

Summary

This report results from the Counseling Program evaluation performed by the AGS Counseling Faculty, based on data collected during the 2020-2021 Academic Year. Program evaluation was conducted using the following as framework:

- Institutional Mission
- Institutional Core Values
- Program Objectives

The AGS counseling program has three major objectives, which are measurable and reflect current knowledge and projected needs concerning counseling practice in a multicultural and pluralistic society.

1. Provide state-of-the-art academic programming guided by competency-based standards and outcomes. This objective reflects a focus on providing **quality education**.
2. Provide an active and inclusive learning environment where students utilize self-reflection, feedback, and skill acquisition to gain meaning and generate new knowledge. This objective reflects a focus on the **learning environment**.
3. Prepare students to offer quality professional counseling services that focus on transforming society through social interest in action. This object reflects a focus on **professional readiness**.

Counseling Program: Annual Report

*Counseling Program
SY 21-22*

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Objective #1: Quality Education

Program faculty evaluate the quality of education provided through assessment of curriculum, instruction, and student learning. Curriculum is informed by diverse sources, including CACREP curricular standards, feedback from stakeholders (students, alumni, site supervisors, and employers), and new information acquired by faculty through engagement in professional associations and continuing education activities.

Instruction is evaluated at the end of each course, through student course evaluations conducted via SmartEvals. Results of these evaluations are shared with each instructor and with the program Chair and are used to inform continuous improvement of instruction.

Program faculty use several complementary sets of data to evaluate student learning, including a) rubric-based data regarding key performance indicators, collected via LiveText and in-classroom measures such as quizzes, b) data provided by students during the exit survey, c) data provided by site supervisors, d) data regarding the development of professional dispositions required for the ethical practice of professional counseling, and e) each student develops a professional portfolio (in LiveText) that demonstrates their competence in all areas of the academic program, which is evaluated when students are ready to graduate.

Student learning – Key Performance Indicators

Assessment of student learning regarding key performance indicators (KPIs) during this academic year focused on the areas of research and program evaluation, family counseling, and career counseling. A 4-point scale is used for program evaluation, with students being rated at beginning, developing, proficient, or advanced levels in each KPI. Program expectations are that a minimum of 80% of the students score at the proficient level in all KPIs. Data regarding the KPIs evaluated this year were collected via the LiveText platform and are presented in Appendix A. In summary, these data show that:

- 97% or more students performed at the proficient or advanced level in research and program evaluation KPIs, with a minimum of 80% scoring at the advanced level.
- 99% of the students performed at the advanced level regarding ethics and multicultural issues related to research in counseling.
- 94% or more students performed at the proficient or advanced level in each of the family counseling KPIs.
- 100% students performed at proficient or advanced levels in the career counseling KPIs.

These data show that students met expectations in all KPIs evaluated this academic year (2020-21).

Student Academic Development

A second component of quality education is the support offered by the program to promote students' academic development. Evaluation of student academic development is based on information collected a) by advisors during portfolio touchpoints, which tracks whether students are on-track; and b) data collected by the student management system (SONIS), regarding satisfactory academic progress (SAP), represented by a GPA of 3.0 or better (on a 4-point scale) and completion of a minimum of 12 credits during the academic year.

Portfolio touchpoints are used to monitor the development of each student and the program does not aggregate these data. Rather than informing program evaluation once a year, this information is discussed in bi-weekly faculty meetings if/when a given student fails to meet touchpoint expectations.

Data regarding SAP are used both to track each student and as an aggregate to inform program evaluation. To remain in good standing, AGS students are required to maintain SAP, as indicated by completing a minimum of 12 credits per academic year and earning GPA of 3.0 (on a 5-point scale). During the 2020-21 academic year, a total of five counseling students failed to maintain SAP; GPAs for these students varied from 2.25 to 2.91.

Program improvement Action Plan: Although the number of program students who failed to meet SAP requirements was small (fewer than 4%), the program started a collaboration with the registrar, in which the registrar provides advisors with an early alert notice when any of their advisees' GPA fall below 3.2. This will allow advisors to work proactively with their advisees to promote student success.

Student Professional Development

The program uses two criteria for evaluating student professional development: a) development of professional competencies and b) development of professional dispositions. The development of professional competencies is tracked via portfolio touchpoint discussions between advisors and students, portfolio examinations at the conclusion of the program, and exiting students' perceptions about their level of preparedness in the different areas of professional counseling activity.

