



2025 ANNUAL REPORT

November 2025

**COUNSELING AND
REHABILITATION PROGRAM**

**Department of Neuropsychiatry &
Behavioral Science**

School of Medicine – Columbia

University of South Carolina

COUNSELING AND REHABILITATION PROGRAM
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
2025 ANNUAL REPORT

The 2025 Annual Report presents an overview of the Counseling and Rehabilitation (C&R) Program's mission and objectives, which continue to guide the evaluation process; the results of our program evaluation; discussion of our findings; a presentation of subsequent program modifications that resulted from the process; and a discussion of other substantial program changes. Data are from 2024-2025, unless otherwise noted.

Executive Summary

The University of South Carolina School of Medicine's Counseling and Rehabilitation (C&R) Program continued its mission in 2024–2025 to enhance the quality of life for individuals with disabilities and those disadvantaged by cultural, educational, or economic factors. This year's report highlights growth, achievement, and innovation across education, scholarship, and service domains.

Program enrollment increased to 78 students, reflecting strong interest and steady expansion. Eight students graduated in 2024–2025, all of whom secured employment within six months—continuing the program's 100% employment rate for actively seeking graduates. Faculty introduced two new specialty practice areas—Clinical Addiction Counseling and Career Counseling—approved by the USC Board of Trustees and the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education. These additions, alongside the established Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling specialization, broadened opportunities for students and strengthened alignment with community and workforce needs.

Student performance remained high across all Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), with benchmarks met or exceeded in all areas. The National Counselor Examination (NCE) first-time pass rate reached 100%, reflecting strong preparation and effective curriculum delivery. Faculty continued refining assessment processes, including updated comprehensive exams, enhanced evaluation of ethics and diversity competencies, and the integration of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) into advising and supervision practices.

The program also advanced several key initiatives. The Clinic for Counseling and Assessment (CCA) was formally developed, supported by a \$199,998 Center for Rural and Primary Healthcare grant and a \$573,000 Duke Endowment award, to provide community counseling services while offering students hands-on training opportunities. The program also relocated to the School of Medicine–Columbia campus, improving access to interdisciplinary collaboration and medical education resources.

Faculty and students demonstrated robust engagement through presentations, publications, and community service. Notably, students and faculty presented at state and national conferences, and faculty secured significant grants to expand training and research in rural and addiction counseling. Advisory Board feedback and employer surveys affirmed high satisfaction with graduate preparedness, while student and alumni input guided ongoing improvements, particularly in areas such as licensure preparation and counseling with diverse populations.

Overall, the 2024–2025 academic year was marked by innovation, academic excellence, and deepened community partnerships. As the program prepares for CACREP reaccreditation under the 2024 standards and continues integrating its new specialty areas, it remains committed to cultivating ethical, skilled, and compassionate counseling professionals ready to serve South Carolina and beyond.

Mission and Program Objectives

Counseling and Rehabilitation Mission Statement

The **Mission** of the Counseling and Rehabilitation Program is to enhance the quality of life of persons who have physical or mental disabilities, including addictions, or who are disadvantaged by cultural differences and educational and economic impoverishment, through educational, scholarly, and service activities.

Counseling and Rehabilitation Program, with specialty in Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling Objectives

Program Objectives

Education

- To provide high quality professional **education** that includes classroom learning, field experiences, and other applied learning opportunities to equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary for successful, effective, and responsible participation in changing diverse state and national rehabilitation counseling environment. Specifically,
 - Education/Program Objective # 1. Students will demonstrate current knowledge and competencies required for successful practice in the field of professional counseling.
 - Education/Program Objective # 2 (Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling). Students will be able to demonstrate specialized clinical and technical knowledge in working with individuals with disabilities to achieve their personal, social, psychological, and vocational goals.
 - Education/Program Objective #2 (Clinical Addiction Counseling). Students will be able to demonstrate specialized clinical and technical knowledge in working with individuals with and without disabilities who experience substance-use disorders and addictions to achieve their personal, social, psychological, and vocational goals.
 - Education/Program Objective #2 (Career Counseling). Students will be able to demonstrate specialized clinical and technical knowledge in working with individuals with and without disabilities to build life skills and achieve their career goals and with businesses to promote workplace health and wellbeing.

Scholarship

- Through research and **scholarship** activities, to advance knowledge and understanding of the effects of disability on the lives of persons with disabilities, the effectiveness of programs

and services for people with disabilities, and the role of individuals with disabilities in society, the workplace, and the world.

Service

- To provide **consultation** and **training** to agencies and programs to enhance the abilities of their personnel serving disabled and disadvantaged persons in South Carolina and throughout the southeast.
- To provide rehabilitation **services** while offering students the opportunity for firsthand learning under the supervision of qualified, experienced professionals.
- To **support** the operations and activities of the Department of Neuropsychiatry and Behavioral Science, School of Medicine, and University

Respect for Diversity

- To actively demonstrate **respect** for cultural and individual diversity in areas of education, scholarship, and service.

Section 1. Results of the Evaluation

Section 1 includes the following data: (1) demographic and other characteristics of applicants, students, graduates; (2) vital statistics; (3) aggregate student assessment data including knowledge, skills, and dispositions; (4) systematic follow-up studies; and (5) external review.

1.1 Demographic and Other Characteristics of Applicants, Students, and Graduates

Applicant Data

	# Applications	Number Accepted	Number Matriculated
Fall 2024	120	51	33
Spring 2025	73	11	9
Total AY 24-25	183**	62	42
Fall 2023	51	39	24
Spring 2024	24	17	8
Total AY 23-24	64**	50**	32
Fall 2022	21	11	7
Spring 2023	4	2	2
Total AY 22-23	25	13	9
Fall 2021	14	12	7
Spring 2022	7	5	4
Total AY 21-22	21	17	11

**unduplicated applications

Applicant Demographic Data for AY 2024-2025

	# Applications N=183	Number Accepted N= 62	Number Matriculated N=42
Gender	Female-128 Male-55	Female- 52 Male- 10	Female- 34 Male- 8
Race/Ethnicity	African American- 87 Caucasian- 65 Hispanic- 3 Asian- 5 More than one- 16 Race/Ethnicity Unknown- 7	African American- 12 Caucasian- 43 Hispanic- 0 Asian- 0 More than one- 6 Race/Ethnicity Unknown- 1	African American- 9 Caucasian- 30 Hispanic- 0 Asian- 0 More than one- 2 Race/Ethnicity Unknown- 1
Age (average)	31.45 years old	30.56years old	29.69 years old
Age (range)	20 years to 68 years	22 years to 64 years	22 years to 64 years

Applicant Score Data

For the 2024-2025 academic year, the average scores for accepted students were as follows:

	Undergraduate GPA	GRE	MAT
AY 24-25	3.51	Approval by university to discontinue requirement of GRE	Approval by university to discontinue requirement of MAT
AY 23-24	3.45	Approval by university to discontinue requirement of GRE	Approval by university to discontinue requirement of MAT
AY 22-23	3.40	Writing: 3.25 Quantitative:143 Verbal: 146	413
AY 21-22	3.30	Writing: 4.3 Quantitative: 147 Verbal: 152	397

Student Data

	Number Enrolled	New students	Graduates
Fall 2024	69	33	4
Spring 2025	70	9	3
Total AY 24-25	78 (unduplicated)	42	7
Fall 2023	53	24	8

Spring 2024	52	8	4
Total AY 23-24	62 (unduplicated)	32	12
Fall 2022	45	7	0
Spring 2023	46	2	12
Total AY 22-23	48 (unduplicated)	9	12
Fall 2021	45	7	2
Spring 2022	46	5	7
Total AY 21-22	50 (unduplicated)	12	9

Student Demographic Data

	2024-2025	2023-2024	2022-2023
	Number Enrolled N= 78	Number Enrolled N= 62	Number Enrolled N= 48
Gender	Males- 12 (15%) Females- 66 (85%) Affirmed gender-0	Males- 8 (13%) Females- 53 (85%) Affirmed gender- 1(2%)	Males- 6 (13%) Females- 41 (85%) Affirmed gender- 1 (2%)
Race/Ethnicity	African American- 18 (23%) Caucasian- 51(65%) Hispanic- 2 (3%) Asian- 0 More than one- 6 (8%) Race Not Reported- 1 (1%)	African American- 17 (27%) Caucasian- 34 (55%) Hispanic- 2 (3%) Asian- 1 (2%) More than one- 8 (13%) Race Not Reported- 0	African American- 10 (21%) Caucasian- 31 (65%) Hispanic- 1 (2%) Asian- 1 (2%) More than one- 4 (8%) Race Not Reported- 1 (2%)
Age (average)	31	32	32

Graduation Data

- Eight (8) students graduated in the 2024-2025 academic year. All 8 (100%) found employment within 6 months of graduation.

	Number of Graduates	Number Employed at Graduation	Number Employed 6 Months After Graduation
Fall 2024	4	3	4
Spring 2025	3	3	3
Summer 2025	1	1	1
Total	8	7	8
Fall 2023	8	7	8
Spring 2024	4	3	4
Summer 2024	4	1	4
Total	16	11	16

Fall 2022	0	0	0
Spring 2023	12	10	11
Summer 2023	4	3	4
Total	16	13	15**
Fall 2021	2	2	2
Spring 2022	7	2	5
Summer 2022	1	1	1
Total	10	5	8**

** Number reflects students actively pursuing employment. **

Graduate Demographic Data

	2024-2025	2023-2024	2022-2023
	Number of Graduates N = 8	Number of Graduates N = 16	Number of Graduates N = 16
Gender	Female- 6 (75%) Male- 2 (25%) Affirmed gender- 0	Female- 13 Male- 2 Affirmed gender- 1	Female- 14 (87.5%) Male- 2 (12.5%)
Race/Ethnicity	Black/African American- 2 (25%) Caucasian- 6 (75%) Asian- 0 More Than One- 0 Race Not Reported- 0	Black/African American- 3 (18.75%) Caucasian- 10 (62.5%) Asian- 1 (6.25%) More Than One- 2 (12.5%) Race Not Reported- 0	African American- 3 (18.75%) Caucasian- 10 (62.5%) More Than One- 2 (12.5%) Race Not Reported- 1 (6.25%)
Age (average)	33	35	32

Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) scholarships

In 2022, the Counseling and Rehabilitation program wrapped up its most recent Department of Education RSA long-term training grant. Thirty-two students received awards through this grant; the last student who received funds through the RSA Grant graduated Fall 2024. The program continues to monitor RSA Grant opportunities that support students' education and our communities' rehabilitation service needs and goals. As such, a call for proposals was sent out by OSERS Fall 2025 for which the C&R program applied.

1.2 Vital Statistics

Program Graduates

- 2024-2025: 8 MA program graduates (60 credit hour degree)
- 2023-2024: 16 MA program graduates (60 credit hour degree)
- 2022-2023: 16 MA program graduates (60 credit hour degree)
- 2021-2022: 10 MA program graduates (60 credit hour degree)
- 2020-2021: 5 MA program graduates (60 credit hour degree)

Program Completion

For students who started the 60 credit-hour program in 2022-2023 (N=9):

- 4 graduated in 2.5 years
- 4 are on track to graduate in 3.5 - 4 years
- 1 left the program for non-academic reasons

For students who started the 60 credit-hour program in 2021-2022 (N=10):

- 7 graduated in 2.5 years
- 2 are on track to graduate in 3.5 - 4 years
- 1 left the program for non-academic reasons

For students who started the 60 credit-hour program in 2020-2021 (N=24):

- 16 graduated in 2.5 years
- 5 are on track to graduate in 3.5 - 4 years
- 3 left the program for non-academic reasons

For students who started the 60 credit-hour program in 2019-2020 (N=16):

- 4 graduated in 2.5 years
- 2 graduated in 2 years
- 1 graduated in 1.5 years
- 1 is on track to graduate in 3 years
- 4 are on track to graduate in 3.5 - 4 years
- 2 transferred to other professional programs
- 2 left the program for non-academic reasons

Certification

In 2024-2025, 1 program graduate took and passed the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) exam (100%). Not all program graduates seek this certification.

In 2023-2024, 1 of 2 (50%) program graduates took and passed the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) exam. The student who did not pass opted to not retake as it is not needed for the graduate's place of employment.

