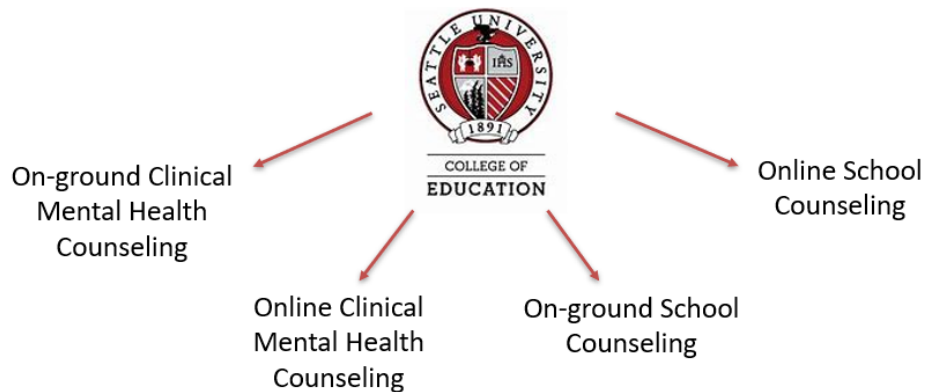




## 2023 Annual Report Counseling Program | College of Education

### Introduction

As part of our continual efforts to provide excellent training for clinical mental health counselors, Seattle University's Counseling Program is providing this report of counseling program data gathered in AY22-23 and assessed in the fall of 2023. Additionally included are subsequent actions and program improvements made based on the data. This report contains highlights of recent activities, changes, and initiatives that affect the two program tracks with two site delivery modalities within Seattle University's Counseling Program.



### Counseling Program Mission Statement

Our mission is to prepare diverse, ethical, reflective, clinically skilled, and multiculturally competent counselors to become leaders and advocates who confront injustice and provide quality service in diverse communities.

### Program Objectives

In keeping with Seattle University mission and values, students will be assessed by the following Counseling Program Objectives.

1. To prepare reflective equity minded clinical mental health and school counselors to be technologically competent, professional, ethical decision--makers, and knowledgeable of legal matters.
2. To prepare equity minded clinical mental health and school counselors to be multicultural and social justice competent leaders who tailor their approaches to align with clients' cultural worldview, practice advocacy, value diversity, and promote social justice.
3. To prepare equity minded clinical mental health and school counselors to use knowledge of human growth and development to improve client understanding, addictions, well--being, and to enhance resiliency from a multicultural and social justice framework.
4. To prepare equity minded clinical mental health and school counselors with career development knowledge and skills to help clients make informed career decisions.
5. To prepare equity minded clinical mental health and school counselors to demonstrate understanding and application of established and emerging counseling theories through effective use of empowerment techniques for working with diverse populations.
6. To prepare equity minded clinical mental health and school counselors to demonstrate an understanding of established and emerging group counseling theories through effective use of group techniques for working with diverse populations.
7. To prepare equity minded clinical mental health and school counselors to use their understanding of assessment to assess individuals' abilities, aptitudes, achievements and interests.
8. To prepare equity minded clinical mental health and school counselors to utilize research to evaluate services and make research based professional judgments.

*Specific Clinical Mental Health Counseling Objectives:*

9. To prepare equity minded clinical mental health counselors with the foundation to effectively work in a clinical mental health agency and respond to substance use disorder issues.
10. To prepare clinical mental health counselors who understand the role of a clinical mental health agency within the larger community.
11. To prepare clinical mental health counselors with knowledge and skills to provide quality service in clinical mental health settings that lead to a more just and humane world.

