

Annual Report 2023-2024

The Counseling Program is pleased to present this 2023-2024 Academic Year annual report. This report highlights program evaluation results, including admissions data, graduation, and job placement rates, and our annual alumni survey. Each year, our full-time faculty review program data, consult with site supervisors and part-time faculty, and consider programmatic changes. Recent changes are detailed within this report.

Clinical Mental Health Counseling Concentration: Admissions and Graduation Rates

Date Range	Graduated in 2 years Number (%)	Graduated in 3 years Number (%)	Graduated in 4+ years Number (%)	Withdrew or did not finish Number (%)	Graduation Rate
2020-2021	21%	68%	11%	0	100%
2021-2022	16%	58%	25%	0	100%
2022-2023	13%	67%	20%	0	100%
2023-2024	7%	46%	46%	1	100%

The overall Graduation Rate for the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program is 100%. Most of the cohort earned the Counseling MS in 3-4 years during this term. The preferred time to complete the program continues to be three years. Working adults choose this option because it is most compatible with full-time employment.

Current Counseling Students (FTE)

The number of full-time, part-time, and full-time equivalent (FTE) students at each campus site.

FT=12 SCH FTE=FT+PTSCH/12

	Full-Time Students	Part-Time Students	F.T.E.
Clinical Mental Health Counseling	Fall 2023 1 Spring 2024 1	Fall 2023 41 Spring 2024 48	Fall 2023 27.83 Spring 2024 32.41
Certificate of Advanced Study	Fall 2023 0 Spring 2024 0	Fall 2023 6 Spring 2024 5	Fall 2023 2.58 Spring 2024 2.66

Counseling Program: Graduates by Concentration
Graduates for the past (7) Years

	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Clinical Mental Health Counseling	19	19	18	11	12	15	13
Certificate of Advanced Study	2	2	1	4	2	5	2

Counseling Program: The Student Demographic

The chart below reflects the racial and gender diversity of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program students.

2023-2024			
Ethnicity	Females	Males	Total
Amer. Indian- AK Native	2	0	2
Asian- Pacific Islander	1	0	1
Black- Non-Hispanic	16	2	18
Hispanic	18	0	18
Non-Resident Alien	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0
White-Non-Hispanic	16	3	19
Total	53	5	57

CMHC 2023-2024 CPCE Results

13 CMHC graduates attempted the CPCE and all but one passed the exam. The mean score for the group (80) is within one standard deviation of the national average (87+/- 16) in 2024.

Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Alumni Survey Results

The following sections summarize the survey results completed by 2023-2024 graduates of the University of Bridgeport's master's in counseling – Clinical Mental Health Counseling program. Alumni anonymously completed an 18-item, Likert-style questionnaire.

The survey aimed to assess the program's ability to prepare students in specific content areas: Multicultural Counseling Competency; Diagnostic Skills; Knowledge of and Proficiency in Ethical Use of Appraisal Instruments; Understanding and Use of Research; Knowledge of Ethical Codes; Techniques and Interventions in Individual and Group Settings. Alumni Assessment of Overall Program Quality.

Current Employment Status and National Counselor Exam (NCE) preparation were also examined.

Content Areas

Multicultural Counseling Competency

Of the alumni surveyed, 100% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “My program provided me with the skills necessary for counseling persons of different cultural contexts.”

Diagnostic Skills

100% agreed or strongly agreed that the CMHC program taught them diagnostic skills. No respondents disagreed with this statement.

Techniques and Interventions for Individual and Group Settings

When asked about the extent to which the program provided them with the therapeutic techniques and intervention competencies necessary for both individual and group settings, 100% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed.

Clinical Practice and Ethical Code

100% of the alumni surveyed strongly agreed that the program provided them with an understanding of the role of a professional counselor and the accompanying ethical code. No respondents disagreed with this statement.

Ethical Use of Appraisal Instruments

100% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the program prepared them with knowledge of the ethical use of appraisal instruments. No respondents disagreed.

Ability to Review and Conduct Research

When provided with the statement, “My program prepared me with knowledge to review and conduct counseling research, 100% of respondents answered, ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree,’.

Overall Program Quality

When asked about the overall quality of the CMHC program, 100% of respondents answered that they were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with it. 100% of respondents noted that they had recommended the program to a friend or family member.

Current Employment Status

When asked about current employment status, 85% of the alumni surveyed answered that they are currently employed, with 85% reportedly working in a field directly related to their graduate education at the University of Bridgeport. When asked about their employment locations, 71% of respondents reported working in an urban location, 14% reported working in a suburban location and 14% reported Other.

