



PhD Counselor Education | MS Clinical Mental Health Counseling | MS School  
Counseling

## 2020-2021 Counselor Education Unit Annual Report

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This report contains highlights of recent activities, changes, and initiatives that affect the specialized accredited programs within Capella University's Counselor Education Unit (CEU). The CEU continues to focus on academic excellence through our curriculum, residency experiences, practicum and internship, and learner advising. A comprehensive assessment process guides program improvement at the course, program, and unit levels.

## **COUNSELOR EDUCATION UNIT (CEU)**

In 2020-2021, the Counselor Education Unit at Capella University offered three advanced degree programs accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP): the MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC); the MS in School Counseling (SC), which is also accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP); and the PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision (CES). The CEU also offers the MS in Addiction Studies program, which is recognized by NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals.

The CEU has primary responsibility and authority for preparing professional counselors and counselor educators. One of its major responsibilities is to ensure graduate degree programs that are part of the CEU adhere to best practices and national accreditation standards and prepare learners to become competent clinicians and educators in their field.

## **THE COUNSELOR EDUCATION UNIT MISSION STATEMENT**

The Counselor Education Unit prepares adult learners committed to leadership, advocacy, and service to become professional counselors and counselor educators. Through our competency-based curriculum and comprehensive assessment program we ensure all learners have the knowledge and skills necessary to become practitioner-scholars. Our graduates are then prepared to serve a diverse population of clients across a variety of therapeutic settings and situations. We prepare our doctoral learners to serve as scholar-practitioners committed to the ethical practice of administration, teaching, supervision, and leadership in the counseling profession.

## **PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

### **MS Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC)**

The mission of the CACREP-accredited Clinical Mental Health Counseling program is to prepare master's-level counselors to work effectively with clients across diverse therapeutic settings and situations. Learners receive academic preparation and clinical training designed to instill high standards for professional practice based upon established ethical standards for counselors and sensitivity to the complex mental health needs of a multicultural society.

### **Key Program Modifications/Highlights in 2020-2021**

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling program prepares learners to serve as clinical mental health counselors for a diverse population of clients in various therapeutic settings. The

program seeks to deliver its curriculum through a dynamic, interactive, and collaborative learning environment and provides learners with a strong theoretical foundation in the field of professional mental health counseling.

Enrollment in the CMHC program decreased slightly in early 2020, a change the CEU attributes to impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Enrollment strengthened again by Q4 2020. Data collected via required forms from CMHC learners registered in site-based learning courses, site supervisors, and faculty instructors indicate strong learner performance and satisfaction during Practicum and Internship:

- Learners reported a high degree of satisfaction with their site-based learning experiences and noted significant growth in their performance at their sites.
- Site supervisors reported their graduate interns/learners are well prepared to apply knowledge, demonstrate a range of skills, and work competently and ethically with clients.
- Telehealth training was provided to support the transition of site-based learning sites to telehealth and for learners to maintain placements.

Feedback from learners, supervisors, and faculty about the site-based learning experience was incorporated in major course revisions to practicum and internship courses and the program manual.

The program added one core faculty member during 2020: Dr. LaToya Smith.

### **MS School Counseling (SC)**

The mission of the CACREP-accredited School Counseling program is to prepare master's learners to assume leadership positions as school counselors serving diverse populations of students in public or private elementary, middle, and high school settings. Built on national standards and the comprehensive school counseling model of the American School Counselor Association, the curriculum offers a comprehensive approach to the delivery and management of contemporary school counseling programs. Within the curriculum, there is an emphasis on assessment; intervention; individual and group counseling; school counseling core curriculum; consultation and consultation with teachers, parents, and the community; and advocacy for system change in the P-12 environment. Through coursework and clinical skills training, learners demonstrate proficiency in evidence-based counseling approaches for P-12 children and adolescents.

### **Key Program Modifications/Highlights**

Data from learners, faculty, site supervisors and other stakeholders are evaluated quarterly to ensure continuous improvement of the program. Most learners in the school counseling program begin their site-based learning in the fall quarter to better align their schedules with the public-school calendar. The number of learners enrolling in the program over the past year showed a slight decline due to COVID-19 and the impact to the P-12 environment; site-based

learning placements stayed consistent with pre-pandemic levels as many schools were able to support the transition to tele-based school counseling. Data collected from School Counseling learners registered in site-based learning courses, site supervisors, and faculty instructors indicate strong performance of learners on key learning outcomes evaluated during the clinical practice experience and high levels of satisfaction.