Development of Professional Competencies

Exiting students' perceptions about their level of preparedness is assessed with the use of an exit survey. Students completing the program during the 2020-21 academic year reported the following regarding their perception of how well prepared they were to enter the counseling field (full set of data can be found in Appendix B):

- 87% reported feeling prepared or well-prepared in the use of interviews and assessment instruments and in the application of assessment results to the choice of treatment interventions.
- 92% reported feeling prepared or well-prepared regarding foundations of Adlerian psychology and professional identity.
- 95% or more reported feeling prepared or well-prepared regarding professional ethics; multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills; human development; theoretical frameworks; group dynamics and group leadership skills; and skills in building and maintaining therapeutic relationships.

Program improvement Action Plan: Students in the MCFC specialty rated the areas of professional preparation related to use and application of assessment interviews and tools significantly lower than students in the CMHC and CODAC specialties, with 80% of the students indicating they felt very well or well prepared and 20% of the students indicating they felt only somewhat prepared. Although these numbers meet the 80% threshold program faculty established as the acceptable rate of preparation, faculty identified these areas as needing improvement. Since students in the MCFC do not take a course focused on clinical treatment planning, faculty reviewed the courses specific to the MCFC specialty (couples counseling and family counseling) to include more assessment and treatment planning content.

Development of Professional Dispositions

Counseling Program faculty have identified five core areas of professional attitudes and behaviors, each represented by a series of key professional dispositions (KPDs). KPDs are evaluated informally by faculty on an ongoing basis, as well as formally during three designated program touchpoints. When students enter the program, they are introduced to the concepts of counselor professional identity and professional dispositions. As they progress toward degree completion, they are supported in developing this professional identity, and evaluation of professional dispositions is an integral component of this process.

In the previous academic year, core faculty evaluated the preliminary data from the initial launch of the KPD form, which resulted in a change in the form used to track professional dispositions. This year, faculty reviewed aggregated data from all three touchpoints:

multicultural counseling course (beginning of program), Practicum (mid program), and Internship (end of program). The program reviewed an aggregate of all data from all data points (presented in Appendix C), thus obtaining a snapshot of all the students evaluated, without distinction between different stages of the program.

Program evaluation regarding professional dispositions this academic year included both an assessment of students and an assessment of the process itself, with the process assessment including a survey of employers regarding what qualities they valued most in program graduates. As shown in appendix C, 99% of the students met program expectations (rating of proficient or better) with the majority being rated as advanced. Program faculty was pleased to learn that the five qualities most valued by employers were work ethics; self-awareness; critical thinking; respect for diversity; and interpersonal skills, which reflect the five areas used in the program for evaluation of students' professional dispositions.

Program Improvement Action Plan: During data analysis, faculty recognized that the process of dispositions evaluation could be improved by examining whether professional dispositions evolve as students advance in the program. Moving forward the program will also aggregate data from each developmental stage separately, to obtain a more complete picture of student development. As all students in the program can choose to take any given course either online or on campus, there is no distinction between "online" and "on campus" students.

Objective #2: Learning Environment

The program aims to provide an active and inclusive learning environment where students utilize self-reflection, feedback, and skill acquisition to gain meaning and generate new knowledge. Program faculty assess the quality of the learning environment by examining 1) advising, 2) field experience, 3) students' perception of faculty engagement, and 4) data related to inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility.

Quality of Advising

The program evaluates five aspects of advising, and exiting students reported the following degree of meeting or exceeding expectations in each of the areas:

- Advisor accessibility and responsiveness – 89%
- Advisor engagement throughout the program – 83%
- Advisor helpfulness and engagement in portfolio development – 90%
- Advisor's commitment to providing useful feedback – 85%
- Advisor's flexibility in developing and adjusting course schedule – 92%

These levels of satisfaction are higher than those reported in the previous academic year and reflect the effectiveness of the advising model established in 2019-20. Program faculty expect that as students who entered the program prior to the implementation of this model graduate, the level of satisfaction of exiting students will be further improved. With this expectation in mind, our plan is to monitor student satisfaction scores and implement an improvement plan if needed.

Quality of Practicum and Internship

Program faculty compared student satisfaction with the support and faculty supervision during practicum and internship for this academic year with that reported by students who graduated in the 2019-20 academic year. While the program met expectations in all categories both years, data show an overall improvement in 7 of the 8 categories examined. Data can be found in Appendix D.