In 2022-2023, no program graduates reported taking the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) exam.

In 2021-2022, 1 of 1 (100%) program graduates took and passed the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) exam.

Licensure Examination

In 2024-2025, 7 of the 8 recent program graduates reported taking the National Counselor Examination (NCE), and of those who took it, all 7 (100%) passed the exam on their first attempt. Not all program graduates seek licensure.

In 2023-2024, 9 recent program graduates took the National Counselor Examination (NCE), and of those who took it, all (100%) passed the exam on their first attempt. Not all program graduates seek licensure.

In 2022-2023, 11 recent program graduates took the National Counselor Examination (NCE), and of those who took it, 10 (90.9%) passed the exam on their first attempt. Not all program graduates seek licensure.

In 2021-2022, 8 (100%) recent program graduates took and passed the National Counselor Examination (NCE). All 8 of these program graduates are seeking licensure (Note: 2021-2022 is the first year reporting this statistic in Annual Report).

Employment Outcomes

- Academic year 2024-2025: 100% of program graduates (N=8) who were actively seeking employment are employed. Four of 8 (50%) graduates are employed as professional counselors in rehabilitation agencies or community mental health centers. One graduate (12.5%) is working in higher education, and one (12.5%) is employed with a Sheriff's Office as well as part-time in a Chaplaincy position. The other two (25%) graduates are employed in private practice.
- Academic year 2023-2024: 100% of program graduates (N=16) who were actively seeking employment are employed. Eleven of 16 (69%) graduates are employed as professional counselors in rehabilitation agencies or community mental health centers. Five (31%) of the graduates are employed in private practice.
- Academic year 2022-2023: 100% of program graduates (N=15) who were actively seeking employment are employed. One (1) graduate opted to delay their job search. Eleven of 15 (73%) graduates are employed as rehabilitation counseling professionals in rehabilitation agencies or community mental health centers or practices. Two (2) graduates are employed in a school setting, one (1) is employed at a family community agency, and one (1) is self-employed.
- Academic year 2021-2022: 100% of program graduates (N=8) who were actively seeking employment are employed. Two (2) graduates opted to delay their job search. 6 of 8 employed graduates (75%) are employed as rehabilitation counseling professionals in rehabilitation agencies or community mental health centers. One (1) graduate is employed in a school setting, and one (1) is employed at a victims' advocacy agency.

1.3 Aggregate student assessment data including knowledge, skills, and dispositions

This section addresses the aggregate student assessment data, including knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions.

Student Learning Outcomes for 2024-2025

During the 2024-2025 AY, there were two new specialty practice areas added to the Counseling and Rehabilitation Program, clinical addiction counseling and career counseling. This section will include details from these specialty practice areas as well as the clinical rehabilitation counseling specialization.

The MA degree in Counseling and Rehabilitation has one (1) overarching program/educational goal, which focuses on the field of professional counseling (8 core areas). Also, there is a second program/educational goal that focuses on each specialty practice area.

The collection of Student Learning Outcome (SLOs) data coincides with the 60-credit hour MA program and alignment with our accrediting body's (CACREP) reporting requirements.

The expectation is that the program gathers and then reviews data on individual student performance over time focusing on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), as well as data on aggregate program performance (SLOs).

The data are separated into 12 Student Learning Outcomes for the eight Common Core content areas of Professional Counseling, and another two or three Student Learning Outcomes cover each Specialty area, Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling (3), Clinical Addiction Counseling (3), or Career Counseling (2). Each SLO has multiple measures. See [Appendix 1](#) for a summary and crosswalk of the overall assessment plan.

Summary Data for 2024-2025

Each SLO has multiple measures, ranging from two measures to four measures. Benchmarks for the measures are reported as the percentage of students who meet the success target.

For the eight Core areas, four core areas achieved 100% performance across all measures and four were met with outcome measures between 92.3%-100% across all points of measure. As in the previous year, our review revealed that results of less than 100% were related more to personal student factors than to academic performance factors.

- In the Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling Specialty area, performance was reported as the percentage of students who meet the success target specialization. One learning objective achieved 100% performance across all measures and the remaining SLOs scored between 90%-100% across measures. No changes were recommended in the SLOs related to the specialty practice area.
- For the Clinical Addiction Counseling and Career Counseling specialty practice areas, performance was positive overall. Learning objectives assessed for these two new areas were met at 100%.

All 12 SLOs, within the eight Core areas, met all measure criteria confirming that students could demonstrate knowledge and competencies required for successful practice in professional

counseling. In the specialty practice area SLOs, students demonstrated they met appropriate knowledge and competencies across all measures

- In the Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling Specialty area, all three SLOs met all measure criteria illustrating that students were able to demonstrate specialized knowledge in working with individuals with disabilities to achieve their personal, social, psychological, and vocational goals.
- In the Clinical Addiction Counseling Specialty area, all three SLOs met all measure criteria for the measures assessed illustrating that students were able to demonstrate clinical and technical knowledge in working with individuals with and without disabilities who experience substance-use disorders and addictions to achieve their personal, social, psychological, and vocational goals. Not all measures could be assessed since the specialty practice area began just this AY. One student transferred from the clinical rehabilitation counseling specialty and was ahead of peers who started in the Fall 2024. This student's performance was included in the overall review of outcomes for clinical addiction counseling.
- In the Career Counseling Specialty area, one SLO met all measure criteria illustrating that students were preliminarily able to demonstrate specialized knowledge in working with individuals with and without disabilities to build life skills and achieve their career goals and with businesses to promote workplace health and wellbeing. As this specialty practice area began Fall 2024, only one course in the specialization was taken by students.

During the faculty review of SLOs each semester, faculty closely examined any measure that did not achieve 100% performance. This year, there were no areas that scored less than 90%.

After the annual review 2022-23, the Practicum and Internship Coordinator developed an assignment for this AY that was included during Practicum focusing on dilemmas that may arise when working with clients at students' sites and applying an ethical decision-making model to work through the real dilemma. AY 2024-25 students seem to be utilizing an ethical decision-making model on their exam, demonstrating knowledge and application of an ethical decision-making model. Up through Fall 2024, faculty documented student success on the ethics component of the exam by recording whether students passed the overall section. Beginning in Spring 2025, however, faculty reviewers identified and assessed the specific ethics-related prompt within the exam to provide a more accurate measure of student learning outcomes (SLOs). This shift ensures that data reporting reflects students' mastery of ethical knowledge and decision-making skills in alignment with CACREP standards.

In RCON 711, diversity has been consistently integrated into coursework through counseling theories. With intentional focus during the past academic year, diversity has also been addressed in broader terms to support students in developing skills for working with diverse clients. This intentional approach has had positive outcomes, as students demonstrated increased awareness and application of multicultural concepts in both class discussions and practice activities.

Starting 2023-24 AY, students in RCON 725 are assigned to present and take an active role in teaching theories to their peers, which includes theories not covered by the text. Faculty will continue to monitor progress as reflected by the comprehensive exam scores on the career theories exam prompt. Through Fall 2024, faculty documented student success on the career

component of the exam by recording whether students passed the overall section. Beginning in Spring 2025, however, faculty reviewers identified and tracked the specific career-related question within the exam to provide a more accurate measure of student learning outcomes (SLOs). This shift ensures that data reporting reflects students' mastery of career development knowledge and application skills in alignment with CACREP standards.

The Counseling and Rehabilitation program has found that integrating students into groups during Learning Community Saturday (LCS) and Orientation is beneficial for community building and for promoting professional development through peer modeling. These experiences provide group hours for students unable to lead groups at their practicum or internship sites. The LCS and Orientation groups provide a mechanism to engage in group counseling/group work, leadership, and supervised clinical practice, thus ensuring that students demonstrate competency in facilitating groups within diverse contexts.

During the 2023-24 AY, the faculty member who teaches the NPSY 758 course, detailed including clinical triage reports to prioritize client specific needs, determination of order of treatment, understanding of level(s) of care as it relates to comorbidity, differential diagnosis, and/or exacerbated symptoms toward enhanced development of clinical writing competence. Skill development in this area will continue to be monitored, but there was improvement that was noted in the Spring and Summer sections of the course. This AY (2024-25), NPSY 758 in-class activities were further streamlined to reflect better utility in the field with more application and reflective of the DSM-5-TR and societal changes for effective practice.

The two new specialty practice areas were added to the Counseling and Rehabilitation program and began Fall 2024. Faculty will continue to assess the utility of the courses designed or assigned to these new specialties for assessing student learning and skill development.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The C&R program allows students to matriculate in both Fall and Spring semesters and to attend as either part-time or full-time students. Without a cohort model, aggregate data does not always match individual student data. The program faculty systematically collects Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for individual students across time.

In addition to enrolling students in fall and spring semesters, students may attend part-time or full-time. While this flexibility meets program students' needs, it also presents challenges as to how faculty can collect data related to key performance indicators for individual students at multiple points in the curriculum. Faculty record KPI information during our bi-annual disposition meetings and then review the KPIs with students during the Spring semester to ensure that all feedback related to academic progress is formally presented to each student at least once per year.

Due to the primarily virtual nature of contact with students, we continue to seek the most efficient and effective mechanism by which to provide and manage copies of the feedback. Program faculty review the information via shared screen using a meeting platform (e.g., WebEx).

This programmatic review has proven fruitful. For example, during the program's review of KPIs in Spring 2025, it was learned that two students, during their RCON 711: Rehabilitation Counseling Theories and Practice course in Fall 2024 did not complete the Adlerian Lifestyle

Assessment assignment. While not completing the assignment does not irreparably impact grades for the course, the assignment addresses a KPI. Therefore, faculty discussed this issue and determined that it was required for the students to complete it successfully prior to being eligible to enter their next skills-based course.

Comprehensive Examination Data

Summarized Results: In 2024-2025, students did well on the Comprehensive Examination overall. We had a 100% pass rate overall. Our first-time pass rate (N=9) was 55.5%, with 45.5% of students returning to take one or more sections. This iterative process is designed to be an intentional part of the learning process, providing students who have not yet fully developed their knowledge and skills with the opportunity to further explore the material and to participate in a different case study. This formal process allows students to gather formative feedback on areas for further growth to address those areas and reflect professional competence.

Faculty Discussion: Revision of the comprehensive exam took place in Spring 2024 with new cases and review of the examination prompts. The new cases and updated prompts were piloted Summer 2024. Faculty will continue to monitor the exam as a measure of students' demonstrated knowledge and competencies necessary for practice in the field of professional counseling.

Clinical Evaluation Data

Internship students, as a mechanism to gauge their clinical case competency, are required to develop case conceptualizations that include how mental health conditions impact the counseling and/ or rehabilitation process. Competency is assessed based on students earning a score of "Satisfactory" or higher on the case conceptualization assignment. This assignment focuses on individuals with serious mental illnesses and includes an evaluation of the student's ability to critically assess a psychiatric diagnosis. During reporting period, 11 internship students, depending on their enrollment status, successfully met the goal by accurately describing the impact of mental health conditions on key areas of functioning, including interpersonal relationships, employment, and independent living. Each student earned a grade of "Satisfactory" on their first attempt, with all also performing well on the section requiring evaluation of the client's psychiatric diagnosis.

Dispositions Data

Assessment Process

Faculty assess student dispositions using an adapted process based on the work of Spurgeon, Gibbons, and Cochran (2012). Dispositions include commitment, interpersonal competence, openness, respect, integrity, and self-awareness. Professional dispositions are assessed 2 times per year, in the Fall and Spring semesters. Each disposition is rated on a 3-point continuum of Growth Needed, Developing Well, and Exceptional. Students are rated according to what would be expected of them during the semester in which they are enrolled. That is, a first semester student is not compared to what would be expected of a practicum or internship student.

In addition to faculty review of dispositions, each student completes a self-assessment of dispositions. This "two-step" iterative process is designed to help students to calibrate their own

professional and personal development monitoring skills. Designated faculty members meet individually with students to compare the faculty and student assessments and identify areas for growth and continued improvement. This process for review of dispositions is intentionally separate from academics and is not graded. Rather, students reflect on their own development, rate themselves, and receive critical feedback in key professional dispositional areas in a setting that maximizes adult learning capacities.

