program!

It is my hope that the following report provides you with the data you seek while also offering a comprehensive and meaningful understanding of our program, our work, and the progress we have made over the past year. Within these pages, we aim to present not only a summary of key data, but also a thoughtful reflection of our ongoing commitment to excellence in counselor education and training.

This report includes a broad range of information, from demographic data and the results of our comprehensive assessment processes to graduation rates and post-graduation employment outcomes. Together, these elements are intended to present a clear and cohesive picture of program functioning and effectiveness over the review period. In addition, we provide a detailed account of our program objectives and the specific ways in which these objectives were addressed and achieved throughout the year.

While we offer a “big picture” perspective, we have also made every effort to include a thorough and transparent examination of student development and progress. Particular attention is given to sections outlining programmatic changes and modifications, including summaries of student performance across multiple competencies. We also present an analysis of student outcomes on the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE), highlighting both areas of strength and opportunities for continued growth.

The report concludes with a recognition of the many accomplishments of our students and faculty, whose dedication and achievements continue to advance the mission and reputation of our program.

Thank you for taking the time to review this report. We welcome your questions and value your continued interest and support. We look forward to engaging with you as we share both our successes and the challenges that inform our ongoing efforts toward continuous improvement.

Sincerely,

Irv Esters

Irv Esters, PhD, PLC-S
Head, Department of Counseling
University of Louisiana at Lafayette



Introduction

The Counseling Program at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette remains committed to preparing highly competent, ethical, and culturally responsive counselors in alignment with CACREP standards and the evolving needs of the profession. Through a comprehensive curriculum, intentional clinical training experiences, and ongoing program evaluation, faculty strive to support student development across academic, clinical, and professional domains. The program continues to emphasize evidence-based practice, professional identity, and advocacy, while integrating feedback from stakeholders and assessment data to inform continuous improvement. This annual report reflects the program's commitment to transparency, accountability, and excellence in counselor education as we prepare graduates to serve diverse individuals, families, and communities.



Mission

The mission of the Department of Counseling at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette is to develop Professional Counselors who embody ethical practice, respect for diversity, and a strong professional identity by integrating theory, research, and practice into a competency-based curriculum, for service to K-12 schools and in various mental health settings.

Program Objectives

1

Program Objective 1. Academic Excellence

Provide an experiential, contextual, and competency-based curriculum guided by theory, research, practice, and leadership that prepares students professionally and academically.

2

Program Objective 2. Diverse and Inclusive Learning Community

Provide a diverse and inclusive learning community that promotes ethical practice, respect for diversity, and a strong professional identity among the next generation of Professional Counselors.

3

Program Objective 3. Prepare Future Professional Counselors

Prepare future professional counselors in the areas of professional growth, academic excellence, and professional competence by working closely with schools, community agencies, and university colleagues.



Program Highlights

Enrolled Students (FA25)	72
24-25 Graduates	24
Degree Completion Rates	100%
Employment Rates	100%
CPCE Exam Pass Rates	100%

Student Demographics

African American	2
American Indian/Native American	
Asian American	2
Caucasian/White	57
Hispanic/Latino/Spanish American	4
Native Hawaiian/Pacifican Islander	
Multiracial	4
Other/Undisclosed	2
Nonresident Alien	1



Assessment of Program Objectives

Program Objective 1. Academic Excellence

Student Learning Outcomes

Fall 2024, Spring 2025, Summer 2025

Benchmark: 90% of students will score at proficient or above

CACREP Standard	Student Learning Outcome	Signature Assessment	Outcome
Professional Orientation, Identity, and Ethics 3.A.10.	<p>Knowledge: Students will demonstrate knowledge related to professional identity including the history and philosophy of the profession, the value of professional organizations and credentialing bodies, and the value and necessity of adherence to the ACA Code of Ethics.</p> <p>Skills: Students will demonstrate ethical practice in their encounters with clients.</p>	<p>Knowledge: COUN 500 Final Exam</p> <p>Skills: COUN 539 Supervisor Evaluation of Student</p>	<p>82% at proficient or advanced</p> <p>72% at proficient or advanced</p>
Social and Cultural Diversity 3.B.3.	<p>Knowledge: Students will demonstrate knowledge of social and cultural diversity issues in counseling.</p> <p>Skills: Students will implement culturally appropriate interventions.</p>	<p>Knowledge: COUN 506 Final Exam</p> <p>Skills: COUN 540 Site Supervisor Evaluation of Student</p>	<p>100 % at proficient or advanced</p> <p>100% at proficient or advanced</p>
Human Growth and Development 3.C.1.	<p>Knowledge: Students will identify developmental tasks and conceptualize treatment through the lens of human growth and development.</p> <p>Skills: Students will assess significant transitions across the lifespan and delivery of clinical services.</p>	<p>Knowledge: COUN 524 Case Studies</p> <p>Skills: COUN 524 “Letter from Older Wiser Self” Assignment</p>	<p>100% at proficient or advanced</p> <p>100% at proficient or advanced</p>