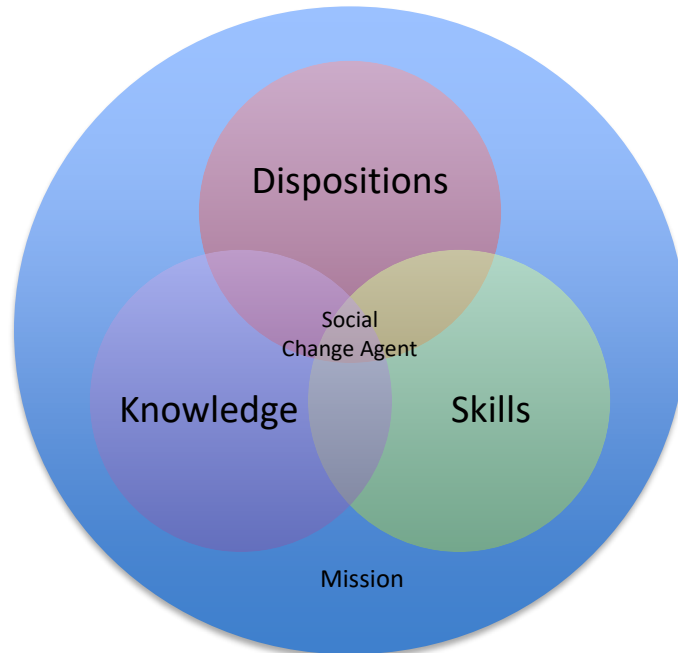
*Specific School Counseling Program Objectives:*

9. To prepare school counselors to be change agents who plan, implement, and evaluate a student-centered data-driven school counseling program that advances the mission of the school and to address substance use disorder issues in schools.
10. To prepare school counselors to work collaboratively with school staff, families, and community members to achieve common goals for the education of all K-12 students, improvement of schools, and advancement of the larger community.
11. To prepare school counselors with knowledge and skills to provide quality service in K-12 schools that lead to a more just and humane world.

**Counseling Assessment System**

To ensure that students are meeting the program objectives, students are assessed on *knowledge*, *skills*, and *dispositions* throughout the program. To assess student progress in these three areas the Counseling Program uses an assessment system, referred to as the Counseling Assessment System (CAS), to evaluate student's ability to meet Academic Standards (i.e., knowledge and skills) and demonstrate Professional Dispositions (i.e., conduct) expected of beginning counselors and social change agents (See Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Counseling Assessment System**



Academic Standards include earning a B or higher in the required courses and earning a 3 or higher on all following summative assignments using the following scale:

- 4 = Mastery
- 3 = Proficient
- 2 = Developing
- 1 = Beginning
- 0 = Inadequate

Professional dispositions in the Counseling Program include the following and also require a score of 3 or higher:

1. *Self-Expression*: Expresses self effectively and appropriately
2. *Listening*: Listens to others
3. *Cooperativeness*: Cooperates with others
4. *Feedback*: Able to receive and integrate feedback
5. *Respect*: Demonstrates respect for others in a non-judgmental way.

6. *Self-awareness*: Awareness of own impact on others
7. *Conflict*: Appropriately handles conflict with others
8. *Personal responsibility*: Takes personal responsibility
9. *Professional*: attitudes and behaviors are professional and aligns with ACA Code of Ethics
10. *Motivation*: Takes initiative to complete tasks
11. *Multiculturalism*: Accepting of social and cultural diversity
12. *Social Justice*: Attitudes and behaviors promote a just world

The Counseling Program is a three-year program. Students are assessed during four transition points:

1. Admissions: Prior to beginning the program.
2. Candidacy: Mid-way through the program.
3. Pre-professional practice in clinical training experience: Before beginning practicum and internship.
4. Graduation: At the end of the program.

During these transition points, Academic Standards are reviewed as well as Professional Dispositions. The following data is a summary of the Counseling Assessment System data for the graduating class of 2023.