Summary of 2024-2025 Results:

As in previous years, students continue to do well regarding dispositions, with most students receiving ratings of Developing Well across all six characteristics. Ratings of Exceptional are reserved for rare instances in which a student demonstrates a particular dispositional characteristic beyond what would be expected of a developing counseling professional. On average, 10-15% of students receive one or more ratings of Exceptional. Similarly, on average, approximately 10% of students receive one or more ratings of Growth Needed. As in years past, in 2024-2025, most students who received ratings of Growth Needed had rated themselves similarly and/or were receptive to the feedback from faculty. During this AY, about 15% of students were given a rating of exceptional in at least one area during one of the rating periods. This indicated that students were making incredible efforts to work on their personal and professional development. Again, this year, the *commitment* category was rated highest for many of these students, highlighting their “investment in learning; development of counselor identity; advocacy; professional excellence; civic engagement; collaboration; scholar/practitioner; acting on feedback.”

To address remediation, the program faculty members meet with the student to collaboratively create a Professional Development Plan (PDP) with the student. Based on the framework of the Professional Development Plan presented by faculty from Youngstown State University and with consultation from Dr. Protivnak of Youngstown State University, the C&R program faculty created a procedure outline for developing Counseling and Rehabilitation Program Professional Development Plans to assist faculty and students develop collaborative remediation plans designed to promote student success and support forward progression in the program. In addition to being presented in the Student Handbook, the PDP is introduced during the program's Annual Orientation and Returning Student meeting as an opportunity for students to further professional and dispositional growth (rather than a punitive process). Students are informed that these plans may be initiated by faculty, students, or a combination of faculty and a student.

The review of dispositions is linked to the formal annual Spring evaluation process in which students receive feedback about the development of knowledge and skills (i.e., key performance indicators) and dispositions.

1.4 Exit Interview

To capture current contact information and other helpful information for program continuous improvement efforts, the C&R program captures student feedback in an exit interview with each student in the semester in which they are preparing to graduate or exit the program. The exit interview is divided into two parts. Part 1 is designed to capture contact information, reason for exiting the program, current employment, use of student services, and professional organizational memberships. Part 2 is a survey designed to gather information about students'

perspectives regarding their learning related to several SLOs areas (professional counseling orientation, theories, human growth and development, ethics, working with diverse clients, career counseling, basic counseling skills, research, and disability, MH & addictions).

All 11 graduates completed both Part 1 and 2 of the exit interviews. On Part 2, graduates rated their learning as 5.9 or above on a scale from 1 to 7. Means range 5.6 to 6.91 (above avg. to very high).

The lower scores were in relation to Career Theories and Human Growth and Development:

- *Although Career Assessment was not my favorite class, I still earned an extensive amount of information that has assisted me as a professional and will continue to provide insight into the future as a counselor.*
- *I'll be honest I am not as interested in this aspect of counseling so I do not feel I got as much out of this portion of the program. That being said, I was given the basic tools and resources to understand career counseling, I just did not dive as deeply into these topics. I do believe it is necessary, however, as I have already come across so many instances where clients need support with employment.*
- *I feel the least comfortable with Career Theories. I don't think they felt relevant in terms of why we were learning them and the application or background of the theories never held much impact in terms of pushing forward with this area.*
- *The "Human Growth and Development" course was instrumental in providing the foundational knowledge needed to understand how individuals grow and develop over the lifespan. Each class we were challenged to work with clients (hypothetically) that were of different ages, ethnicities, etc.*
- *I believe the program does a good job of building off the basics from undergraduate development classes and relating human growth and development to the counseling field.*
- *The required Human Growth and Development course focused only on the development from birth through adolescence. I would have appreciated more attention to the developmental changes in all stages of adulthood.*
- *The counseling skills across the lifespan weren't very prominent in the program.*

Higher scores 6.6 and 6.9 were in the areas of Professional Orientation, Intentional Interviewing and Basic Skills, and Ethics.

- *Learning and enhancing basic and advanced counseling skills were another foundational element of this program. Having practice in class and during internship and practicum ensured that I was developing well in areas that influence the therapeutic relationship between the counselor and client. The professors in the Rehabilitation Counseling program all provided exceptional, truthful, and constructive feedback in skills development throughout the entire program.*
- *I am confident in my counseling skills and feel that I have a solid foundation to work with.*

- *The Rehabilitation Counseling program provided me theoretical orientations through the classes that I enrolled in as well as experiential learning opportunities through internship and practicum. The disposition process also enhanced my professional counseling orientation. Having professors that provide excellent guidance, constructive criticism, and tutelage also enhanced my professional counseling orientation as a graduate of the Rehabilitation Counseling program.*
- *This program has done a great job in enhancing my professional counseling orientation through experience and exploration.*
- *Although there was a class designated for ethics, "Ethics in Rehabilitation Counseling," ethics was incorporated into every class throughout the program. Identifying the ethical principles and thoroughly assessing each situation through those lenses was a critical component of ethical decision making. Being aware of laws, statutes, and state regulations in tandem with the code of ethics was also an important element of this program that encouraged the analyzation of ethical principles in ethical decision making as a counselor.*
- *The way the specific class on ethics was delivered helped me to take a new perspective on handling ethical dilemmas as they arise. In addition, having ethical decision making be a through line throughout the program from that point forward was helpful to use across many different situations and applications.*

Graduates were also asked to comment on the strengths of the faculty and program.

- *I would like to shoutout Dr. Richardson!! Her patience, warmness, and knowledge fostered a nurturing environment for throughout practicum and internship.*
- *The faculty are the most valuable individuals of the Rehabilitation Counseling Program. They were really the best faculty that I have worked with in any program that I have pursued. I have learned so much from them.*
- *The most valuable part of my experience was getting to bounce ideas off of my peers in the learning community. I learned so much from their "real-life" experiences that just can't be taught in a textbook.*
- *The entire faculty has been so supportive and encouraging. They truly want the students to succeed and will do what they can to facilitate that success. There is a cohesiveness among the faculty that flows down to the students, which is evident in the interactions of the resident and distance learners on LCS. The team approach to learning has prepared me to enter the field of counseling and utilized a treatment team approach.*
- *Shout out for Dr. Richardson she has been an amazing teacher! The most valuable experience has been the relationships formed with other students and professors in the program. It really helped us stay consistent and focused. Another valuable experience was the mock client sessions. It was been very beneficial!*
- *Very great experience that focused on developing insight into myself which is essential in this field. I also enjoyed the community and friendship that I have been able to gather as a result of this program*
- *Most valuable part of my experience would be being President of CRSA and being a Graduate Assistant / Teaching Assistant with my PhD. program.*

- *I absolutely loved my Addictions and Group classes and also found Human Growth and Development to be helpful! I also want to take a moment to appreciate the format of the Group class! Additionally, I want to thank Dr. Walsh for his method of teaching. It really aligned with my learning style and I continue to think about the experiences introduced and use techniques he taught to this day.*

Finally, graduates were asked to provide additional feedback related to the faculty and program's growth areas.

- *I have felt like larger cohorts don't seem to feel as connected to the program and faculty as smaller cohorts have felt. Perhaps that's not terrible, but the relationships and support of faculty stand out to me as making a huge impact on my experience and success.*
- *I believe that having comps being done earlier might be more beneficial for the students. Areas such as careers and disability was studied years prior to taking the exam. On top of taking licensure exams making the whole process of studying very strenuous in addition to gathering hours for internship*
- *None that I can think of right now.*
- *I felt I often had the same professors that did not quite line up with my learning style. It would be nice to have more flexibility in choosing which professors to learn from that align with individual learning styles. Also, I felt like a lot of what I learned from the textbooks was taught in class at times when it would have been more helpful to learn how to apply learnings from the text to actual counseling situations.*

Summary

A few students from this group of graduates were the last to not have the option to take RCON 680 as part of their program of study to meet their human growth and development requirement. The score in this area was the lowest at 5.9/7. The faculty will continue to monitor this area and integrate human growth concepts in other courses. The faculty also discussed ways to use data to add more diversity to the Learning Community Saturday events to address the "life after school" identified in this AY's exit interviews.

1.5 Systematic follow-up

Site Supervisor Survey Data

The 2024 survey of site supervisors was completed in January 2025 – February 2025, and the results are attached. Of the 15 site supervisors who were surveyed, six individual site supervisors responded (a 40% return rate). All site supervisors reported working with Internship students, where they may have also served as the site supervisor for students during their Practicum.

Note: One respondent responded to the survey twice, so numbers in each response category may not match total responses in all cases.

In the first section of the survey, site supervisors were asked to rate the overall quality of several items on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being unsatisfactory and 10 being outstanding. Here are the average ratings:

- Access to faculty members: Average rating of 9.65
- Clarity of USC documentation process: Average rating of 9.82
- Ease of completing required USC documentation: Average rating of 9.65

In the second section of the survey, site supervisors were asked to respond to several questions regarding the MA program. The first question asked site supervisors for recommendations for the educational preparation of practicum/internship students. Site supervisors responded with the following:

- *Was very impressed with the educational prep provided to the student I worked with this year and have been pleased to see such a dedication within your program to diversify opportunities for learning provided to your students. I think you all are doing a great job!*
- *I believe you all prepare your students really well.*
- *My experience with the student was positive. She was extremely prepared.*

Site supervisors were also asked to comment on the strengths of the faculty and program. Site supervisors gave the following responses:

- *The program's research opportunities and emphasis on making the most of practicum and internship learning has stood out to me as both unique and integral to the education provided. Excellent communication and accessibility.*
- *I was very impressed by the level of clinical documentation from the student. They had a good grasp on diagnosis, writing treatment plans and chart notes.*
- *The breadth of their training.*
- *The faculty we have worked with have been great. I am pleased with all the students we have worked with.*
- *The program is well rounded and gives students the opportunity to understand the world around them and the individuals they will serve.*

Finally, site supervisors were asked to provide additional comments related to the weaknesses, or areas for growth, of the faculty and program. Site supervisors offered the following responses:

- *I am happy to continue being able to contribute to the growth of your students and feel privileged to see the program grow and thrive as well. I feel like your program is a model for what a masters should look and feel like.*
- *Poor collaboration and communication at times in ensuring student was on track with completing requirements for the program. Other programs use on-line platforms for documentation and this would have been helpful in completing required forms.*
- *More students our way!*
- *Great program.*

Summary

Lunch and Learn opportunities continued throughout the 2024–2025 academic year to give students exposure to practicum and internship placement sites. The Practicum/Internship Information Packet was updated, and a separate Site Supervisor Handbook was developed to offer additional support and clarify expectations for site supervisors. Faculty also explored online platforms for tracking and maintaining information related to curriculum mapping and experiential learning. The School of Medicine – Columbia currently uses the Oasis System for its Medical Education Programs, and C&R will collaborate with the assessment office during the 2025–2026 academic year to implement curriculum maps and experiential learning supports using this software.

Employer Survey Data

The 2024 Annual Employer Survey was sent out to 17 Employers. We sent the survey link to each graduate/employee and asked them to follow up with their supervisor on completion. Responses were received from 3 Employers. Reminders were sent out at one and three weeks. That brings the response rate on the electronic survey to 17%. This was less than expected.

Consistent with Counselor Education practice, the Employer Survey is designed to measure Employers level of satisfaction in areas of Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes. Respondents are asked to rate from a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being Most Satisfied and 1 being Least Satisfied.

In the areas of Knowledge: Counseling Techniques and Theories, Disability and Working with Diverse Populations, and Knowledge of Appropriate Interventions with Diverse Clients, respondents rated 5 points out of a possible 5 points, indicating Satisfaction with this area. In other Knowledge areas, the average rating was 4.67 out of a possible 5 points. These included areas such as Role of the Rehab Counselor, Disability Related Information, as well as Vocational Issues and the World of Work.

In the Skills areas, all respondents rated their level of Satisfaction at an average of 4.67 out of a possible 5 points, indicating high satisfaction with employee preparation in terms of skills. All respondents reported scores of 5 points out of a possible 5 points in the Skill areas of Use of Culturally Appropriate Interventions with Diverse Clients.

In Attitude areas, all respondents rated their level of Satisfaction as Most Satisfied in areas such as: Workplace Attitude, Attitudes Towards Persons with Disabilities, and Attitudes Towards Persons with Diverse Cultures/Backgrounds, and Attitudes Towards Co-Workers. In the area of Attitudes Towards Supervisors, the response average was 4.67 out of a possible 5 points.