The comparison of levels of student satisfaction with their field experience among the three specialties revealed that 1) while students in the CMHC and CODAC specialties were more satisfied than the program average with their practicum and internship experiences, students in the MCFC specialty were significantly less satisfied and 2) while the 2020-21 level of satisfaction of MCFC students was lower than those for CMHC and CODAC, it was significantly higher than the level of satisfaction among MCFC students who graduated during the 2019-20 academic year. It is expected that as students who entered the program prior to program improvement initiatives implemented in 2019-20 graduate, this indicator will continue to improve.

Faculty engagement

Exiting students also provided feedback regarding their interactions with faculty, with the following results:

- Faculty responsiveness in the classroom met or exceeded expectations of 93% of the students.
- Faculty availability and responsiveness outside of the classroom met or exceeded expectations of 81% of the students.
- 90% of the students reported that faculty's engagement in supportive and professional interactions met or exceeded their expectations.
- 68% of the students reported having their expectations regarding timeliness of feedback met or exceeded, while 78% were satisfied with the quality of feedback.

Program Improvement Action Plan: The level of student satisfaction with timeliness and quality of feedback received from faculty was below program goals. To improve program quality in this area, the program established rules for timeliness and frequency of feedback and faculty are receiving training regarding more active participation in the online learning environment, since all courses this academic year were delivered online.

Inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA)

Program faculty are committed to providing an environment that promotes inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA) in education and in the counseling profession. To this end, demographic characteristics of applicants, students, and graduates is an integral component of program evaluation. These data are presented in Appendix E and show that:

- The program had fewer applicants in 2020-21 than in 2019-20, in all ethnic categories.

- The percentage of applicants of color this academic year was 2% lower than in the previous year, and the percentage of applicants of color who enrolled in the program was 3% lower than in the previous year.
- The sex distribution of applicants and new students remained the same as in the previous year, with approximately 70% of applicants and new students identifying as female.
- Data regarding gender identity of applicants and new students were not available for the previous year and program faculty question the accuracy of the data for the current academic year due to lack of coordination between the platform used by Admissions (Element451) and the student management system (SONIS).
- The age range of applicants and new students was remarkably similar in the last 2 academic years, varying from 23 to 62 years.
- 77% of the students who completed the program this academic year did so on-time. The CMHC specialty had the highest percentage of on-time graduation (92%), followed by CODAC (83%), then MCFC (63%). Program faculty attributes the lower rate of on-time graduation for students in the MCFC specialty to the instability in advising and field experience coordination prior to 2019 and expects this will continue to improve as students who entered the program prior to the changes implemented at that time graduate.
- The percentage of students of color graduating this academic year was higher than the average percentage of students of color in the program (29.5% versus 17%). Program faculty were unable to identify a reason for this difference but recognized the positive influence of faculty diversity.

Program Improvement Action Plan: As part of its commitment to IDEA, in 2019 the program asked the Admissions department to be intentional in recruiting a diverse group of students. As a result, social media marketing was focused on zip codes corresponding to areas of high ethnic diversity. Data for the 2020-21 academic year show that this strategy may not have been successful in increasing the diversity of applicants. The program recognizes that COVID may have had a significant impact in recruitment and new student enrollment, especially when one considers that underprivileged populations were disproportionately affected by the pandemic. Nevertheless, program faculty believes that it is important to be more proactive in the recruitment of students from diverse backgrounds. To this end, the program will 1) work with administration to emphasize program faculty diversity, AGS's and the program's value of diversity, and program curricular emphasis on the Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies (MSJCC) on AGS's webpages and marketing materials; 2) ask Admissions to track information regarding the reasons why successful applicants fail to enroll into the program (i.e., applicants who were accepted but did not become students); 3) have program faculty participate in an Admissions taskforce, to have more influence on the targeting of admission efforts; and 4) coordinate with Admissions and the Registrar to establish a better process for tracking gender identity from application to

graduation; to this end, program faculty brought this issue for discussion in the IDEA taskforce, which is working on developing a better tracking system. In the meantime, a question regarding gender identity has been added to the exit survey.

Objective #3: Professional Readiness

To evaluate how well the program prepares students for professional practice, program faculty collect and analyze information from exiting students, alumni, field experience site supervisors, and employers. To obtain a better response rate from constituent groups other than exiting students, the program has decided to reduce survey frequency from yearly to once every two years. The results of surveys performed this academic year are summarized below.

