

**William Paterson University
Professional Counseling Program
Assessment Report 2014**

The Professional Counseling Program assesses the program on an ongoing basis. The following is a summary of the assessment activities over the last two years. All surveys were scored on a five point Likert type scale (1= Poor Preparation 2= Somewhat Poor Preparation 3=Fair Preparation 4= Good Preparation 5= Excellent Preparation)

The annual exit survey of graduates showed that 75% of the 2014 graduates who responded to the survey felt their preparation in the eight core curriculum areas was either good or excellent. The other 25% felt their preparation was fair. The majority also felt that the quality of knowledge and instruction provided by the faculty was either good or excellent. The majority of students also felt that their preparation for work in a mental health setting was only fair. The program is currently looking at ways to strengthen this preparation.

The alumni survey showed somewhat lower scores than the most recent graduates with the majority of graduates feeling that their preparation was only fair to good (means of 3-4.2). When analyzing the data it would appear that the ongoing changes that we make to the program based on feedback from multiple constituents has paid off, with recent graduates rating their preparation higher than those who graduated earlier. Another interpretation of these results might be that as graduates get jobs and are working in the field, they feel less prepared than they did upon graduation. The faculty is currently working on ways to clarify these findings.

The 2013 annual survey of site supervisors showed that the supervisors were even stronger in their support of the program. The mean rating for the eight core curriculum areas was between 4.3 and 4.9 showing that the majority felt that interns' preparation was between good and excellent. Site supervisors also found that interns' preparation for work at their site (both in schools and mental health agencies) was good to excellent (mean of 4.3 and 4.2 respectively).

Student scores on the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam (CPCE) (taken in the Fall of the last year of the program) have been consistently higher than the national mean. The CPCE has been given since 2009 and information from previous exams has been used to strengthen the student's curricular experience. For example, student scores in the area of social and cultural foundations were below the national mean in 2009. We made changes to the multicultural counseling course, and the scores have been rising. In Fall of 2013, student scores were at par with the national mean.

Finally, a needs assessment of current students conducted in March, 2014 showed that students felt that they needed more instruction in their concentration areas. Based on that feedback, the program has been changed to encompass a second

foundations course for the school counseling concentration and a second foundations course for the mental health concentration. Those changes will take effect in Fall, 2015.

For further details about our assessment activities, or if you would like to see the raw data, please contact the professional counseling program's assessment coordinator, Dr. Michelle Hinkle at hinklem@wpunj.edu.