Employers noted areas of strength in Employees as follows:

- *Willingness to advocate for her clients, willingness to manage her caseload with ethical regard, and manage all responsibilities in a caring, professional way.*
- *Openness, willingness to implement different approaches and strategies.*
- *Personable willingness to learn*

Summary

Faculty will continue to seek ways to evolve and improve processes to get returns on employers' surveys. CEs are being offered now to site supervisors, graduates, and employers. It is hoped this way of providing community service will support an increase rate of return of employer surveys.

Alumni/Graduate Survey Data

Summarized Results: The faculty met and examined the results of the 2023-20224 Survey of Program Graduates at the March 4, 2025, program meeting.

Of the 17 MA graduates who were surveyed, 6 graduates responded, which represents a 35% response rate.

Program graduates were first asked to evaluate MA courses in terms of how much that information is utilized in their professional settings. The average rating for this section was 3.69 of 4 points (compared to 3.68 of 4 points last year). Most areas were rated at 4 out of 4 points. The area not rated as highly was Research, which was rated as 3 out of 4 points. This is consistent with a Professional Preparation program as graduates' employment roles at the master's level are less likely to involve research duties.

Second, Graduates were asked to rate how core courses helped to prepare them as professional counselors. Graduates seemed broadly satisfied in this area, ranking many areas 3.75 out of a possible 4 points. Areas that averaged rated at 3.2 out of 4 points were Understanding State and Federal VR Programs, Occupational Analysis, Supported Employment and Job Development. Items that averaged 3.3 out of 4 points were Gender Issues, Workplace Accommodations, Job Placement/Development, and Addressing Family Issues in Counseling. The lowest reported score was LGBTQ+ Issues at 2.85. It is worth noting that some graduates were not in positions that required several of these lower rated areas.

One data trend of note was that all graduates rated Counseling related content highest of all, with 4.0 for Active Listening and Counseling and 3.85 for Group counseling. Other Counseling related areas reported at 3.7 out of 4 points, which was like last year's rating of 3.7 out of 4 points. This has been an area of focus these past two years, and it appears to have been successful.

The survey graduates also rated how they perceive their specialization coursework and field experiences prepared them for their current employment. The average rating for this section ticked up this year to 4 of 4 points, compared to 3.85 of 4 points last year. This is thought to be the result of intentional and deliberate work by the Practicum and Internship Coordinator.

For the program graduates surveyed, the average rating of overall experiences within the program was 4.0 on a 4-point scale (compared to 3.75 of 4 last year). Most (5) items shared the highest rating of 4.0, while the remaining items averaged 3.75 out of 4.

Graduates were also asked to provide feedback on which program activities seemed of greatest value. Selected comments below:

- *The graduate Assistantship work and presentations, Learning Communities*
- *The hands on practice of counseling techniques with peers, mock clients and professors.*
- *I valued the practices that we did with our classmates and other students within the program. I gathered a lot of insightful information from other's counseling styles which was beneficial to me.*
- *Student led discussions, application projects/papers, in-class practices and feedback, video analysis and feedback.*
- *Group counseling, Addictions counseling, internship*
- *Theories, making in vivo videos, medical psychosocial aspects, learning community*

Students were also asked if they felt that additional training with any given population may have proven helpful.

- *Families and family counseling interventions*
- *Children*
- *Teens*
- *LGBTQ+ and BIPOC populations*

Graduates were also asked what suggestions they may have on how the program may improve:

- *Less focus on conducting research. More focus on how to understand and utilize research professionally. Promoting more independence by encouraging independent work.*
- *More guidance/support toward the end of the program around navigating licensure, job search, and life transition. It'd be nice to learn more in-depth regarding counseling theories, but I recognize timewise that is impractical and is why CE is important!*

Students were asked to evaluate the adequacy of University Resources. Students reported general satisfaction with university resources, averaging 3.5 out of a possible 4 points. Students were asked to evaluate the adequacy of University Resources. Students reported general satisfaction with university resources, averaging 3.5 out of a possible 4 points.

Summary

Graduates recommended that additional training in working with families, children, teens, and diverse populations, including LGBTQ+ and BIPOC clients, would have been beneficial. They also suggested program improvements such as placing less emphasis on conducting original research and more on understanding and applying research in professional practice, encouraging greater independence through self-directed work, and providing more structured support at the end of the program to assist with licensure preparation, the job search process, and life transitions. While some expressed interest in deeper exploration of counseling theories, they recognized that time constraints make this challenging and acknowledged the value of

continuing education for ongoing professional development. While faculty want students to be informed consumers of research for practice, understanding the process and application are key to that understanding. Given the shift to have RCON 702 students to conduct and then present their research at LCS, faculty will continue to gauge feedback in this area. The faculty agree that graduates can explore more counseling theories and interventions or delve deeper into a particular theory after graduation. It is our desire to help cultivate the lifelong learner who strives to learn and grow throughout their professional career. The Counseling and Rehabilitation program faculty offered Family and Addictions course during AY 2024-25 as part of the new Clinical Addictions Counseling, which students in other specialty practice areas may take as their elective. The faculty will track the prompt asking about additional training with any given population.

Student Evaluation of Site Supervisor Survey Data

Each student evaluated the perceived effectiveness of their site supervisor at the end of their practicum and internship as part of the Agency Placement Evaluation. This year, all students (12 in practicum; 10 in internship) rated their experiences with their site supervisors. The average ratings ranged from 8.75 to 9.37 each semester on a scale from 1 (unsatisfactory) to 10 (outstanding), with an overall average of 9.03, reflecting consistently high levels of satisfaction throughout the year.

Summary

Students consistently noted that their site supervisors provided helpful and supportive guidance during the field experiences. The Practicum and Internship Coordinator worked closely with students and site supervisors throughout the field experiences, which worked to build and strengthen collaborative opportunities.

1.6 Additional external review

CACREP Accreditation

The program's accreditation was formally reviewed and determined at CACREP's January 2021 board meeting. From CACREP site visitor feedback, the Counseling and Rehabilitation Program began two new specialty practice areas during AY 2024-25, Clinical Addiction Counseling and Career Counseling. These specialty practice areas were approved by the USC Board of Trustees (2024, February 26) and the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE; 2024, April 10).

The CACREP Board adopted the 2024 CACREP Standards at its February 2023 meeting, which went into effect July 2024. The Counseling and Rehabilitation Program used AY 2024-25 to start updating all areas of the program to meet the 2024 CACREP Standards. Faculty reviewed all syllabi, both core and specialty practice area syllabi, and updated course assignments to include the new standards to be used starting Fall 2025. It is expected that all accredited programs to comply with the standards by July 1, 2026. The C&R program will use AY 2025-26 to develop a self-study to bring all specialty practice areas under one accreditation cycle. This process will ensure that we comply with the 2026 deadline.

Counseling and Rehabilitation Advisory Board Data

The function of the Advisory Board is threefold: It serves as a primary external review of our program. In addition to this vital program evaluation function, the Advisory Board is intricately linked to two of our program objectives. Specifically, the presence of students and professional representatives of private, government, and public agencies helps us to achieve effective and responsible participation in a changing state and national environments as they relate counseling and rehabilitation. In addition to advising the program, the Advisory Board also requests consultation and training as specific needs present themselves. This year, the Advisory Board met in January 2025 and June 2025.

Highlights of the 2024-2025 Advisory Board process:

- Rising demand and complexity of services – Agencies are experiencing increased needs across multiple sectors (mental health, substance use, vocational rehabilitation, disability services) with co-occurring disorders and generational trauma being major themes.
- Expanding roles and collaboration – Counselors, peer support specialists, and other professionals are being called into nontraditional settings (schools, jails, workplaces, rural communities), highlighting the importance of interprofessional collaboration and evolving scopes of practice.
- Technology and access challenges – While AI, VR, and broadband initiatives offer promise, barriers such as reimbursement, funding gaps, and low digital literacy—especially among youth with disabilities remain significant.

Ideas from Advisory Board members included:

- Training and professional development initiatives – Create workshops, panels, and school-based trainings focused on co-occurring disorders, disability accommodations, assistive technology, trauma, and ACEs to equip professionals working with youth and underserved populations.
- Integration of new service models – Explore adding program components such as coping with trauma after suicide, grief counseling, and peer support roles, while leveraging Medicaid/Medicare reimbursement opportunities to expand counselor career pathways.
- Community-focused technology efforts – Partner with organizations like Palmetto Care Connections to increase digital literacy, expand access to broadband, and incorporate technology responsibly in rural and disability-serving contexts.

Discussion: Overall, the Board highlighted both pressing needs in our communities. Agencies are grappling with increasing demand, particularly related to co-occurring disorders, trauma, and the growing needs of individuals with disabilities. C&R faculty discussed ways to continue to bring information to our students to help prepare them for the world of work as well as the larger community through speaker series events, lunch & learn events, and sharing partner information in the newsletter.

Section 2. Discussion of Findings

This year's Program Evaluation process yielded some key insights:

The previous year's Site Supervisor survey yielded the recommendation that students need to determine how clinical rehabilitation counseling looks in their elected site for practicum and/or internship, which may require the student to find ways to observe a day in the facility before accepting the site. To that end, Lunch and Learn opportunities continued throughout the 2024–2025 academic year to provide students with exposure to a variety of practicum and internship placement sites. One recommendation was for clearer information and an online mechanism for submitting supervision paperwork. The Practicum/Internship Information Packet was updated, and a separate Site Supervisor Handbook was developed to offer additional support and clarify expectations for site supervisors. Faculty also explored online platforms for tracking and maintaining information related to curriculum mapping and experiential learning. The School of Medicine – Columbia currently uses the Oasis System for its Medical Education Programs, and C&R will collaborate with the assessment office during the 2025–2026 academic year to implement curriculum maps and experiential learning supports using this software.

The faculty again noted the lower-than-expected return rate this year from employers of the employer surveys. Faculty will continue to seek ways to evolve and improve processes to get returns on employers' surveys. CEs are being offered now to site supervisors, graduates, and employers. It is hoped this way of providing community service will support an increase rate of return of employer surveys.

Graduates recommended that additional training in working with families, children, teens, and diverse populations, including LGBTQ+ and BIPOC clients, would have been beneficial. They also suggested program improvements such as placing less emphasis on conducting original research and more on understanding and applying research in professional practice, encouraging greater independence through self-directed work, and providing more structured support at the end of the program to assist with licensure preparation, the job search process, and life transitions. While some expressed interest in deeper exploration of counseling theories, they recognized that time constraints make this challenging and acknowledged the value of continuing education for ongoing professional development. While faculty want students to be informed consumers of research for practice, understanding the process and application are key to that understanding. Given the shift to have RCON 702 students to conduct and then present their research at LCS, faculty will continue to gauge feedback in this area. The faculty agree that graduates can explore more counseling theories and interventions or delve deeper into a particular theory after graduation. It is our desire to help cultivate the lifelong learner who strives to learn and grow throughout their professional career. The Counseling and Rehabilitation program faculty offered Family and Addictions course during AY 2024-25 as part of the new Clinical Addictions Counseling, which students in other specialty practice areas may take as their elective. The faculty will track the prompt asking about additional training with any given population.

As in previous years, students continue to do well regarding dispositions, with most students receiving ratings of Developing Well across all six characteristics. Ratings of Exceptional are reserved for rare instances in which a student demonstrates a particular dispositional characteristic beyond what would be expected of a developing counseling professional. On

average, 10-15% of students receive one or more ratings of Exceptional. Similarly, on average, approximately 10% of students receive one or more ratings of Growth Needed. As in years past, in 2024-2025, most students who received ratings of Growth Needed had rated themselves similarly and/or were receptive to the feedback from faculty. During this AY, about 15% of students were given a rating of exceptional in at least one area during one of the rating periods. This indicated that students were making incredible efforts to work on their personal and professional development. Again, this year, the commitment category was rated highest for many of these students, highlighting their “investment in learning; development of counselor identity; advocacy; professional excellence; civic engagement; collaboration; scholar/practitioner; acting on feedback.”

