NORTHWESTERN COLLEGE

COUNSELING PROGRAM

Annual Program Evaluation Report 2025/26

Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program

Contents

Introduction 3

Program Overview 3

Enrollment, Admissions, and Student Data 4

Course-Embedded KPI and Rubric Assessment Data 4

Program Learning Outcome Findings 4

- PLO 1 — Professional Dispositions 4
- PLO 2 — Spirituality and Christian Worldview Integration 5
- PLO 3 — Counseling Knowledge and Skill Development 5

Student Learning Outcome (SLO) Assessment Findings 5

- SLO Assessment Highlights 5

Graduate Survey Results 7

- Graduate Demographics 7
- Graduate Outcomes 7

Business Partner and Employer Feedback 7

- Identified Strengths 8
- Identified Areas for Growth 8

Climate of Department Survey Results 8

CCS-R Clinical Competency Data 8

- Overall Findings 9
- Areas of Strength Identified Through CCS-R Data 9
- Areas Identified for Continued Development 9

Completion Rates for Cohorts 10

Fieldwork Placement Rates (Practicum and Internship) 10

CPCE and NCE Pass Rates 10

Doctoral Admissions 10

Program Improvements and Action Steps for 2026–2027 10

- Curriculum and Instruction 10
- Clinical Confidence Development 11
- Assessment and Program Evaluation 11

Summary 11

Data Sources 12

Introduction

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) Program at Northwestern College engaged in a systematic annual program evaluation process during the 2025–2026 academic year consistent with CACREP 2024 Standards related to comprehensive assessment, continuous program evaluation, student learning outcomes, professional dispositions, and program improvement.

Program assessment data were collected through:

- KPI and rubric assessment data
- Course-embedded assessment measures
- CCS-R clinical evaluations
- Graduate survey data
- Business partner/employer feedback
- Climate of Department survey data
- Admissions and enrollment data
- Faculty review and longitudinal assessment analysis

Assessment findings were reviewed to evaluate:

- Student learning outcomes
- Professional dispositions
- Clinical competency development
- Academic quality indicators
- Program effectiveness
- Stakeholder satisfaction
- Continuous quality improvement needs

Program Overview

The CMHC Program continues to prepare students for ethical, culturally responsive, developmentally informed, and clinically competent counseling practice through a hybrid counselor education curriculum integrating:

- Academic rigor
- Clinical skill development
- Professional identity development
- Multicultural responsiveness
- Advocacy
- Ethical counseling practice
- Christian worldview integration
- Clinical supervision and field experience

Assessment processes align with the program's Comprehensive Assessment Plan and CACREP 2024 standards.

Enrollment, Admissions, and Student Data

Admissions and enrollment data for the 2025–2026 academic year demonstrated continued program growth and sustained student interest in the CMHC Program.

Reviewed data included:

- Applied student numbers
- Accepted student numbers
- Cohort enrollment patterns
- Student progression data
- Clinical placement participation

The program continues to enroll students from diverse educational, geographic, professional, and developmental backgrounds.

Course-Embedded KPI and Rubric Assessment Data

The CMHC Program utilizes course-embedded assessment rubrics and KPI measures to evaluate student mastery of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) aligned with CACREP 2024 standards.

Assessment data collected from Blackboard rubric reports demonstrated consistently strong student performance across foundational counseling competencies, professional dispositions, multicultural responsiveness, spirituality integration, and counseling skill development.

Program Learning Outcome Findings

Note: After the site visit, the program faculty modified PLO's and SLO's to better support the 2024 CACREP Standards.

PLO 1 — Professional Dispositions

Students demonstrated strong development of professional dispositions and counselor readiness through COUN 605 Pre-Practicum CCS-R rubric assessments.

Average student rubric score:

- 96.75%

Students demonstrated strengths in:

- professionalism,
- counseling readiness,
- responsiveness to feedback,
- ethical behavior,

- and counseling presence.

PLO 2 — Spirituality and Christian Worldview Integration

Students demonstrated strong competency related to understanding religion, spirituality, and integration of Christian worldview concepts within counseling practice through COUN 550 rubric assessments.

Average student rubric score:

- 97.85%

Assessment evidence included:

- Personal Model of Counseling Paper and Video assignments,
- integration of counseling theory and worldview concepts,
- and reflective application of spirituality within counseling practice.

PLO 3 — Counseling Knowledge and Skill Development

Students demonstrated strong mastery of counseling knowledge and skill development outcomes.

Average student rubric score:

- 100%

Students demonstrated competency in:

- counseling theory application,
- conceptual understanding,
- ethical decision-making,
- and foundational counseling processes.

Student Learning Outcome (SLO) Assessment Findings

Course-embedded rubric assessment data demonstrated strong student achievement across multiple SLO domains.

SLO Assessment Highlights

SLO 01.01

Average score:

- 97.54%

SLO 01.02

Average score:

- 97.91%

SLO 01.03

Average score:

- 95.09%

SLO 01.04

Average score:

- 97.14%

SLO 01.05

Average score:

- 98.75%

SLO 01.06

Average score:

- 90.67%

SLO 01.07

Average score:

- 93.75%

SLO 01.07

Average score:

- 91.37%

SLO 01.09

Average score:

- 98.25%

Overall findings indicate that students consistently met or exceeded established program benchmarks across course-embedded assessment measures.

Faculty review identified particularly strong student performance in:

- ethical counseling practice,
- multicultural responsiveness,
- counselor self-awareness,
- counseling theory integration,
- and professional identity formation.