The degree of exiting students' satisfaction with their preparedness to enter the professional field significantly increased this academic year, with 94% of students reporting they felt very well or well prepared. This represents a 17% increase from the previous year. No student reported feeling unprepared. The number of students feeling very well or well prepared in the core competence areas of counseling was even higher, with 97% reporting feeling very well or well prepared. Regarding employment opportunities, 70% exiting students reported having employment opportunities at their internship site.

Program alumni surveyed in 2021 reported the following information regarding employment and passing rates in licensure examinations:

- 89% were employed in the field.
- 71% obtained employment while still in school or within 2 months of graduation.
- 53% earned an annual salary between \$40K and \$60K, with 6% earning more than \$80K.
- The great majority (80%) had not taken the licensure exam yet, but 100% of those who took the exam passed in the first attempt.

Employers of graduates were also surveyed this academic year, with 100% reporting that program graduates were well prepared for the position they occupy in their agencies and 88% stated they would recommend our graduates to other agencies. Regarding promotion within the agency, 75% of the respondents stated that our graduates are good candidates for promotion.

End of Program Evaluation Report

Appendix A – Student Learning Data

Rubric-based LiveText Student Learning Data

Following schedule set up in the PEP, these courses were reviewed in Winter 2021: 500, 541, 544, 562. Course reviews took into consideration LiveText data regarding student learning as represented by signature assignments designed to measure student performance in Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), student feedback through SmartEvals, and instructor feedback. The goal established by the program was to have a minimum of 80% of the students achieving a “proficient” level in each of the KPIs.

Rating scale: Advanced=4 points; Proficient=3 points; Developing=2 points; Beginner=1 point

KPI	Total # of Students	Students rated as Proficient (%)	Students rated as Advanced (%)	Number of Course Sections	Number of Instructors	Mean of average scores by each instructor	S.D. among instructors
Interview and Critical Review of concepts	46	13.04	86.96	4	2	3.842	0.130
Evaluation Protocol	46	17.39	80.43	4	2	3.758	0.012
Critical analysis of research article	74	17.57	81.08	4	2	3.531	0.653
Ethical and legal considerations	74	0.00	98.65	4	2	3.938	0.008
Multicultural considerations	74	0.00	98.65	4	2	3.938	0.088
Genogram; structural map; family constellation	68	27.94	70.59	6	4	3.716	0.165
Patterns: identification and discussion	68	25.00	69.12	6	4	3.625	0.203
Career – Research critique	35	34.29	65.71	3	1	N/A	N/A

Appendix B – Completing Students’ Preparedness

Upon program completion, all students complete an exit survey aimed at evaluating students’ perceptions regarding the quality of all aspects of the program. The table below shows the cumulative data for academic year 2020-21 regarding student learning in each area of professional development.

Area of Preparation	% Students who they believe they are		
	Well prepared + Very well prepared	Somewhat Prepared	Unprepared
Foundation of Adlerian Psychology	92	8	0
Professional Identity	92	8	0
Professional Ethics	97	3	0
Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge, and Skills	95	5	0
Normal and Abnormal Human Development	95	5	0
Understanding clients within a Theoretical Framework	95	5	0
Group Dynamics and Leadership Skills	97	3	0
Use of Assessment Interviews and Instruments*	87	11	3
Use of Assessment to Inform Treatment Planning*	87	11	3
Choosing and Implementing Treatment Interventions	89	11	0
Skills for building and Maintaining Relationships	97	3	0

*Students in the MFT specialty rated these two areas of professional preparation significantly lower than students in the CMHC and CODAC specialties, with 80% of the students indicating they felt very well prepared or well prepared and 20% of the students indicating they felt only somewhat prepared. Although these number meet the 80% threshold we established as the acceptable rate of preparation, faculty identified these areas as needing improvement.