Student Learning Outcome data were positive and indicated that students are doing well in acquiring key knowledge and skills. No substantial changes have been warranted, though the comprehensive exams were reviewed and updated. The new comprehensive exams assess integration of knowledge and description of skills-based understanding.

Overall, the C&R faculty expressed satisfaction with both the summative outcomes and formative processes of the program. Program evaluation efforts will continue to identify areas for growth and improvement, which will be addressed as the program evolves, particularly with the addition of the two new specialty practice areas. With continued program expansion, faculty recognized the importance of researching and investing in an assessment management system to better support C&R courses and enhance students' practical learning experiences. Over AY 2025-26 we will integrate C&R processes with the Oasis System used with the SOM-C ME program and assess its efficacy for our needs.

The 2025 Annual Report will be presented and discussed with the Counseling and Rehabilitation Program Advisory Board at its January 2026 meeting.

Section 3. Recent and Subsequent Program Modifications

The review of incoming data throughout the year resulted in several program actions and modifications.

3.1 Comprehensive Exam

In 2024-2025, the program implemented the revised comprehensive exam following the faculty review conducted last year. The updated case studies and refined prompts now reflect current issues in counseling and rehabilitation practice, providing students with clearer, more relevant scenarios in which to demonstrate their knowledge, critical thinking, and clinical competence. These revisions have strengthened the exam's alignment with program learning objectives and enhanced its role as a comprehensive measure of student readiness for professional practice.

3.2 Specialty Practice Areas

After being approved by the USC Board of Trustees (2024, February 26) and the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE; 2024, April 10), during AY 2023-24, the Counseling and Rehabilitation Program welcomed new students to the Clinical Addictions Counseling and Career Counseling specialty practice areas Fall 2024.

Information about all three of the program specialty practice areas is listed on the C&R program website and outlined in the *2024-2025 Student Handbook*. The Counseling and Rehabilitation Program will begin the self-study process to bring all three specialty practice areas under one accreditation cycle. The self-study process will take place during AY 2025-26.

3.3 New Course Offerings

As the C&R program initiated its two new specialty practice areas, clinical addiction counseling and career counseling, there were new courses added to the schedule. AY 2024-25 unveiled the following new courses:

RCO 701: Foundations in Addictions and Treatment in Counseling Examines the structure and application of theories of addiction, techniques, strategies, and resources for dealing with a broad range of addictive behavior, including substance related and process, or behavioral, focused, and the environmental, social, and cultural contexts related to addiction. (Taught Fall 2024)

RCO 712: Addiction and the Family Examines theories and principles of family systems and systems-based approaches as applied to working with people with substance use disorders and/or addictive behaviors and their families. (Taught Fall 2024 and Spring 2025)

RCO 703: Foundations in Career Counseling Introduction to the origin and evolution of career counseling as well as the social, cultural, and political issues, trends, and organizational variables that impact the field. Presents the role and functions, scope of practice, and practice settings of career counselors. (Taught Fall 2024)

3.4 Field Placements and Partnerships

This year, the C&R program has implemented updates to our Practicum and Internship Information Packet. These include revised appendices to reflect the new concentrations in Clinical Addictions and Career Counseling, the addition of a live supervision evaluation form for supervisors, new audio recording policy, and the consolidation of materials by removing the separate Site Supervisor Handbook. Language throughout the packet was modified to ensure inclusiveness for both students and site supervisors.

We have continued to prioritize in-person site visits at placement locations, which strengthens relationships with our community partners. Site supervisors have consistently expressed appreciation for these visits, which foster collaboration, support midterm evaluations, and provide opportunities for facility tours, enriching the field experience for both students and supervisors.

This year, we have also expanded our network with 21 new partnerships, offering students a broader range of experiential learning opportunities. These placements span private practices, hospital settings, outpatient services, and agencies serving diverse populations, including individuals with addictions, college students, and those who are Deaf or blind from various cultural backgrounds. In addition, we have reestablished partnerships with key agencies such as Veterans Affairs, MUSC, and Prisma Health. This expansion enhances the practical training experiences available to our students, further contributing to their professional growth and ensuring they are well-prepared to meet the evolving needs of the counseling profession.

Section 4. Other Substantial Program Changes

4.1 CACREP Accreditation

The program's accreditation was formally reviewed and determined at CACREP's January 2021 board meeting and accreditation was granted through March 2029 for the clinical rehabilitation counseling specialty. During AY 2024-25, the C&R program prepared the *2016 Standards Monitoring/Midcycle Report*, which was due to the CACREP Board September 2025.

Updates to the CACREP Standards were approved by CACREP Board February 2023 to go into effect July 2024. All accredited programs are expected to comply with the 2024 CACREP Standards by July 1, 2026. The Counseling and Rehabilitation Program faculty used AY 2024-25 to update all areas to meet the 2024 CACREP Standards as they prepared the mid-cycle report. All course syllabi, core courses and specialty practice area syllabi, were reviewed and updated to reflect the 2024 CACREP Standards.

4.2 Visiting Professor

To support the program's continued growth and strengthen instructional capacity, a visiting professor was hired during the academic year. This appointment provided additional expertise in the program's specialty areas, enhanced course offerings, and contributed to student learning and faculty collaboration. The visiting professor brought expertise in counselor education and supervision as well as addiction counseling.

4.3 Development of the Clinic for Counseling and Assessment (CCA)

During AY 2024-2025, the C&R program endeavored to develop an onsite student operated, faculty directed clinic. The mission of the University of South Carolina School of Medicine Clinic for Counseling and Assessment (CCA) is to help individuals, families, and communities identify and utilize their strengths, overcome life's challenges and barriers, and reach their full potential. Over AY 2024-2025, the CCA Operations Manual was developed and went through quality assurance review at the Departmental, School, and University level.

The CCA will begin providing services during AY 2025-26. The CCA will provide counseling services to clients ranging from elementary school through late adulthood. Services include individual, family, couples, and marital counseling will be delivered by supervised practicum and internship students, referred to as Counselors-in-Training, in specialty areas such as clinical rehabilitation counseling, clinical addictions counseling, and career counseling.

Two grant resources were secured to support the development of the CCA. First, C&R was awarded \$199,998.00, through the SC Center for Rural and Primary Healthcare (CRPH), which supports and develops sustainable rural and primary care education and health care delivery in South Carolina through clinical practice, training, and research. Allocation of the CRPH grant dollars will cover two years (2024-2026) to establish and sustain the CCA. The funding priorities include essential start-up expenses, operational needs, and technological upgrades to support the clinic's activities to serve the Tri-County area and Fairfield and Chester counties. The C&R was also awarded a \$573,000 Duke Endowment to further the CCA through the hiring of a Clinic Coordinator and other supports.

4.4 Relocation

The C&R program moved to the School of Medicine campus – Columbia to start AY 2024-25. With the move, students noted increased opportunities to collaborate and connect with their peers in various medical and health–related fields and access resources and services available through the School of Medicine – Columbia. The Counseling and Rehabilitation program is located at:

University of South Carolina
School of Medicine
Building 1
Basement Level
6311 Garners Ferry Road
Columbia, SC 29209
(803) 216-3690
Email: rehab@uscmcd.sc.edu

Section 5. Student Professional Engagement and Accomplishments

5.1 Learning Community Saturday Event

As is tradition, students participated in a full day at the Learning Community Saturday (LCS) event hosted by the C&R program during both the Fall and Spring semesters. These 2024-2025 Learning Community Saturdays featured current and former students presenting areas of clinical interest and clinical trends in the field. This year the Fall LCS was held at our new home on the School of Medicine – Columbia Campus, which offered much more space and opportunities for creativity! Presentations such as “Epic Quests: Finding the Power of Mythology in Modern Gaming,” “The Intersection of Career Development and Modern Health,” and “Serving First-Generation Americans and Immigrants with Disabilities” just to name a few of the 12 total presentations. During the Spring LCS, students who took RCON 702: Introduction to Rehabilitation Research and Program Evaluation in the Fall were required to present their research projects developed during the course. This addition added yet another layer to the event! Highlighting just how research enriches our learning and clinical work. Other presentations included “Eating Disorder Assessment and Treatment,” “QPR Suicide Prevention,” “Cultural Competency: Supporting Veteran Populations through Rehab Counseling,” “The Bidirectional Relationship of Opioid Overdose and Brain Injury,” and “Compassion and Multicultural Perspectives on Wellness” just to name a few of the 22 total presentations. In both the Fall and Spring, the LCS ended with portfolio process groups led by C&R Practicum and Internship students.

5.2 Student Professional Development

Students, recent graduates, and alumni frequently express a desire for greater involvement in scholarly activities. In response, faculty and staff have developed initiatives to increase student engagement in these activities, offering a variety of opportunities that promote professional growth and participation within the program.

Orientation. Each Fall semester, before classes begin, the Counseling and Rehabilitation Program holds its New and Returning Student Orientation Event, and the most recent event held on August 19th was one for the books. During the event, a record breaking 33 new students, comprised of folks from our three specialty practice areas, were welcomed to the program for the Fall '24 semester. In addition to meeting and networking with the program's returning students to discuss subjects like the Practicum and Internship experiences, the new folks were able to learn more about the program from faculty members and about life after graduation from C&R program alumni. USC and SOM-C services were also on the agenda. The day concluded with Reflecting Team groups to discuss and process the program, hopes, and concerns.

Student Presentations. In addition to students presenting at the Spring and Fall Learning Community Saturday events, there are students who also have presentations accepted at the local, state, regional, and national level. During AY 2024-25 two students along with faculty members had their presentation accepted to the Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (SACES) conference in Dallas, TX from November 7th-9th. Both highlighted their experience at the conference in the November *C&R News* newsletter.

Annually, early in the Spring semester, USCB hosts the LIFT Conference. This year's conference theme was "Finding Joy in Leadership," and C&R had two members of our learning community invited to present. One of our faculty members presented valuable tips on overcoming burnout, and a student presented insights into cultivating joy through authentic leadership.

Another student presented on Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) transition services at the second annual Hands & Voices Building Bridges Family Conference on February 22, 2025, at Brookland Baptist Church in Columbia, SC. This event connects families affected by hearing loss with vital resources, including the South Carolina Association of the Deaf (SCAD), Carter Hears!, the SC School for the Deaf and Blind, and Beginnings SC.

Also in the Spring, Counseling and Rehabilitation Program faculty and students recently participated in the second annual Career Tracks event, hosted by the College of Hospitality, Retail and Sport Management at the University of South Carolina. This event brought together students, alumni, and industry professionals for a day dedicated to connection, learning, and career exploration. C&R faculty and students presented mindfulness and the application of virtual reality in mindfulness practice.

Lastly, the Counseling and Rehabilitation Program was well represented at the Discover USC conference in April by three students. Discover USC brings together the university's research and scholarly community in a full-day event that celebrates graduate, postdoctoral, and medical scholar innovation and scholarship. C&R students presented posters titled "Training Executive Function and Emotional Regulation for Children in Rural Schools or of Low Socioeconomic Status" and "Graduate Students' Perceptions of ChatGPT in Mental Health Education." Notably, the student presenting the ChatGPT research received the Graduate Student Award for her entire section.

Student Governance. Students also participated in SOMC governance by volunteering to serve on SOMC committees. Students are encouraged to seek opportunities to work with faculty or their peers to promote their professional development through scholarly activities and leadership in counseling.

During AY 2024-25, one of our students was not only elected as Student Representative for the American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA) for which she will serve for three years starting July 2025. In addition, this same student was awarded 2025 ARCA Master's Student of the Year.

Another student was awarded a grant through the Dr. Pamela Leconte Student Membership fund, which was established to award grants to students who exemplify the spirit of Dr. Leconte through advocacy, education, and engagement in the field of vocational evaluation or career assessment. The student will work with the Standards Committee, responsible for making recommendations to the VECAP Board regarding the association's Code of Ethics, reviewing and making recommendations to the VECAP Board regarding amendments to the association's By-laws, and managing the Facebook Community of Practice as well as the quarterly Case Study Club.

Student Organization. The student organization, Counseling and Rehabilitation Student Association (CRSA), also engaged in professional development and advocacy efforts throughout the year to support their peers' professional development and wellness with programs such as CRSA Writing Workshop and CRSA Safe Space offering an honoring and respectful space.