Graduate Survey Results

Graduate survey data reflected strong satisfaction with the CMHC program overall.

Graduate Demographics

Surveyed graduates represented:

- Female and male graduates
- Ages 20–45
- Employment in private practice and hospital settings
- Provisionally licensed professional counselors

Graduate Outcomes

Graduates reported:

- Increased salary and career advancement following graduation
- Strong preparation for counseling practice
- Positive perceptions of faculty support and clinical preparation

One graduate specifically noted:

“I did not expect to feel so prepared for the counseling world, but I was confident once I graduated and trusted my education would carry me.”

Business Partner and Employer Feedback

Business partner and employer feedback reflected strong perceptions of student compassion, multicultural responsiveness, and client-centered care.

Identified Strengths

Stakeholders described CMHC students as:

- Caring
- Compassionate
- Client-focused
- Willing to work with diverse populations
- Able to explore bias and multicultural considerations

Identified Areas for Growth

Stakeholders identified several developmental areas including:

- Student confidence
- Reflective skill development
- Creative and flexible problem-solving
- Increased comfort with counseling technology
- Administrative technology skills such as spreadsheets and scheduling systems

Climate of Department Survey Results

Climate survey results reflected generally positive student perceptions related to inclusivity, support, and program culture.

Survey domains included:

- Curriculum integration
- Faculty training
- Recruitment and admissions
- Student support services
- Policy and practice review
- Open dialogue

Students generally reported positive experiences related to:

- Inclusive learning environments
- Open communication
- Faculty support
- Diverse perspectives in coursework

CCS-R Clinical Competency Data

Clinical competency and professional disposition data were reviewed through CCS-R evaluation reports across practicum and internship experiences.

Overall Findings

Clinical evaluation data demonstrated strong student performance across:

- Professional ethics
- Empathy and caring
- Respect and compassion
- Openness to feedback
- Professional boundaries
- Multicultural responsiveness
- Counseling skill development
- Emotional stability and self-control

Most students scored within:

- Meets Expectations/Demonstrates Competency or
- Exceeds Expectations/Demonstrates Competency

categories across evaluated competencies.

Areas of Strength Identified Through CCS-R Data

Professional Ethics

Students demonstrated exceptionally strong ethical competency.

Openness to Feedback

Students demonstrated strong receptiveness to supervision and professional growth.

Professional Boundaries

Students demonstrated strong professional boundary management and professionalism.

Empathy and Therapeutic Presence

Students consistently demonstrated strong therapeutic presence and empathic engagement.

Areas Identified for Continued Development

Although overall competency outcomes were strong, several developmental patterns emerged.

Reflective Skill Development

Faculty identified the need for:

- Increased advanced reflection practice
- Greater conceptual depth
- Increased integration of clinical meaning-making
- Confidence and Clinical Flexibility

Business partner feedback and CCS-R data reflected a need for:

- Increased counseling confidence
- Improved flexibility and adaptability
- Stronger tolerance for ambiguity in counseling process
- Documentation and Administrative Competency

Some students demonstrated developmental needs related to:

- Record keeping
- Clinical documentation
- Administrative systems
- Technology integration

Completion Rates for Cohorts

Cohort A (Fall 2022 start): 75% (6 of 8)

Cohort B (Fall 2023 start): 91% (10 of 11)

Cohort C (Fall 2024 start: 91% (10 of 11)

Aggregate completion rate: 84% meets program benchmark

Fieldwork Placement Rates (Practicum and Internship)

Fieldwork Placement Rates Practicum placement rate: 100%

Internship placement rate: 100%

CPCE and NCE Pass Rates

Credentialing Exam Pass Rates CPCE Pass Rate: 100%

NCE Pass Rate: 100% Employment Outcomes

100% of survey respondents employed in the counseling or human-services field within 6 months

Doctoral Admissions

1% of graduates reported doctoral program admission

Program Improvements and Action Steps for 2026–2027

Based on annual assessment findings, the CMHC Program identified the following action steps:

Curriculum and Instruction

Faculty will:

- Increase reflective counseling interventions in skills courses
- Expand advanced conceptualization activities
- Integrate additional case consultation opportunities
- Increase exposure to counseling technology systems
- Expand documentation and administrative competency training

Clinical Confidence Development

Faculty and supervisors will:

- Increase opportunities for live feedback
- Expand experiential role-play activities
- Increase developmental supervision supports
- Strengthen reflective processing in supervision

Assessment and Program Evaluation

The program will continue:

- Annual KPI review
- CCS-R longitudinal trend analysis
- AQI monitoring
- Stakeholder survey review
- Faculty calibration processes
- Continuous program improvement processes

Summary

Annual assessment findings for the 2025–2026 academic year demonstrate that the Northwestern College CMHC Program continues to prepare students who are:

- Ethical
- Compassionate
- Clinically capable
- Multiculturally responsive
- Professionally engaged
- Open to supervision and growth

Course-embedded KPI and rubric assessment findings demonstrated that students consistently met or exceeded established program benchmarks across assessed learning outcomes and professional competencies.

Assessment data support continued program effectiveness while also identifying targeted areas for ongoing curricular refinement and professional development.

The CMHC Program remains committed to systematic assessment, continuous improvement, and alignment with CACREP 2024 standards to support student success and high-quality counselor preparation.

Data Sources

- Blackboard Raw Goal and Rubric Assessment Data
- Graduate and Professional Studies Survey Data
- CCS-R Clinical Evaluation Reports
- Business Partner and Employer Feedback
- Climate of Department Survey Results