

Lewis & Clark Graduate School of Education and Counseling



Lewis and Clark College
Graduate School of Education and Counseling
Annual Program Report
Academic Year 2022-23

Prepared by counseling program faculty for program website posting:

https://graduate.lclark.edu/departments/counseling_psychology/mental_health/outcomes/ and distribution to current students, affiliate faculty, alumni, employers, university administrators, and advisory board members.

(1) Program Overview

The Professional Mental Health Counseling and Professional Mental Health Counseling with specialization in addictions (PMHC and PMHC-A) are housed in the Department of Counseling, Therapy, and School Psychology. The PMHC program's roots can be traced back to 1972 and was recognized by the state of Oregon as a state accredited program when licensure in the state was first established in 1989. The PMHC-A program was started in 1999. It should be noted that PMHC and PMHC-A are separate programs for administrative purposes but are accredited as a single CACREP program as they share most courses. This is summarized in the table below:

Program	Total Credits Required	Common Credits	Other requirements
MA PMHC	60	52	2 credit Addictions course 6 credit hours electives
MA PMHC-A	62	52	9 credits of addictions courses 1 elective credit

The PMHC and PMHC-A programs share a mission statement and have nine program objectives. The mission statement is:

The Professional Mental Health Counseling program prepares highly skilled, ethical, and compassionate mental health professionals grounded in a commitment to social justice.

We emphasize the client-counselor relationship, creative and experiential modalities, and a thorough understanding of mental health issues across the lifespan. The curriculum reflects multiple theoretical perspectives with guidance to support students in developing their own framework for community and clinical practice.

Our program creates a transformative environment where students emerge with an understanding of their own social locations and the role of power, privilege, and difference within institutional, social, intimate, and therapeutic relationships. We have a commitment to social justice which is embodied in six focus options across the curriculum: counseling with LGBT+ clients, feminist counseling, mind/body/spirit/creativity, community/professional advocacy, ecopsychology, and eating disorders.

And the nine program objectives are:

1. Students develop knowledge in the eight common core areas identified in CACREP standards,
2. Theory and Research to Practice
3. Clinical Skills (Helping Relationships)
4. Self as Counselor (Reflective Practitioners)
5. Multicultural Competence

6. Professional Counseling Identity
7. Ethical Practice
8. Social Justice Advocacy and Community Involvement
9. Research and Assessment

(2) Introduction

The start of the Fall of 2022 marked the return to in-person classes as the norm, with a lessening of the mask mandates. While there were still COVID-19 precautions (students needed to show proof of vaccination, masks would continue to be worn if any student preferred it), the start of last year marked a noticeable step to pre-COVID-19 instruction. In addition, we received two new faculty members, Dr. Rafe McCullough, and Dr. Justin Henderson who both started in the Fall of 2022. With a newer faculty pool, we have started to draft possible structural and logistic changes to the PMHC and PMHC-A programs. Some topics up for discussion include emphasizing more of a child focus during students' coursework, practicum, and internship, changing the course sequence to have two tracks that are both eight semesters long, and a revisit on how we can make program and student assessment more useful for the faculty, outside of meeting accreditation requirements.

The Lewis and Clark Community Counseling Center (LCCCC) is continuing to expand, with Art Therapy planning on having more of a presence in the Fall of 2023. While we're unsure how to best utilize this opportunity for the PMHC and PMHC-A programs, there has been discussion with Art Therapy faculty on possible crossover educational experiences. In-person counseling has also resumed, and students are now providing both in-person and telehealth services. Because of this, the LCCCC is still able to provide state-wide counseling services to more marginalized communities as well as provide students a beginning clinic experience that will more closely resemble what to expect after graduation (as most community agencies will continue to use a combination of in-person and telehealth platforms to provide services).

PMHC and PMHC-A students continue to score high marks on standardized tests and can secure a job immediately after graduation for graduates seeking employment. The outlook for professional mental health counselors and addiction counselors continues to remain high and this prospect will likely remain for several years, as there continues to be a mental health counselor shortage.