Appendix C – Professional Dispositions

Key Professional Disposition (KPD)	Advanced	Proficient	Developing	Beginner	No Opportunity to Observe
Relationships	66%	34%	0%	0%	0%
Ethics	64%	36%	0%	0%	0%
Awareness, Wellness, Growth	61%	37%	1%	0%	0%
Multiculturalism	70%	30%	0%	0%	0%
Engagement	69%	30%	1%	0%	0%

Appendix D – Practicum and Internship Support and Faculty Supervision

Aspect of Field Experience	Program Met or Exceeded Expectations	
	2020-21 academic Year	2019-20 academic year
Field experience coordinator help in solving problems associated with field experience	92%	81.6%
Faculty (classroom) supervisor's clinical knowledge	95%	92.1%
Faculty supervisor's modeling of ethical behaviors	98%	94.7%
Faculty supervisor's modeling of appropriate clinical behaviors	98%	94.7%
Faculty supervisor's modeling of Adlerian behaviors and attitudes	98%	94.7%
Faculty supervisor's multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills	94%	94.7%
The overall preparation for professional practice and employment you developed as a result of your field experience	95%	94.7%
Faculty supervisor's frequency of classroom/academic supervision.	97%	94.7%

Aspect of Field Experience	% Met/Exceeded Expectations			
	Counseling Program	Specialties		
		CMHC	CODAC	MCFC
Field experience coordinator help in solving problems associated with field experience	92%	94%	100%	87%
Faculty (classroom) supervisor's clinical knowledge	95%	100%	100%	87%
Faculty supervisor's modeling of ethical behaviors	98%	100%	100%	94%
Faculty supervisor's modeling of appropriate clinical behaviors	98%	100%	100%	94%
Faculty supervisor's modeling of Adlerian behaviors and attitudes	98%	100%	100%	93%
Faculty supervisor's multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills	94%	100%	100%	87%
Overall preparation for professional practice and employment	95%	93%	100%	93%
Frequency of academic supervision	97%	100%	100%	93%

Appendix E – Program Demographics

2019-20 Academic Year – ethnic distribution of applicants (A) and new students (E)

Ethnicity	Summer 19		Fall 19		Winter 20		Spring 20		Academic Year	
	A	E	A	E	A	E	A	E	A	E
Asian	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
B/AA	3	2	7	5	1	1	1	1	12	9
H	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Native	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	4	3
White	23	15	26	21	15	11	12	10	76	57
Not Disclosed	10	1	25	6	9	0	5	0	49	7
Total	37	19	60	34	27	13	19	11	143	77

2020-21 Academic Year - ethnic distribution of applicants (A) and new students (E)

Ethnicity	Summer 20		Fall 20		Winter 21		Spring 21		Academic Year	
	A	E	A	E	A	E	A	E	A	E
Asian	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
B/AA	1	0	2	2	1	0	2	0	6	2
H	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Native	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	7	7	30	29	6	6	7	6	50	48
Not Disclosed	3	0	8	0	5	0	2	0	18	0
Total	11	7	41	32	12	6	12	7	76	52

2019-20 and 2020-21 ethnicity of applicants and new students

Ethnicity	2019-20 Academic Year		2020-21 Academic Year	
	% Applications	% Enrollment	% Applications	% Enrollment
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.7	0	1.3	1.9
Black/African American	8.4	11.7	7.9	3.8
Hispanic	0.7	1.3	1.3	1.9
Native American/AK Native	2.8	3.9	0	0
White	53.1	74.0	66.0	92.3
Other	34.6	9.0	23.7	0
Total BIPOC	12.6	16.9	10.5	7.7

2019-20 and 2020 sex and gender identity of applicants (A) and new students (E)

Sex/Gender Identity	2019-20									
	Summer		Fall		Winter		Spring		Academic Year	
	A	E	A	E	A	E	A	E	A	E
Female	31	16	43	24	21	9	10	5	105	54
Male	6	3	17	10	6	4	9	6	38	23
Non-binary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
% Female	83.8	84.2	71.7	70.6	77.8	69.2	52.6	45.5	73.4	70.1

Sex/Ge nder Identity	2020-21									
	Summer		Fall		Winter		Spring		Academic Year	
	A	E	A	E	A	E	A	E	A	E
Female	6	3	30	23	9	5	9	6	54	37
Male	5	4	11	9	3	1	1	0	20	14
Non- binary	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	1
% Female	54.5	42.9	73.2	71.9	75.0	83.3	75.0	85.7	71.0	71.1

2019-20 and 2020-21 age ranges of applicants and new students

		2019-20 Academic Year	2020-21 Academic Year
Applicants	youngest	23	23
	oldest	69	83
Enrolled	youngest	23	23
	oldest	62	61

Demographics of 2020-21 graduates

	2020-21 Graduates' Demographics			Number of Students Completing	% On-time Completion
	% Female	% BIPOC	Average Age		
CMHC	62	38	35	13	92
CODAC	67	17	34	12	83
MCFC	79	16	36	19	63
Program Totals	70	29.5	35	44	77