<p>Career Development</p> <p>3.D.1</p>	<p>Knowledge: Students will demonstrate knowledge of career development theories.</p> <p>Skills: Students will apply knowledge of career counseling theories and skills.</p>	<p>Knowledge: COUN 507 Final Exam</p> <p>Skills: COUN 507 Career Assessment Assignment</p>	<p>100% at proficient or advanced</p> <p>100% at proficient or advanced</p>
<p>Counseling and Helping Relationships</p> <p>3.E.9.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Students will demonstrate proficiency in critically assessing and applying advanced interviewing techniques, counseling strategies, and case conceptualization skills within clinical scenarios.</p> <p>Skills: Students will apply counseling and case conceptualization skills that impact client outcomes and facilitate positive change by producing a video portfolio of counseling skills.</p>	<p>Knowledge: COUN 505 Final Exam</p> <p>Skills: COUN 505 Final Skills Evaluation</p>	<p>33% at proficient or advanced</p> <p>30% at proficient or advanced</p>
<p>Group Work and Group Processes</p> <p>3.F.5.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Students will demonstrate knowledge of group formation including how to recruit, screen and select members.</p> <p>Skills: Students will construct a proposal for a comprehensive group plan, including formation, recruiting, screening, and selecting members.</p>	<p>Knowledge: COUN 509 Final Exam</p> <p>Skills: COUN 509 Group Plan Proposal Paper</p>	<p>67% at proficient or advanced</p> <p>100% at proficient or advanced</p>
<p>Assessment and Testing</p> <p>3.G.4.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Students will demonstrate knowledge of individual and group approaches for assessment and evaluation in the counseling context, including basic psychometric principles and the use of formal and informal appraisal mechanisms.</p> <p>Skills: Students will conduct a critical analysis of an existing assessment instrument based on its psychometric properties</p>	<p>Knowledge: COUN 504 Mid-term Exam</p> <p>Skills: COUN 504 Test Evaluation Project and Presentation</p>	<p>46% at proficient or advanced</p> <p>89% at proficient or advanced</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Research and Program Evaluation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3.H.1.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Students will demonstrate the ability to critically analyze a research journal article.</p> <p>Skills: Students will create a research poster that synthesizes the current scholarly literature on a specific counseling topic.</p>	<p>Knowledge: COUN 501 Journal Article Critique Assignment</p> <p>Skills: COUN 501 Research Poster Presentation Assignment</p>	<p>90% at proficient or advanced</p> <p>95% at proficient or advanced</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Clinical Mental Health Specialty Area</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5.C.2.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Students will demonstrate knowledge of techniques and interventions to address a variety of mental health concerns.</p> <p>Skills: Students will demonstrate the ability to perform techniques and interventions for diverse mental health issues.</p>	<p>Knowledge: COUN 505 Final Exam</p> <p>Skills: COUN 555 Final Skills Evaluation</p>	<p>33% at proficient or advanced</p> <p>95% at proficient or advanced</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">School Counseling Specialty Area</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5.H.5.</p>	<p>Knowledge: Students will demonstrate proficiency in designing a core counseling curriculum, including detailed lesson plans.</p> <p>Skills: Students will deliver an inclusive class lesson, incorporating various classroom management techniques and personalized instructional strategies tailored to meet the diverse needs of learners.</p>	<p>Knowledge: COUN 503 Final Exam</p> <p>Skills: COUN 553 Class Lesson Presentation</p>	<p>59% at proficient or advanced</p> <p>100% at proficient or advanced</p>



Assessment of Program Objectives

CPCE Scores

Semester	Number of Students	Pass Rate
Fall 2024	19	100%
Spring 2025	4	100%
Summer 2025	5	100%