(3) Matriculation, enrollment, and program evaluation data (PMHC)

Total Number of Students in PMHC and PMHC-A

	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23
Total Head Count	115	123	120	121	119

Graduates

Counting the PMHC-A program, we had a total of 64 (40 PMHC and 22 in PMHC-A) graduates in the 2021-2022 academic year. Though not reflected in any formal reports yet, according to our closing paperwork of students in their final semester, we have 54 graduates since the Fall of 2022 up to this semester (though this number is not yet finalized as we're still in the summer semester).

(4) Student evaluations data

According to the 2021-22 Exit Survey, (N= 44) the PMHC program scored well when students rated the overall quality of their experience in our program, with the majority of responses having us in the "Good" or "Very Good" categories. The one exception can be seen in the students' ratings of our advising with 13.6% rating it poor, 36.4% rating it fair, and 41% rating it good. In the Fall of 2023, we will take formal steps in addressing our advising strategies in our strategic plan. With regards to teaching and course evaluations, our expectation is that student teaching evaluations are high. When lower ratings, or student concerns are brought regarding instructors (usually seen in adjuncts, rarely in core faculty), the evaluations are reviewed by the faculty member and/or chair, with program directors working with adjunct faculty on improvements. Program changes are made using a review of Exit Surveys (Students), Alumni Surveys, and Supervisor/Employer Surveys on which respondents are asked to evaluate the program and program objectives. In addition, faculty reviews qualitative feedback from students and student performance to make program changes.

NCE. An additional informal measure of student achievement is the National Counselor Exam (NCE). This is the primary examination that is required for students to become Licensed Professional Counselors in Oregon and most other states. As last year, we had a 100% pass rate in Spring 2022 and our students scored 'significantly' *higher* than the national average. As of this report, we haven't received the pass rate for students who took the NCE in the Spring of 2023.

Survey Results

Exit Survey Results

Responses to the question "How well did your educational experiences at Lewis & Clark increase your knowledge and understanding of the following:" areas that scored with a mean average over 4.0 (labeled as considerably) include: the professional roles and functions of counselors, counseling theories, social and cultural diversity, ethical and legal issues in counseling, establish an effective working relationships with clients, provide effective counseling for individuals, assess clients appropriately, develop and implement sound treatment plans, give attention to importance of the balance between self-care and work/career, and access and utilize research information to improve counseling effectiveness.

Mission and Program Objectives Evaluation - Overview

This year, as in past years, overall ratings are strong, with most alumni reporting that objectives were met or exceeded.

Program Objectives*	2020-21 Percentage Rating Met or Exceed/Mean	2021-22 Percentage Rating Met or Exceed/Mean	2022-23 Percentage Rating Met or Exceed/Mean
Theory and Research to Practice	96%	86%	88%
Clinical Skill (Helping Relationships)	100%	84%	88%
Self as Counselor (Reflective Practitioner)	100%	100%	100%
Multicultural Competence	96%	91%	94%
Professional Counseling Identity	100%	91%	88%
Ethical Practice	96%	93%	100%
Social Justice Advocacy and Community Involvement	93%	84%	70%
Research & Assessment	86%	82%	91%

Alumni Survey

The number of responses to the alumni survey was small, but responses showed that alumni felt that they had a positive experience and felt prepared to begin their work as professional counselors. They also felt overwhelmingly that we had attained our program objectives in their programs. Responses to key items are presented in the table below:

Alumni Survey Key Items	2019-20 (N =14)		2021-22 (N=10)		2022-23 (N=16)	
	Adequately/ Exceptionally		Adequately/ Exceptionally		Adequately/ Exceptionally	
Overall, how prepared did you feel when you first started the profession?	78.57%		60%		71%	
	Equally/ More Prepared		Equally/ More Prepared		Equally/ More	