Student News. Early Fall semester, one of C&R's students was featured in the publication "Success Wisdom by Deaf and Hard of Hearing People." The book invites readers into a captivating anthology that celebrates the achievements and unique perspectives of over 100 Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Deaf Blind Deaf Disabled, Deaf Plus, and Late-Deafened individuals.

Section 6. Faculty Professional Engagement and Accomplishments

Research and Scholarship

In the academic year 2023-2024, C&R faculty engaged in several scholarly activities. A partial listing of those activities follows:

Highlights:

Dr. David Dawson was selected as a program participant for the 2024-2025 Propel AI Program. Propel AI is a faculty development program designed to grow competence in innovative AI technology, foster creativity in the ways faculty engage with AI and connect faculty members across disciplinary lines to inspire new collaborative partnerships. Propel AI (Artificial Intelligence) grows faculty competence in innovative AI technologies and the rapidly changing landscape of AI research. The program incubates brand new research initiatives in AI and enhances interdisciplinarity collaborative partnerships.

Dr. Farren Stackhouse has been selected to participate in the prestigious Provost's AI Teaching Fellowship Program at the University of South Carolina, a competitive initiative led by the Center

for Teaching Excellence. This is a yearlong fellowship, running from March 2025 to February 2026, that supports faculty in exploring innovative ways to integrate artificial intelligence into teaching and learning. Through workshops, collaborative learning communities, and an AI Teaching Fellowship Showcase, participants will develop creative, tech-forward strategies to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. The program emphasizes the transformative potential of AI in higher education and empowers educators to bring innovative tools into the classroom.

Grants and Awards:

- Dr. Dawson: Center for Clinical and Translational Research at USC (CLINTRUSC) - CEO and is funded by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS)/NIH (Funded).
- Drs. Richardson and Sacco-Bene: Center for Rural and Primary Healthcare (\$199,998; 2 years; Funded)
- Drs. Richardson and Sacco-Bene: Rural Resilience Clinic - To establish mental health and substance use field placements in nine student-led clinics, The Duke Endowment (\$573,000; three years; Funded).

International, National, State, and Local Presentations:

Dr. Sacco-Bene presented:

- **Sacco-Bene, C.**, Walsh, M., Richardson, T., Linder, S., & Zito, J. (2024, November 9). *Thriving in community: Strategies for learning and engagement*. Roundtable session at the Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision 2024 conference, Dallas, TX.
- **Sacco-Bene, C.** (2024, November 8). *ARCA task force Delphi study: Identifying disability-related competencies in clinical supervision*. Content session accepted at the Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision 2024 conference, Dallas, TX.
- Dunlap, P., **Sacco-Bene, C.**, & Balva, D. (2025, March 28). *Inclusive spaces: Rethinking accessibility in counseling and supervision*. Education session presented at the 2025 ACA Annual Conference & Expo, Orlando, FL.

Dr. Richardson presented:

- Sacco-Bene, C., Walsh, M., **Richardson, T.**, Linder, S., & Zito, J. (2024, November 9). *Thriving in community: Strategies for learning and engagement*. Roundtable session at the Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision 2024 conference, Dallas, TX.

Dr. Sepulveda presented:

- **Sepulveda, V.**, & Purvis, D. (October 2024). Addressing relational aggression in counselor education and supervision. (Presentation Session) North Central Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Conference, Rosemont, Illinois.

- Purvis, D., & **Sepulveda, V.** (October 2024). Supervisory role supporting internship students speaking ESL and collaboration with site supervisors. (Roundtable Session) North Central Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Conference, Rosemont, Illinois.
- Nerone, J., & **Sepulveda, V.** (November 2024). Archetypes: A tool toward self-discovery. (Presentation Session) Wisconsin Counseling Association Conference, Madison, Wisconsin.

Dr. Stackhouse presented:

- Peterson, G., Webb, K., **Stackhouse, F.**, Battle, T. (July 2024) Young, Black, & Gifted: Discussion of Black Millennial Counselor Educators' Career Experiences. National Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns (NAMRC).

Dr. Walsh presented:

- **Walsh, M.** (2025, February). *Shelter from the storm-choosing wellness*. University of South Carolina Beaufort LIFT Conference. Invited Speaker.

Publications:

Veshinski, S. E., & **Sacco-Bene, C.** (2025). Child custody and divorce assessment strategy and inventories. In L. Sperry (Ed.), *Couple and family assessment: Contemporary and cutting-edge strategies*. Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.

Sacco-Bene, C., Balva, D., Hunter, T., & Fadul, O. (Under Review), Best practice considerations for clinical supervision with supervisees with disabilities/disabled supervisees. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*. Sage.

Stackhouse, F., Petee, H., & **Walsh, M.** (In Progress). When the whistle blows: Using e-sports as a buffer to explore tragic optimism and transcultural competence among tailor-assisted adolescents.

Stackhouse, F., Brooks, M., Wang, Y., Smith, S., Kim, T., Limbrick, D. (In Progress). Racial microaggressions meet sports perfectionism: Virtually disparate implications for psychotherapists to get-in-the-game with minority collegiate athlete identities.

Peterson, G., Webb, K., **Stackhouse, F.**, Battle, T. Mathews, S. (Under Review). The honest truth: An ethnographic study of racial and professional identity development among graduates of an HBCU CACREP-Accredited Counselor Education and Supervision. *Journal of Counseling and Multicultural Development*.

Walsh, M. J., & Alison, A. (2024). Program evaluation. In Bringing it all Together: Effective Program Evaluation. In Wester & Wachter-Morris (Eds.). *Practitioner's Guide to Research Methods: How to Design and Implement Effective Studies (2nd ed)*. Routledge Taylor Francis.

Walsh, M., **Sacco Bene, C.**, & Cline-Kelly, D., Eds. (In Progress). *Family Systems Perspectives for Helping Professionals: Theory and Applications for Effective Leadership, Collaboration and Change*. Routledge Taylor Francis.

Service

In the academic year 2024-2025, C&R faculty engaged in several service activities. A partial listing of those activities follows:

Dr. Dawson

In addition to professional memberships in ACA, APA, ARCA, and ACES:

- South Carolina Assistive Technology Advisory Committee (ATAC)
- Co-Coordinates Rehabilitation Virtual Reality Lab
- Co-Director South Carolina Assistive Technology and Educational Research Center (SC-CATER)
 - Saturday and Sundays K-12 student drop in SC-CATER
- SOMC Library Committee
- SOMC Information Technology Committee
- SCDEC Transition to Careers Committee
- Contributing Investigator Institute for Rural Education and Development
- USC Digital Accessibility Network

Presentation and Training Service:

- Jubilee: Festival of Black History and Culture
- Able SC Equipt Saturday exploration Monthly
- SC-CATER STEM awareness every Sunday
- SC CATER: McNair Scholar Program
- South Carolina Computer Science & STEM Summit
- College of Hospitality, Retail and Sport Management conference Mindfulness VR Presentation
- VR Mindfulness at the Neuroscience Club meeting.

Dr. Richardson

- Professional membership in American Counseling Association (ACA), American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA), Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), and South Carolina Counseling Association (SCCA)
- American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA)
 - Public Policy, Professional Preparation, and Standards Chair
- Editorial Reviewer for the
 - *Journal of Employment Counseling*
 - *Journal of Rehabilitation Counseling*
- Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC)
 - Standards and Exam Committee
- USC School of Medicine Culture & Climate Committee (CCC)
- Able South Carolina Board Member
- The Department of Neuropsychiatry and Behavioral Science, The University of South Carolina, Wellness Champion
- Patient Care- Private Practice and SOM-C

Dr. Sacco-Bene

- American Counseling Association
- Conference Proposal Reviewer for 2025 Annual Conference
- American Rehabilitation Counseling Association
 - President, 2025-2026
 - President-Elect, 2024-2025
 - Task Force, Co-Chair, Disability Related Clinical Supervision Competencies for Supervising Supervisees with Disabilities 2023-present
- Professional member, South Carolina Counseling Association
- Professional member, Florida Counselors Association
- Professional member, Association for Counselor Education and Supervision
- USC School of Medicine Leave of Absence Committee, 2022-present.
- USC School of Medicine, Disability Awareness Collaboration.

Dr. Sepulveda

- American Counseling Association (ACA), 2005-present
- Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), 2005-present
- Association for Counseling Sexology & Sexual Wellness, 2020-present
 - Education and Training Committee Member (2022-present)
- Association for Creativity in Counseling (ACC), 2019-present
- Association for Humanistic Counseling (AHC), 2021-present
- Society for Sexual, Affectional, Intersex, and Gender Expansive Identities (SAIGE), 2014-present
- Chi Sigma Iota Counseling Academic and Professional Honor Society International (CSI), 2005 present
- North Central Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (NCACES), 2005-present
- Wisconsin Counseling Association (WCA), 2014-present.
 - Wisconsin Counseling Journal Reviewer (2016-present)
 - Professional Development & Ethics Chair (2020-present)

Dr. Stackhouse

- Professional Member, American Counseling Association (ACA)
- Professional Member, Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES)
- Professional Member, American Counseling Association, National Association for Multicultural Rehabilitative Concerns (NAMRC)
- Co-Coordinator of Counseling and Rehabilitation Virtual Reality Laboratory
- Coordinator of Virtual Reality Mindfulness Lab at C.A.L.M Oasis – USC Student Health Center
- Coordinator of VREC: Virtual Reality Mindfulness + Movement Lab – STROM Wellness and Fitness Center at USC
- Graduate Council Committee of Humanities Social Sciences Education and Related Professional Programs
- Institute for Rural Education and Development at USC - Faculty Affiliate
- Presentation and Training Service:

- Jubilee Festival of Black History and Culture
- Winston Salem State University Virtual Reality Training
- South Carolina Department of Corrections Mental Health Awareness Day
- R.E.S.E.T at Swearingen Engineering Center of USC

Dr. Walsh

- School of Medicine Alumni Awards Committee, 2018-Present
- School of Medicine Alumni Board of Directors-Member, 2023-Present
- American Counseling Association
- Reviewer for *International Journal for the Advancement of Counseling*, 2021-Present
- Appointed Associate Editor for *International Journal for the Advancement of Counseling*, 2023-Present
- Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association
 - Invited Reviewer-Psychiatric Rehabilitation Competencies, 2022-Present
 - Invited Item Writer, Certified Psychiatric Rehabilitation Practitioner Examination, 2023-Present
 - Certification Commission (Appointed 2025)
 - Board of Directors (Appointed 2025)
- American Mental Health Counseling Association- Foundation
 - Re-Emergence Investigation Committee-Appointed Member 2024
 - Vice Chair-Appointed 2025

Faculty Credentials

Dr. Dawson

- Certified Rehabilitation Counselor: CRC 85454
- NSF ID: 000803911

Dr. Richardson

- National Certified Counselor (NCC): #901985
- Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC): #00119124
- Licensed Professional Counselor Associate: SC-LPC # 9092

Dr. Sacco-Bene

- Florida Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC) and Qualified State Supervisor MH & MFT: MH8713
- Virginia Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC): 0701003808
- South Carolina Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC): 11276
- National Certified Counselor (NCC): 85343
- Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC): 36137

Dr. Sepulveda

- Wisconsin Clinical Substance Abuse Counselor (CSAC): 15861-132
- Wisconsin Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC): 5482-125
- National Certified Counselor (NCC): 325416

Dr. Stackhouse

- Licensed Professional Counselor of Georgia GA-LPC #009419
- Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor of North Carolina NC-LCMHC #15443
- Certified Dialectical Behavioral Therapist
- Board Certified Telehealth Provider
- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Certified

Dr. Walsh

- Licensed Professional Counselor: SC-LPC # 4900
- Certified Rehabilitation Counselor: CRC 95795
- Certified Psychiatric Rehabilitation Practitioner CPRP # 10062150

Section 7. Program Engagement

7.1 Newsletter

The Counseling and Rehabilitation program continued its monthly publication of *C&R News*. The academic unit publishes a monthly newsletter designed to keep its community informed and engaged. Each issue features highlights of student involvement and achievements, updates on faculty contributions to professional service, and spotlights on key events such as the LCS and invited speaker series. The newsletter also includes practical resources like writing tips to support students' academic success and a lighthearted "Pet of the Month" feature that adds a personal, community-building touch. Altogether, the newsletter serves as a platform to celebrate accomplishments, share knowledge, and foster connection among students, faculty, and staff.