National Counselor Exam Preparation

At the time of survey distribution, 100% of respondents stated that they had taken the exam or intended to take the exam within a year. When asked if the CMHC program prepared them for the NCE, 85% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that it did so.

Program Changes 2023-2024

Throughout the 2022-2023 Academic Year, the UB Counseling Program continued to evolve and improve. Overall, the RP! program was implemented with moderate to high fidelity to the proposed model and work plan, indicating that the program design and interventions are well thought out and effective. The project directors place a high priority on monitoring process outcomes and progress towards achieving objectives, which facilitates a culture for robust RCQI.

The RP! team initiated a number of RCQI activities in Year Three, including: 1) modifying and enhancing existing courses based on student and/or consultant feedback; 2) additional mindfulness training for faculty, including learning “mindful yoga” in order to train students; and 3) additional DBT training for site supervisors, expanding and deepening the program’s reach into the practice community, including 12 weeks (18 hours) of DBT group skills training for 12 site supervisors at partner site APT Foundation and training for eight clinicians at Lifebridge in trauma treatment for children and adolescents.

Additional RCQI initiatives in year three included:

Meeting recruitment and enrollment goals for Year Three of the RP! program. Program staff set ambitious goals for enrollment Years Three and Four, with the intention of maximizing inclusivity and based upon good-faith application projections. Recruitment efforts have been hindered by several factors: changing academic decisions due to lingering effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, a portion of prospective students being academically unprepared, and the existence of new, competing similar programs in the area that may be drawing prospective students. To maximize engagement and enrollment, RP! faculty presented information to UB undergraduate students enrolled in psychology and human services courses during the 2023-2024 academic year. The presentations emphasized the need for diverse clinicians in the mental health profession. Dr. Dombrowski made a recorded copy of these presentations, which is posted to the UB Counseling homepage and distributed to UB Admissions, UB Career Development Center and undergraduate programs in Psychology and Human Services for marketing and recruitment purposes. Program staff and faculty are undertaking these and numerous other strategies to maximize engagement and enrollment in the program going forward, but adjustments may be required to the enrollment goals. UB may also benefit from securing an extension in the program operation period to enable them more time to enroll students in the program.

Enrollment of male scholars and racially/ethnically diverse scholars. The RP! program goal is that 30% of graduates will be bilingual Hispanic by 2025, and 30% of graduates will be men by 2025. Efforts undertaken in year three to maximize engagement of male students and racially/ethnically diverse students with a particular focus on bilingual Hispanic students, including aggressive and targeted outreach and marketing activities, are outlined above under Objective 2 in the Fidelity Evaluation. RP! staff and faculty have encountered institutional barriers to modifying marketing materials aimed at achieving gender diversity and bilingual Hispanic students. The RP! team is focused particularly on strategies that may prove the most fruitful, including the existing UB student pipeline, which is extremely diverse, and alumni referrals. Many of the strongest RP! students were undergraduates at UB. In addition, RP! faculty are pursuing an opportunity to increase enrollment by becoming a Registered Credential Training Provider (RCTP), through the Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE). Partnering with CCE will help to expand program offerings to

include new professional development opportunities for students seeking to advance in their careers. The two credentials being considered are: 1) Approved Clinical Supervisor (ACS) and 2) Board-Certified Tele Mental Health credentials. RP! faculty have acknowledged that the target number for the proportion of males in the program may prove to have been overly ambitious.

Training site supervisors in supervision of evidence-based, trauma-informed care. While there is strong demand and interest among site supervisors in EBT areas that include DBT, CACREP, trauma-informed care, cultural competency, LGBTQ+, SPACE (Supporting Parents of Anxious Children Emotions), one of the key tasks anticipated at initiation of the RP! program was supporting site supervisors interested in becoming expert at MI supervision and encouraging them to join MINT. Enrolling site supervisors in MINT has been especially challenging. To join MINT, which is the official network of trainers, individuals must pass a role play test and must also demonstrate, in their application, supervised training of teaching MI. The four-day course is only offered once a year. These requirements have proven burdensome. Faculty have observed that pursuing MINT certification may not be worth the time and resources required of counseling professionals, or a meaningful goal. The program team has determined that funds can be more effectively deployed to support additional training in MI for community professionals, rather than specifically for passage of the MINT exam. The UB faculty have undertaken the objective to train site supervisors through our online course available in Canvas. Project directors will promote and encourage MINT training among interdisciplinary departments at UB, such as Nursing, PA, and Public Health.

The UB Counseling Program has been granted accreditation status to offer a fully online version of the CMHC program. The online program will welcome its first full remote class starting in Spring 2025. Additionally, the UB CMHC program has hired a new full-time faculty member, Megan Homer, who will work remotely.