Student Professional Dispositions

Relationships	N = 100 (responses)
Uses interpersonal skills in verbal or written communication resulting in positive relationships.	95% at proficient or above
Promotes equity in classes by avoiding disruptive or domineering behavior and engaging in respectful communication.	99% at proficient or above
Works collaboratively with peers.	99% at proficient or above
Maintains professional boundaries.	100% at proficient or above
Ethics	
Expresses respect for diversity through behavior and communication by treating others fairly and equally.	100% at proficient or above
Adheres to confidentiality set forth within classes, in didactic experiences, and/or clinical setting.	100% at proficient or above
Demonstrates academic, personal, and professional integrity in and out of the classroom setting through honest and accurate representation.	100% at proficient or above
Maintains wellness and refrains from offering or providing professional services when impairment is likely to harm clients or others.	90% at proficient or above
Awareness, Wellness, and Growth	
Makes appropriate self-disclosure and avoids overemphasis on personal thoughts or experiences in role-playing, supervision, and/or practice.	95% at proficient or above
Demonstrates the ability to manage current significant life stressors that are impairing academic or clinical experience.	93% at proficient or above
Is open to receiving feedback and/or supervision and avoids defensiveness (e.g., excessive disputing of grades), reactivity, or hostility towards others when they express concern about professional competency (e.g., accepts personal responsibility and consequences of actions).	96% at proficient or above

Demonstrates the ability to evaluate own learning, reflect upon growth, and monitor own impairment and seek additional assistance/support when needed.	95% at proficient or above
Open to engaging in personal and professional development when recommended.	100% at proficient or above
Multicultural Competency	
Practices cultural humility through willingness/openness to learn or understand differences in others.	99% at proficient or above
Regularly remains actively cognizant of clients' lived experience in role-play, supervision, or practice.	97% at proficient or above
Demonstrates respect for other's strengths and points of view through behavior and communication (e.g., avoids judgement of others).	100% at proficient or above
Refrains from the use of biased language (e.g., sexual prejudice, classism, ableism, discrimination, and other forms of microaggressions) in role-play, supervision, and practice.	100% at proficient or above
Recognizes boundaries of competence and limitations of expertise.	92% at proficient or above
Engagement	
Conducts oneself professionally in personal habits, mannerisms, professional attire, patterns of behavior (e.g., independence, maintains a lifestyle that promotes wellness).	96% at proficient or above
Has regular on-time attendance for class and out-of-class meetings. Notifies appropriate persons and submits necessary documentation if absent.	95% at proficient or above
Demonstrates preparedness for class by turning in assignments on time, following through with assignment responsibilities, and a willingness to learn.	95% at proficient or above
Contributes to keeping conversations in class professional (i.e., takes turns, uses appropriate tone of voice, does not overshare personal information).	98% at proficient or above



Assessment of Program Objectives

Program Objective 2. Diverse and Inclusive Learning Community

Diverse and Inclusive Learning

The newly created exit survey, administered in spring 2025 and summer 2025, rendered insufficient data for a meaningful data analysis.

Program Objective 3. Prepare Future Counselors

Field Experience Outcomes: Site Supervisor Survey

Usefulness of site supervisor agreement and supervision training	71% - somewhat or very useful
Communication and collaboration with UL Department of Counseling and sites	100% - adequate or very thorough
Preparedness of students in all areas of counseling skills/preparation:	Met or exceeded benchmark of 80%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation and professionalism 	87% prepared or very prepared
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical skills 	100% prepared or very prepared
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counseling skills 	100% prepared or very prepared
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to recognize legal and ethical issues 	100% prepared or very prepared
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multicultural awareness and skills 	87% prepared or very prepared
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of best practices 	100% prepared or very prepared
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity for self-reflection 	100% prepared or very prepared
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to incorporate supervisor feedback 	100% prepared or very prepared
Would hire our students	100% would hire our students

Graduate Outcomes

Due to changes in the Assessment Calendar, data were not collected for this cycle.

Employment Outcomes

Due to changes in the Assessment Calendar, data were not collected for this cycle.

Previous historical data reflect the following:

Finding 1	When asked to describe the overall professional preparation alumni received, 100% of respondents reported that their training was excellent (n=14; 100%)
Finding 2	When asked to describe the setting our alumni are currently working in, 36% reported working in a group private practice and 29% reported working in a hospital or IOP.
Finding 3	Alumni were asked about employment in their field of study. We wanted to know if students who graduated were employed in their field of study. The majority of respondents (n=13; 100%) reported being employed in their field of study.
Finding 4	100% of our graduates are finding employment within the first two months of graduation.
Finding 5	We asked alumni about their experience passing their licensure/certification exam. Out of the respondents who took an exam (n=6), a total of 100% (n=6) passed on the first try. 57% (n=8) of respondents have not taken their exam yet.
Finding 6	We wanted to know what the salary range was for our students graduating from the UL Counseling Program. Of those who chose to disclose (n=13), the majority of respondents (n=8; 57%) reported making between \$40,001 - \$60,000.

Programmatic Changes & Modifications



Overall Programmatic Changes

- Dr. Austin was hired as a new assistant professor in the fall of 2024
- Transition to 2024 CACREP Standards began and will be reflected in fall 2025, spring 2026, and summer 2026 courses.
- The Student Handbook is being revised according to the 2024 CACREP Standards and will be published fall 2025.
- All students were surveyed on class times. Due to survey results, classes will start earlier in the fall of 2025 based on feedback from the students.