### Student Demographics

**Table 1: School Counseling and Clinical Mental Health Counseling Students Admitted Fall 2022**

Race	F	M	Total	Percentage
Asian			17	11%
Black			7	4%
Hispanic			25	16%
Non-resident			4	2%
Unknown			1	1%
Two or More Races			14	9%
White			93	58%
<b>Total</b>			<b>161</b>	<b>100%</b>

A total of 161 applicants were admitted into the Counseling Program. Of these, 123 were admitted into the CMHC program track (63 on-ground and 60 online) and 38 were admitted into the School Counseling program track (38 on-ground and 0 online).

#### *Plan to increase inclusivity and diversity during enrollment:*

The Counseling Department, like Seattle University, provides equal opportunity in admissions, educational programs, and all activities regardless of race, color, national or ethnic origin, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, veteran status, or any other legally protected category. Approximately 58% of counseling students represent a racial or ethnic minority. The

counseling program is increasing inclusivity and diversity within the program through the following actions:

- Offering information sessions specifically connected with diverse identities, including LGBTQ+ applicants, BIPOC applicants, second-career applicants, male applicants, etc.
- Relying on an external admissions team and student success coaches to help assist students with the application process for graduate studies.

### **Candidacy**

The graduating class of 2023 began with 104 students. 84 of these students passed candidacy, which is a lower rate than in previous years. This is most likely due to the challenges of the COVID pandemic. Out of the 20 students who did not reach candidacy, 4 students withdrew from the program for personal related reasons and 16 students either took a leave of absence or took a partial course load primarily due to the COVID lockdown. Students who took the leave of absence or the partial course load joined another cohort.

*Plan to increase candidacy passing rates:*

Candidacy for the graduating cohort of 2023 occurred during the fall and winter of 2021-22, and many students (and faculty) had challenges with the changes to online learning without the platform for online learning. The counseling program increased candidacy passing rates through the following actions:

- Started an online counseling program to increase accessibility to education during global pandemics.
- Increased opportunities for learning through intentional online courses when needed for the on-ground site deliveries.

### **Pre-professional practice in clinical training experience**

School counseling students are in practicum during winter quarter of their second year and internship during their third year. Clinical mental health counseling students are in practicum during fall quarter of their third year and internship during their winter, spring and summer quarters of their third year. Students must acquire 100 hours during practicum (40 direct hours) and 600 hours during internship (240 direct hours).

There was a total of 88 site supervisors working with the 2023 graduating class counseling students. Out of 88 total site supervisors for SC and CMHC Graduates who responded to the survey, 14 site supervisors indicated they worked in a K-12 setting and 36 reported they worked in a community or clinical agency. Site supervisors completed a survey to share input on program strengths and feedback for program improvements. Below are the qualitative results.

Site supervisor feedback on program strengths:

- Students are open and ready to learn.
- Students seek out opportunities for growth and development.

- Interns pay attention to ethical standards.
- Students are receptive to feedback and display basic counseling skills.
- Students are able to connect with clients, advocate and demonstrate good listening skills.
- Students are eager to learn and take on responsibilities.
- Students demonstrate great care in their practice and work with the school students.
- Students ask questions for clarifying information. Students take direction from the School Staff well and follow through.
- Students demonstrate a strong ability to connect with all students and staff at the school.
- Students show creativity in counseling strategies.
- Students show themselves to be strong collaborator and communicator.
- Students have a positive outlook and attitude and are looking for ways to make connections with the students and school staff.

Site supervisor feedback on program improvements:

- Site Supervisors would like to see the syllabus for topics the intern was taking each quarter in order to tailor their supervisor for the SU Intern.
- Provide students with more opportunities to practice group counseling skills prior to internship.
- Site Supervisors would like to see better communication and organization with the site supervisor and intern about expectations.
- More and consistent communication between site supervisor, intern process and progression and faculty advisor.
- Better clinical understanding of theories.