7.2 Lunch and Learn

The program hosts Lunch and Learn events that feature community agency speakers who introduce students to potential practicum and internship opportunities. These sessions also provide valuable insights on topics relevant to counseling, with emphasis focusing on rehabilitation, career, and addiction counseling.

October 2024 – Career Discovery Lunch & Learn *Unlocking Potential: Career Services and Strategies for Real-World Applications*, with presenter, Nigel Smith, Manager of Graduate Student Career Advising at the University of South Carolina.

November 2024 – Career Discovery Lunch & Learn *Collaborative Care Model*, with presenter Heather Coleman, Behavioral Health Care Manager at Prisma Health in the Midlands.

February 2025 – Career Discovery Lunch & Learn *John H. Magill School Mental Health Certificate Program* with presenter, Dr. Courtnie Collins, the South Carolina Department of Mental Health (SCDMH).

April 2025 – Career Discovery Lunch and Learn *Barriers to Access for Adolescents*, with presenter, Dee Robinson, on site at the Tri-County Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse William J. McCord Adolescent Treatment Facility.

June 2025 – Career Discovery Lunch and Learn *Unlocking Independence Through Assistive Technology* with presenter, Rachell Johnson, MCD, CCC-SLP, ATP, Program Manager of the South Carolina Assistive Technology Program (SCATP).

7.3 Speaker Series

In AY 2024-25, the C&R program again sponsored its Professional Speaker Series this academic year to further engage students and the larger learning community in professional development. The 2024-2025 annual year's speakers include

October 2025 – The Counseling and Rehabilitation Program welcomed Dr. Amanda Giordano as presenter to be featured during the program's Fall Professional Speaker Series event. Dr. Giordano specializes in addictions counseling with clinical, instructional, and scholarly experience related to both chemical and behavioral addictions. She is the sole author of a clinical reference book titled, *A Clinical Guide to Treating Behavioral Addictions* and co-author of a textbook titled, *Addiction Counseling: A Practical Approach*. Dr. Giordano presented "Clinical Work with Behavioral Addictions: A Primer" to both a live and virtual audience. Attendees gained knowledge regarding how to conceptualize behavioral addictions, the use of reliable assessment instruments, and considerations when referring clients to peer support groups for behavioral addictions.

November 2025 – Collaborating with the SC Department of Mental Health, the C&R program hosted Jennifer Butler, Director of Public Education at SCDMH, to present "Talk Saves Lives" Addressing students' requests for more information about suicide prevention and intervention, this presentation was delivered on campus to students and colleagues from around the School of Medicine.

February 2025 – The Professional Speaker Series Spring featured speaker was Paige Shaffer, PhD., MPH, is an Assistant Professor of Medicine at the UMass Chan Medical School Department of Medicine, Division of Health Systems Science. Dr. Shaffer is an Epidemiologist with expertise in psychiatric epidemiology, the etiology of addiction, and biostatistics, and focuses on populations with co-occurring mental health and addiction. She brought research data to support the importance of working concurrently with clients who have co-occurring disorders.

7.4 Virtual Reality

During the 2024-2025 academic year, the Virtual Reality (VR) Lab engaged with various stakeholders, including individuals from the School of Medicine, Able South Carolina, the Department of Social Services, Ollie Johnson Health Fair of Santee, South Carolina Department of Corrections and the broader university community (e.g., Office of Access and Opportunity).

The VR team focused on identifying and assessing VR programs tailored to counseling, medicine, disability awareness, and functional assessment.

Throughout the academic year, Dr. Dawson collaborated with a faculty to integrate VR into the curriculum for first-year medical students and physician assistant students. The program emphasized the development and reflection on the soft skills critical for healthcare practitioners. Additionally, Dr. Stackhouse has continued to expand partnership with the USC Health Center, Counseling and Psychiatric Services of USC on research projects and campus initiatives to integrate VR-based relaxation, mindfulness, etc. applications at the CALM Oasis center, STROM Fitness and Wellbeing Center and other requested locations/events. These campus initiatives expound upon resources available to USC students, staff, and faculty.

Dr. Dawson and Dr. Stackhouse continue to develop the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a competent tool and integrative device within the counseling scope and academia. Dr. Dawson continues to work on virtual reality and AI as a therapy or therapeutic modality. Dr. Stackhouse, a select Provost AI Fellow for the year 2025, works to explore and collaborate the integration of AI and GenAI into teaching and learning. These innovative techniques and strategies play a significant role in both the development and creation of personalized learning and healthcare solutions.

Virtual reality was also integrated into RCON711 utilized VR to explore applications for anxiety management, mindfulness, and pain management, extending VR in classes beyond RCON 733. Faculty members extended their expertise by conducting VR training at Winston-Salem State University. In collaboration with the USC College of Pharmacy, faculty facilitated VR empathy training for students and staff.

The South Carolina Center for Assistive Technology and Educational Research (SC-CATER) continue to foster an interdisciplinary collaboration between faculty, professionals, and individuals with disabilities. The Center is dedicated to improving the lives of persons with disabilities, focusing on education and transitioning to the workforce. SC-CATER is anchored by the core values of equality, equity, and access, ensuring that no individual is denied services or opportunities based on their disability.

SC-CATER provides clinical opportunities for Counseling and Rehabilitation (C&R) students, offering hands-on experience in working with people with disabilities using Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) methodologies. These include personalized applications such as robotics and coding. C&R students also engage with K-12 students and their families in assistive technology. The program hosts open house sessions, offering children the chance to explore technologies like robotics. C&R faculty shared this AY their expertise by presenting to undergraduate students and community partners on adaptive technologies and STEM, and participate in various outreach activities, including McNair Scholars Jubilee, Statewide Afterschool STEM Day, and educational programs for schools in Lexington and Richland districts.

7.5 Podcast

Throughout AY 2024-25, the C&R produced new content. The idea behind this service to the community is to provide a medium on which to explore information, trends, current events, and other areas that impact counseling and rehabilitation.

- “Perspectives from the Field, an Interview with Daniel Balva” where we interview Dr. Balva who recently completed his postdoctoral psychology residency at the VA Pacific Islands Healthcare System in Honolulu, HI. He has a strong passion for global mental health, multiculturalism and international social justice concerns, juvenile justice, and disability awareness— all of which form the basis of his research interests and international collaborations and engagement.
- “Perspectives from the Field, an Interview with Paul Toriello” where we interview Dr. Paul Toriello, Assistant Dean for Clinical Graduate Programs, here at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine. In the field of research and patient care, he has started two student-operated, faculty-directed counseling clinics, and has a long history of successful funding for research grants focused on innovative interventions for persons with co-occurring addictions and mental health issues.

7.6 Giving Back

Friendsgiving. For the third year, the C&R program hosted its Friendsgiving Open House. This event is a way to say thank you to supervisors, board members, students, adjunct faculty, and other community partners.

De-Stress Fest. This year, Graduate Assistants of the Counseling and Rehabilitation Program volunteered to table a virtual reality demo table during the School of Medicine De-Stress Fest. SOM-C students were invited to join the GAs for 20-minute blocks of time as they were introduced to a variety of apps using the Meta Quest 2 virtual reality headsets. Students explored apps carefully curated by the C&R GAs to engage in meditative and relaxation exercises as well as a variety of medical apps relating to anatomy, diagnosis, and more. This is just one example of how the C&R program gives back to its SOM-C community.

Appendices

1. *Summary and crosswalk of the overall assessment plan*
2. *Disposition Rating Form*

Appendix 1

MA-60, Counseling and Rehabilitation – Academic Assessment Plan

EVALUATION IN THE PROGRAM

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ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

(ALIGNED WITH CACREP AREAS and DATA COLLECTION POINTS)

Updated August 1, 2024

Educational Objective 1 – Students will demonstrate knowledge and competencies required for successful practice in the field of professional counseling. (Corresponds to CACREP’s 8 common core elements)

Area 1 – Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice.

Curriculum: EDCE 510, RCON 704

Other measures: Pre-practicum assessment, Comprehensive assessment

			Measure
Area 1. Professional counseling orientation and ethical practice	SLO 1.1 Students will adopt a professional counseling orientation commensurate to beginning counselors. (KPI) (Type of KPI: Knowledge)	Measure 1. 90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on the Reflective Learning Paper in EDCE 510 (Intro. to Counseling).	Rubric
		Measure 2. Pre-practicum assessment. 100% of students will articulate a professional counseling orientation as measured by a rating of Satisfactory on the PPA.	PPA form
	SLO 1.2 Students will engage in ethical decision-making process that demonstrates	Measure 1. 90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on the Final Ethics Case Presentation in RCON: 704 (Ethics)	Rubric

	<p>an understanding of ethical principles and is beneficial to the client. (KPI)</p> <p>(Type of KPI: Skill)</p>	<p>Measure 2.</p> <p>Comprehensive assessment (CA). 90% of students will pass the ethics portion of the CA on the first attempt; 100% will pass on the second attempt.</p>	Comp question
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Area 2 – Social and Cultural Diversity

Curriculum: RCON 605 (Culture), RCON 711, RCON 883/884/885 (Internship)

Other measures: Pre-practicum assessment, Comprehensive assessment

			Measure
Area 2. Social and cultural diversity	<p>SLO 2.1 Students will describe how student-centered and client-centered cultural factors may influence the counseling relationship across a variety of helping settings. (KPI)</p> <p>(Type of KPI: Knowledge)</p>	<p>Measure 1.</p> <p>90% of students will earn a grade of Competent or better on the Stylistic Model (Self-Analysis Series) assignment in RCON 605: (Culture and Disability).</p>	Rubric
		<p>Measure 2.</p> <p>Pre-practicum assessment. 100% of students will demonstrate a Satisfactory understanding of their strengths and areas for growth as related to counseling diverse clients.</p>	PPA form
		<p>Measure 3.</p> <p>Comprehensive assessment (CA). 90% of students will pass the multicultural counseling portion of the CA on the first attempt; 100% will pass on the second attempt.</p>	Comp questions
	<p>SLO 2.2 Students will demonstrate the ability to work effectively with diverse clients in</p>	<p>Measure 1.</p> <p>90% of students will earn a grade of satisfactory or better on the Diversity component of the video recording assignment in RCON 711 (Theories/Practice II).</p>	Rubric

	a counseling setting. (KPI) (Type of KPI: Skill)	Measure 2. 100% of students will receive a rating of Satisfactory or better on the final Site Supervisor evaluation in RCON 883/884/885 (Internship); specifically, the item related to working with diverse clients.	Evaluation form
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Area 3 – Human Growth and Development

Curriculum: RCON 680 (or EDPY 705), RCON 711, NPSY 757

Other measures: Comprehensive assessment

Area 3. Human growth and development	SLO 3.1 Students will identify psychosocial and psychoeducational strategies for promoting resilience and optimal development and wellness across the lifespan. (KPI) (Type of KPI: Knowledge)	Measure 1. 90% of students will earn an overall grade of B or better in RCON 680 (or EDPY 705) (Human Growth & Development). [Edited in Fall 2024]	Data Warehouse
		Measure 2. 90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on the Adlerian Lifestyle assessment in RCON 711 (Theories and Practice II).	Need measure/rubric
		Measure 3. 90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on the Capstone Project in NPSY 757 (Psychopathology for Counselors).	Rubric
		Measure 4. Comprehensive Assessment. 90% of students will pass the lifespan component of the CA on the first attempt; 100% will pass on the second attempt	Comp question

Area 4 – Career Development and Decision-making

Curriculum: RCON 725, RCON 883/884/885

Other measures: Comprehensive assessment

Area 4. Career development and career decision-making.	SLO 4.1 Students will accurately describe theories and models of career development and career decision-making. (KPI)	Measure 1. 90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on the Capstone Project in RCON 725 (Career Theories and The World of Work)	Rubric
	(Type of KPI: Knowledge)	Measure 2. Comprehensive Assessment (CA). 90% of students will pass the career theory portion of the CA on the first attempt; 100% will pass on the second attempt	Comp question
	SLO 4.2 Students will apply a theory and/or model of career development to a client. (KPI)	Measure 1. 90% of students will earn a grade of Satisfactory or better on the capstone presentation (previously: role-play assignment) in RCON 725 (Career).	Rubric
	(Type of KPI: Skill)	Measure 2. 90% of students will earn a grade of Satisfactory or better on the Career Development Project/Parts 4 and 5 in RCON 883/884/885 (Internship)	Rubric