Academic Excellence

- Student Learning Outcomes
 - ◆ The benchmark of 90% proficiency across all KPIs was lowered to 80%.
 - ◆ SLO 9 (Knowledge and Skills) will now be assessed in COUN 519.
 - ◆ SLO 10 (Knowledge) - COUN 503 final exam will be revised due to low pass rate of 59%.
 - ◆ Overall, students are meeting the benchmark for most SLOs; however, faculty recognize the need for ongoing evaluation and refinement.



CPCE Scores

- Our students have a 100% pass rate for the CPCE.
- Multicultural Competence Challenges - The lowest subject area score was Social and Cultural Diversity. A new faculty member will be teaching the course in future semesters, and the curriculum has been revised.



Professional Disposition Evaluation

- 100% of students were proficient or above in all areas, so no programmatic changes are needed at this time.



Diverse and Inclusive Learning Community

- Based on Demographic Data, we made changes to admissions processes and procedures to include a more comprehensive assessment of applicants.



Prepare Future Professional Counselors

- Based on fall 2024 data, the Alumni survey requires revision.
- Based on fall 2024 data, the Employer Survey requires revision.
- Mid-term and Final Evaluations of Practicum and Internship performance will now be collected electronically.



★★ Student and Faculty Accomplishments ★★

During the 2024-25 academic year, students and faculty represented the program through various scholarly contributions and achievements.

❖ Awards

- Sabreelyn Villalpando received the *2024 Zach Esters Award*
- Emily Gannon received the *2024-25 Top CPCE Score*
- Dr. Pool received the *2024 Faculty of Excellence for the College of Education and Human Development*, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

❖ Graduate Student Research Poster Presentations -

- **Research Poster Presentations** - 9 students presented research posters at the 2024 Louisiana Counseling Association Conference in Lake Charles, LA
- **Research Poster Presentation Winners** – All were University of Louisiana at Lafayette Department of Counseling Students
 - 1st Place – Hayley Smith & Heidi Nowicki
 - 2nd Place (tie) – Deb Hill, Gabby Sonnier
 - 3rd Place – Regina Champagne
- **2024 College of Education and Human Development Research Symposium** - 4 students presented research posters at the 2024 COEHD Research Symposium, Lafayette, LA

❖ Invited Keynote Speaker

- Dr. Austin was the invited keynote speaker on the topic *Peace, Love, and Counselor Self-Care* at the 2024 Louisiana Counseling Association Conference in Lake Charles, LA

❖ Conference Presentations

- Dr. Austin and colleagues participated in two author panel discussions and book signings on the topics of *Doing Counseling* and *Counselor Self-Care* at the 2024 American Counseling Association Conference & Expo in New Orleans, LA
- Dr. Pool and colleagues presented a session on *Ethical Understanding of Implicit Bias in the Counseling Relationship* at the American Counseling Association Conference & Expo in New Orleans, LA.

- Drs. Pool and LaFleur presented *Healing Through Play: Helping Bereaved Children Understand Grief Through the Use of Play Therapy and Creative Intervention* at the 2024 Louisiana Counseling Association Conference in Lake Charles, LA
- Dr. Pool served on a panel discussion on *School Counselor Ethics* at the 2024 Louisiana Counseling Association Conference in Lake Charles, LA
- Drs. Pool, LaFleur, and Bourgeois presented a session titled *The Critical Role of School Counselors in Supporting Student Well-Being* at the 2025 Louisiana K-12 Law Conference in Lafayette, LA
- Graduate student Deb Hill and Dr. Pool presented on trauma-informed schools at the 2025 Educators Rising Conference in Lafayette, LA
- Dr. Pool presented a session titled *When Did We All Become Therapists? The Potential Erosion of Counselor Professional Identity* at the 2024 Law and Ethics in Counseling Conference, New Orleans, LA

❖ Conference Volunteers

- 7 students volunteered and Dr. Pool served as a committee chairperson at the 2024 Louisiana Counseling Association Conference in Lake Charles, LA
- 4 students volunteered at the 2024 American Counseling Association Conference & Expo in New Orleans, LA

❖ Publications

- Austin, J., Austin, J., & Bandy, M. (2025). Counselor educator and program characteristics: Impacts on student development of therapeutic presence. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 64(2), 233–247. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ceas.12334>
- Pool, A. (2024). School counseling. In T. M. Mikolon & D. M. Perez (Eds.), *Counseling Children and Adolescents: Diagnostic and Treatment Considerations for Specialized Issues*. Cognella. [Counseling Children and Adolescents](#)





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