*Plan to implement site supervisor feedback on program improvements:*

The site supervisor survey is currently sent once per year to site supervisors. Feedback from the past year included a desire for an increase in communication and organization with all involved in clinical training. The counseling program plans on implementing the site supervisor feedback follows:

- Implementing a “Professional Practice in Clinical Training” Committee to create a training manual which will include policies and procedures for students in practicum and internship, faculty teaching students in practicum and internship, and site supervisors working with students.
- Updating the “Site Supervisor Orientation” to organize and clarify the roles and responsibilities of site supervisors and to disseminate appropriate information, including syllabi.

## **Graduation**

For the graduating class of 2023, the graduation rate was 85.5%. This rate was lower than previous years due to the stressors of the COVID pandemic.

## **Graduate Follow-up**

During follow-up employer survey and graduate surveys are sent to determine graduate's attainment of program knowledge, skills, and dispositions. The graduate survey is distributed to students during the fall/winter term after graduation. This timing allows graduates time to look for employment. The following tables summarize the graduate survey data.

**Table 2: Graduate Survey Overview**

Category	School Counseling – Graduates	CMHC – Graduates
Average Age	33-38	28-36
Full Time Employed	13	7
¾ Time Employed	3	0
Salary	\$77,880	\$64,524
Employment Setting	K-12 Schools, Private Practice	Community Agency, Private Practice

Of the respondents, 31% were graduates of the clinical mental health program and 69% were graduates of the school counseling program. 100% of those who completed the survey were employed. Graduates were also invited to share input on program strengths and feedback for program improvements. Below are the qualitative results.

Graduate feedback on program strengths:

- Ability to be virtual and have classes online.
- Small class sizes.
- Faculty teaching and lecture styles are diverse.
- Students liked that the program was 3 years as it gave graduate students more time to focus on field experience.
- Students like the crossover of mental health counseling and school counseling.
- Internships and educated, experienced faculty members.
- Faculty had diverse work experience.
- CACREP accreditation.

Graduate feedback on program improvements:

- More full-time faculty.
- More school counseling-based curriculum needs to be included in the program.
  - Students would like to learn about Tier 2 interventions and 504 plans.
- The classes are too large.
- More organized and concise class time.
- Provide more assistance with practicum and internship placement.
- Students felt unsupported during internship.
- Adjunct Faculty:
  - Attract and hire more proficient adjuncts.
  - Have less adjuncts teaching and more core faculty teaching.

- There were too many adjunct faculty members teaching.
- Faculty Advising:
  - Students would like mentorship from their faculty advisor. Students state they had little or no contact with their advisor.
  - Interactions with faculty advisors were minimal.
- Cost of the program is too high when comparing this to the quality of the courses and the faculty who teach the courses.
- More full-time faculty.
- More committed and responsive faculty.
- Research opportunities are lacking.
- Teach students to apply skills and theories.
- Provide more preparation for students to go to work in the educational system.

*Plan to implement graduate feedback:*

The counseling program continues to examine barriers to graduation. The counseling program is increasing graduation within the program through the following actions:

- Increasing number of full-time faculty with new hires.
- Decrease class size by reducing the number of students in a cohort.
- Hiring a Placement Coordinator to assist and support students with practicum and internship placement.
- Offering opportunities for students to collaborate with faculty on research opportunities.

**Key Program Modifications/Highlights in AY22-23**

The Counseling Program made many modifications in the academic year of 2022-2023. Highlights are listed below.

- In fall of 2022, the Online Clinical Mental Health Counseling program was launched. The online site delivery format offers the opportunity for students who need a more flexible program, which became very evident in the last few years due to the COVID pandemic.
- The Counseling Program hired four new core faculty members to teach in the Online Clinical Mental Health Counseling program and hired one new core faculty member to teach in the on-ground School Counseling program.
- Hired a Placement Coordinator in the fall of 2022 to assist students with their practicum and internship placement.
- Created program-level committees, including the Student Engagement Committee and the Scholar Committee, to increase student engagement and opportunities to connect with faculty on their scholarly interests.
- The on-ground Counseling Program delivery tracks separated the school counseling and clinical mental health counseling-specific courses to allow for certain courses to focus on the specialization content.