Area 5 – Counseling and Helping Relationships

Curriculum: RCON 601 and RCON 880; RCON 711 and RCON 883/884/885

Area 5. Counseling and helping relationships.	SLO 5.1 Students will demonstrate the intentional use of interviewing and basic counseling skills. (KPI)	Measure 1. 90% of students will earn a grade of Satisfactory or better on the final video in RCON 601 (Helping Relationships).	Rubric
	(Type of KPI: Skill)	Measure 2. 100% of students will earn a grade of Satisfactory or better on the final audio recording in Practicum.	Rubric
	SLO 5.2 Students will discuss and demonstrate	Measure 1.	Rubric

	counseling theories and related techniques. (KPI)	90% of students will earn a grade of Satisfactory or better on the final video in RCON 711 (Theories and Practice).	
	(Type of KPI: Skill)	Measure 2. 100% of students will earn a grade of Satisfactory or better on the audio recording in Internship.	Rubric

Area 6 – Group Counseling and Group Work

Curriculum: RCON 720, RCON 880

Area 6. Group counseling and group work	SLO 6.1 Students will demonstrate group leadership skills by planning and carrying out purposeful group counseling activities. (KPI)	Measure 1. 90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on the group co-leadership paper in RCON 720 (Group Counseling).	Rubric
	(Type of KPI: Skill)	Measure 2. 90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on the group leadership assignment in RCON 880 (Practicum).	Rubric

Area 7 – Assessment and Testing

Curriculum: RCON 714, NPSY 758

Area 7. Assessment and testing	SLO 7.1 Students will select and describe assessment and testing techniques with specific counseling populations. (KPI)	Measure 1. 90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on the “Become the Expert” assignment in RCON 714 (Assessment).	Rubric
	(Type of KPI: Knowledge)	Measure 2. 90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on the Basics of Assessment assignment in NPSY 758 (Classification/Assessment of Mental Disorders).	Rubric

Area 8 – Research and Program Evaluation

Curriculum: RCON 700, RCON 702

Other measures: Comprehensive assessment

Area 8. Research and program evaluation	SLO 8.1 Students will utilize the results of scholarly research to inform and adapt counseling practice.	Measure 1. 90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on the Journal critiques assignment in RCON 700/701/703 (Foundations classes in specialty practice areas)	Rubric
	(Type of KPI: Knowledge)	Measure 2. 90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on the final project in RCON 702 (Research and Program Evaluation)	Rubric
		Measure 3. Comprehensive assessment (CA) 90% of students will receive a passing score on the research section of the CA on the first attempt; 100% of students will pass on the second attempt	Comp question

CLINICAL REHABILITATION SPECIALIZATION

Educational Objective 2 – Students will be able to demonstrate specialized knowledge in working with individuals with disabilities to achieve their personal, social, psychological, and vocational goals.

Curriculum: RCON 734, RCON 733, RCON 883, NPSY 760, NPSY 757, NPSY 758

SA SLO 1 Students will identify and strategically utilize community services and resources related to the provision of individualized rehabilitation services. (KPI) (Type of KPI: Knowledge)	Measure 1. 90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on the final presentation in RCON: 734 (Professional Issues in Rehabilitation Counseling).	Rubric
	Measure 2. Comprehensive Assessment (CA). 90% of students will pass the community resources portion of the CA on the first attempt; 100% of students will pass on the second attempt.	Comp question

<p>SA SLO 2</p> <p>Students will develop and implement individualized service plan for a person with a disability that reflects principles of client choice and self-determination and include theory-based and evidence-based counseling and rehabilitation services. (KPI)</p> <p>(Type of KPI: Skill)</p>	<p>Measure 1.</p> <p>90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on the Case Conceptualization and Rehabilitation Plan (previously: final exam) in RCON 733 (Medical and Psychosocial Aspects of Disability).</p>	Rubric
	<p>Measure 2.</p> <p>90% of students will earn a grade of Satisfactory or better on the Case Conceptualization project in RCON 883 (Internship).</p>	Rubric
<p>SA SLO 3</p> <p>Students will demonstrate fundamental competencies in Addictions and Mental Health counseling</p> <p>(Type of KPI: Knowledge)</p>	<p>Measure 1.</p> <p>90% of students will earn a grade of Satisfactory or better on the Unit 3 Blackboard assignment in NPSY 760 (Addictions Rehabilitation), in which they describe the neurobiological basis for addiction and co-occurring disorders.</p>	Rubric
	<p>Measure 2.</p> <p>90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on the Case Study assignment in NPSY 757 (Psychopathology for Counselors) identify and address the functional effects of the symptoms of mental disorders on holistic life areas.</p>	Rubric
	<p>Measure 3.</p> <p>90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on the Capstone project in NPSY 758 (Classification & Assessment of Mental Disorders) in which they conceptualize and write up a formal diagnosis using current classification systems (i.e., the DSM-5-TR).</p>	Rubric

CLINICAL ADDICTION SPECIALIZATION

Educational Objective 2 – Students will be able to demonstrate specialized clinical and technical knowledge in working with individuals with and without disabilities who experience substance-use disorders and addictions to achieve their personal, social, psychological, and vocational goals.

Curriculum: RCON 701, RCON 712, RCON 880, RCON 884, NPSY 758, NPSY 760, NPSY 761

<p>SA SLO 1</p> <p>Students will identify and strategically utilize community services and resources related to the provision of substance-use disorder and addiction services. (KPI)</p> <p>(Type of KPI: Knowledge)</p>	<p>Measure 1.</p> <p>90% of students will earn a grade of Satisfactory or better on their Community Agency Visit and Interview assignment in RCON 701 (Foundations in Addictions and Treatment in Counseling).</p>	Rubric
	<p>Measure 2.</p> <p>90% of students will earn a grade of Satisfactory or better on their first Case Conceptualization project in RCON 880 (Practicum) in which they community-based resources or service delivery systems that could be applied to their clients</p>	Rubric
	<p>Measure 3.</p> <p>Comprehensive Assessment (CA; Sec 1, Ques #). 90% of students will pass the community resources portion of the CA on the first attempt; 100% of students will pass on the second attempt.</p>	Comp question
<p>SA SLO 2</p> <p>Students will develop and implement individualized strategies and treatment modalities relative to substance use disorder severity, stages of change, or recovery and include theory-based and evidence-based counseling and substance-use disorder and addiction services. (KPI)</p>	<p>Measure 1.</p> <p>90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on the Capstone Behavior Reduction Exercise and Report Paper and Presentation in RCON 701 (Foundations in Addictions and Treatment in Counseling).</p>	Rubric
	<p>Measure 2.</p> <p>90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on both Observation Series and Applying Theory assignments in RCON 712 (Addiction and the Family).</p>	Rubric

(Type of KPI: Skill)	Measure 3. 90% of students will earn a grade of Satisfactory or better on the Case Conceptualization project in RCON 884 (Internship).	Rubric
SA SLO 3 Students will demonstrate fundamental competencies in Addiction and Mental Health counseling. (Type of KPI: Knowledge)	Measure 1. 90% of students will earn a grade of Satisfactory or better on the Unit 3 Blackboard assignment in NPSY 760 (Addictions Rehabilitation), in which they describe the neurobiological basis for addiction and co-occurring disorders.	Rubric
	Measure 2. 90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on Best Practices Dual Diagnosis Assessment, Treatment, and Rehabilitation Project assignment in NPSY 761, which they examine options of assessments and use their findings to inform intervention strategies and the rehabilitation process when working with addiction and co-occurring disorders.	Rubric
	Measure 3. 90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on the Capstone project in NPSY 758 (Classification & Assessment of Mental Disorders) in which they conceptualize and write up a formal diagnosis using current classification systems (i.e., the DSM-5-TR).	Rubric

CAREER SPECIALIZATION

Educational Objective 2 – Students will be able to demonstrate specialized clinical and technical knowledge in working with individuals with and without disabilities to build life skills and achieve their career goals and with businesses to promote workplace health and wellbeing.

Curriculum: RCON 703, RCON 780, RCON 885

<p>SA SLO 1</p> <p>Students will identify influences that impact careers and the workplace and strategically utilize current and appropriate education and labor market information and resources in the provision of career planning and counseling services. (KPI)</p>	<p>Measure 1.</p> <p>90% of students will earn a grade of Satisfactory or better on their Capstone Career Counseling and Organization Behavior Report project assignment in RCON 703, in which they explore influences that impact careers and the workplace to develop strategies for career counseling.</p>	Rubric
	<p>Measure 2.</p> <p>90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on their Capstone Mock Client – Career Counseling assignment in RCON 780, in which, as part of the assignment, they develop a comprehensive Career Counseling Plan and Labor Market Report.</p>	Rubric
	<p>Measure 3.</p> <p>Comprehensive Assessment (CA; Sec 1, Ques #). 90% of students will pass the information and resources portion of the CA on the first attempt; 100% of students will pass on the second attempt.</p>	Comp question
<p>SA SLO 2</p> <p>Students will develop and implement individualized strategies and approaches relevant to the unique needs and characteristics of businesses and employers and diverse clients in the provision of career counseling services. (KPI)</p> <p>(Type of KPI: Skill)</p>	<p>Measure 1.</p> <p>90% of students will earn a grade of B or better on their Organization Behavior Interview and Career Development Program assignment in RCON 780.</p>	Rubric
	<p>Measure 2.</p> <p>90% of students will earn a grade of Satisfactory or better on the Career Development Project in RCON 885 (Internship).</p>	Rubric

		CACREP core areas Specialization (CRC, CAC, CC)										
#	SLO Area# Course	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3
1	EDCE 510	X										
1	RCON 601					X						
1	RCON 605		X									
1	RCON 680 (or EDPY 705)			X								
1	RCON 700								X			
1	RCON 701								X			
1	RCON 702								X			
1	RCON 703								X			
1	RCON 704	X										
3	RCON 711		X	X		X						
1	RCON 712										X	
1	RCON 714							X				
1	RCON 720						X					
2	RCON 725				XX							
1	RCON 733										X	
1	RCON 734									X		
2	RCON 780									X	X	
2/1/1	NPSY 757			X								X
2/2/1	NPSY 758							X				XX
1/1	NPSY 760											XX
1	NPSY 761										X	
2	RCON 880					X	X					
4	RCON 883/884/885				X	X					X	
	RCON 883/884/885 (Site Sup Eval)		X									
	Other skill, knowledge measures											
2	PPA	X	X									
6/6/6	Comps	X	X	X	X				X	X		
	Dispositional evaluation											
2	Dispositions	X	X									

Appendix 2

Assessment of Dispositions			
(Adapted from Spurgeon, Gibbons & Cochran, 2012)			
Commitment:			
Investment in learning; development of counselor identity; advocacy; professional excellence; civic engagement; collaboration; scholar/practitioner; acting on feedback.			
Rating:	Growth Needed	Developing Well	Exceptional
Comments:			
Interpersonal Competence:			
Ability to deal with conflict, express thoughts and feelings effectively, presence			
Rating:	Growth Needed	Developing Well	Exceptional
Comments:			
Openness:			
Openness to ideas, learning, and change; openness to giving and receiving feedback; openness to growth; openness to others; openness to self-development, flexibility and tolerance of ambiguity			
Rating:	Growth Needed	Developing Well	Exceptional
Comments:			
Respect:			
Perceives and honors diversity; appropriate self-care; adherence to the wellness philosophy; curiosity about, and respect for, the experience and selfhood of others.			
Rating:	Growth Needed	Developing Well	Exceptional
Comments:			
Integrity:			
Personal responsibility; personal and professional maturity; honesty; courage; congruence			

Rating:	Growth Needed	Developing Well	Exceptional
Comments:			
Self-Awareness:			
Integrity; humility; self-reflection and exploration of self; understanding of place in history, awareness of personal identity, awareness of influence on others			
Rating:	Growth Needed	Developing Well	Exceptional
Comments:			
FACULTY SIGNATURE and DATE		STUDENT SIGNATURE and DATE	