					Prepared	
Compared to your colleagues who earned degrees at other institutions, how prepared were you?	85.72%		100%		93.33%	
	Well/ Extremely Well		Well/ Extremely Well		Well/ Extremely Well	
Overall, how well did your program meet your expectations?	78.58%		90%		93.75%	

Program Changes Related to Exit and Alumni Surveys

The faculty began discussing revamping our course sequence to include more robust elective focus areas and to emphasize the child track more. Students have scored the Treatment and Intervention with Children and Adolescents course, lower than we would like. Thus, this next academic year will include revisiting the course curriculum and strengthening it.

(6) PMHC program community engagement activity.

- The advocacy requirement implemented as a portfolio component continues to be a significant community engagement for our students. In addition, students are taking part more in state professional organizations related to counseling (Oregon Counseling Association) and advocacy for client and counselor rights (Coalition of Oregon Professional Associations for Counseling and Therapy).
- The Community Counseling Center continues to be an example of community engagement for both the PMHC and the PMHC/A program. The clinic continues to be a contact point for the PUAH grant, and also began to provide services for people referred from the Returning Veterans project and from the nursing program at Walla Walla University
- The PMHC program continues to have a strong relationship in the local community through its relationship with over 100 internship sites.

Engagement with professional Organizations

- ***Dr. Stella Kerl McClain*** is the ACC (Association for Creativity in Counseling) Representative to the Governing Council of the American Counseling Association (ACA).

- **Dr. Rafe McCullough** is currently the co-chair of the ACA Cultural Encounters Task Force.
- **Dr. Jeffrey Christensen** is currently the president for the Oregon Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors (OACES) and still serves as a past-president and advisor for the Oregon Counseling Association (ORCA).

Individual Program Faculty Community Engagement

Dr. Carol Doyle cooks quarterly for the Hoyt Street Homeless shelter and recently attended a community workshop on how churches may help asylum seekers as they navigate the asylum process.

Dr. Stella Kerl-McClain provides psychological evaluations for immigrants seeking asylum through a non-profit organization in the community.

Faculty: Currently each member of both the PMHC and PMHC-A programs hold social locations that have traditionally been marginalized either because of race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or an intersection of those social locations. PMHC faculty are sponsors for groups for Queer Graduate Students and Graduate Students of Color Alliance (GSOCA)

(7) Scholarship activity of program faculty

Publications

Henderson, J. D., de Leon, A., & Christensen, J. K. (2023). Cultivating Compassion for Resilience and Wellbeing: Applications for Individuals and Workplaces. In R. Bansal (Ed.), *Perspectives on Stress and Wellness Management in Times of Crisis* (pp. 230-251). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4017/978-1-6684-8565-1.ch015>

Christensen, J. K., McDowell, T., & Kosutic, I. (2022). A critical review of the scholarly discourse on gambling disorder treatment: , Part 1. *Critical Gambling Studies*, 3(1), 35-46. <https://doi.org/10.29173/cgs96>

Kosutic, I., **Christensen, J. K., & McDowell, T.** (2022). A critical review of the scholarly discourse on gambling disorder treatment: Part II. *Critical Gambling Studies*, 3(1), 47-57. <https://doi.org/10.29173/cgs97>.

Coffey, M., **Christensen, J. K., & Doyle, C.** (under review). Human Relationships and Firefighter Suicidality: Exploring the Mediation of Meaning and Burnout by Thwarted Belongingness. *Stress and Health*.

Kerl-McClain, S. B., Dorn-Medeiros, C. M., & McMurray, K. (2022). Addressing Anti-Fat Bias: A Crash Course for Counselors and Counselors-in-Training. *Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision*, 15 (4). <https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/jcps/vol15/iss4/3/>

Presentations

Dorn-Medeiros, C. M., & Christensen, J. K. (2022, Oct). *Clinical Supervision of Students Counseling LGBTQ+ Clients*. Education session presented at the Western Association for Counselor Education and Supervision conference, Portland, OR.

Coffey, M., **Christensen, J. K., & Doyle, C.** (2022, Oct). *Engaging Firefighter Suicide: Meaning, Burnout, and the Importance of Relationships*. Poster presented at the Western Association of Counselor Education and Supervision, Portland, OR.

Kerl-McClain (2022, Mar). *Size Diversity, HAES & "Body Positivity" and Fat Liberation: Educating Counselors to Avoid Harm*. Presentation for the 2022 Association for Women in Psychology annual conference. Chicago, IL

Kerl-McClain, S. (2022, Apr). *Creativity as a Critical Challenge to White Supremacy in Counselor Education*. Presentation for World Day of Creativity Celebration (virtual).

Christian, A., **McCullough, R.,** Hunter, T., Proctor, Z., & Hipolito-Delgado, C. (2022, Apr). *We're Going There: Creating a Culture of Difficult Dialogues in Counseling*. American Counseling Association Conference, Atlanta, GA.

(8) Provide an update on accreditation activity.

We received an 8-year accreditation from CACREP on Jan 25 2019, and are now accredited until March 31 2027. Two accreditation reports are due in the Fall of 2023, our mid-cycle report, and a new report in the wake of the COVID pandemic, titled "Digital Delivery Substantive Change Report." We are currently on track in our accreditation requirements and are making changes to our program planning to reflect the new CACREP 2024 standards, which took effect in July of 2023.

(9) Strategic Planning

Resulting from an all-day retreat in May of 2023, program faculty identified three goals for the PMHC and PMHC-A program. First, exploring the possibility of removing the 7-semester track and having two separate 8-semester tracks, each with a different sequence. This was to remove pressure that many of the 7-semester students were reporting, while still maintaining the same level of incoming students to the Lewis and Clark Community Counseling Center (LCCCC). Second, revitalizing the child focus track to be more distinct from the adult track, which includes revamping the child focus courses (group counseling with children and treatment interventions for children and adolescents) and holding a section for practicum students that focuses more on youth. Third, revisiting the key assessments the PMHC and PMHC-A program uses and focusing on more robust program assessment methods.

While there are no set dates for some of these changes, program faculty hope to have a tenable plan for changing the course sequence in the Fall of 2024 and we are implementing a new assessment DRF in Taskstream starting in the Fall of 2023, as well as a child focus section at the LCCCC.

(10) Describe new or planned activities, modifications, or initiatives for the next year.

There will be several changes/modifications to the PMHC and PMHC-A programs for the 2023-24 academic year. Starting in the Fall of 2023, Dr. Rafe McCullough, in partnership with TransActive, will be supervising a section of practicum students that will focus on working with trans youth. The students assigned to this section will receive specialized training to provide culturally effective therapy for this marginalized population.

Additionally, program faculty will be revising the PQE and current Practicum/Intern Student evaluations, to be more simplified and reflective of the program's values. These changes will hopefully be in place by the Spring of 2024. In addition to these key evaluations, the 2023 Taskstream DRF will be simplified and updated with new rubrics for our key assessments. This change is to better control for missing data and reflect the new CACREP 2024 standards.

Lastly, program faculty began meeting twice a month in the Spring of 2023 and we will be continuing to do so for the entire 2023-24 academic year to better able discuss and implement the changes we hope to make.

In conclusion, the PMHC and PMHC-A program at Lewis and Clark College is one of the largest master's level counseling programs in the state of Oregon. We continue to be regarded as a quality program informed by the positive feedback from counseling internship sites/supervisors and employers of our graduates from community providers. The rise of telehealth services and the advent of AI chat bots entering the profession, poses some challenges for the counseling profession and counselor educators need to reflect a curriculum and educational process to best meet those challenges. I am proud to say that our current faculty and strategic plan are designed to do just that and that the quality education that we have been able to provide, will continue.