- Learners reported a high degree of satisfaction with their site-based learning experiences and noted significant growth in their performance at their sites.
- Site supervisors reported that school counseling interns/learners were well prepared to apply their knowledge, demonstrate a range of skills, and work competently and ethically with students.
- Telehealth training was provided to support the transition of site-based learning P-12 sites to telehealth and for learners to maintain placements as schools transitioned to virtual learning.

There was one addition to program core faculty in 2020: Dr. Denise Lenares Solomon.

### **PhD Counselor Education and Supervision (CES)**

The mission of the PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision program is to prepare scholar-practitioners for ethical practice of counseling, teaching, supervision, and research. The program utilizes the highest professional standards of counselor educator and supervisor training in a climate of collaborative scholarly inquiry to ensure all learners have the knowledge and skills necessary to fully participate and enhance the counseling profession. We prepare our learners and graduates to assume counseling leadership positions at a regional, state, and national level.

### **Key Program Modifications/Highlights**

During 2020, the CES program hosted doctoral learners in a legacy and restaged version of the curriculum, which launched in Q4 2019. Data from learners, faculty, site supervisors and other stakeholders are reviewed quarterly to evaluate the effectiveness of the new program curriculum in meeting program outcomes.

Data collected from EOCEs indicate high levels of learner satisfaction with the following: preparation for practicum; their own growth and performance; and their overall practicum experience. For internship, EOCE scores reflect high levels of learner satisfaction with course relevance and value; group supervision climate and value; overall quality of site-based learning instructors; overall satisfaction with supervised experiences; and overall quality of faculty supervisors across supervised experiences.

### **2020-2021 PROGRAM DEMOGRAPHICS**

#### **CEU Diversity Statement**

The Counselor Education Unit (CEU) in the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Capella University believes a diverse learning community is critical to preparing future practitioners. In

an inclusive learning environment that values individual differences, we prepare learners to serve their clients and communities while embracing these values of inclusivity and diversity.

### Learners

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>CMHC*</b>	<b>SC*</b>	<b>CES*</b>	<b>CEU Total**</b>
<b>American Indian or Alaska Native</b>	.37%	.10%	.22%	<b>.3%</b>
<b>Asian</b>	1.09%	.31%	1.77%	<b>.98%</b>
<b>Black or African American</b>	23.36	24.67%	30.38%	<b>24.38%</b>
<b>Hispanics of any race</b>	8.6%	10.64%	9.09%	<b>9.11%</b>
<b>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</b>	.27%	.41%	.22%	<b>.3%</b>
<b>Nonresident Alien</b>	.14%	.10%	.44%	<b>.16%</b>
<b>Race unspecified/unknown</b>	9.59%	7.68%	11.09%	<b>9.32%</b>
<b>Two or more races</b>	3.37%	2.35%	2%	<b>3%</b>
<b>White</b>	53.21%	53.74%	44.79%	<b>52.46%</b>

\*Program columns reflect the percentage of the total number of learners active in the program in 2020-21 who self-identified as each ethnicity.

\*\*The CEU total column reflects the percentage of the total number of learners active in the unit in 2020-21 who self-identified as each ethnicity.

<b>Gender</b>	<b>CMHC*</b>	<b>SC*</b>	<b>CES*</b>	<b>CEU Total**</b>
<b>Female</b>	84.97%	88.43%	87.58%	<b>86.02%</b>
<b>Male</b>	14.96%	11.57%	11.97%	<b>13.89%</b>
<b>Unspecified</b>	.07%	0%	.44%	<b>.99%</b>

\*The program columns reflect the percentage of the total number of learners in the program in 2020-21 who self-identified as each gender.

\*\*The CEU total column reflects the percentage of the total number of learners in the unit in 2020-21 who self-identified as each gender.

### Faculty\*

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>CEU Total*</b>
<b>American Indian or Alaska Native</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Asian or Pacific Islander</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Black or African American</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Hispanics of any race</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Nonresident Alien</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Race unspecified/unknown</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Two or more races</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>72%</b>

\*The CEU total column reflects the percentage of core faculty in the unit in 2020-21 who self-identified as each ethnicity.

Gender	CEU* Total
Female	72%
Male	12%
Prefers not to identify	16%

\*The CEU total column reflects the percentage of core faculty in the unit in 2020-21 who self-identified as each gender.

### Site Supervisors

Ethnicity	CMHC*	SC*	CES*	CEU Total**
American Indian or Alaska Native	.81%	.28%	0%	.53%
Asian or Pacific Islander	1.74%	1.94%	0%	1.7%
Black or African American	17.31%	17.22%	19.01%	17.19%
Hispanics of any race	5.92%	5.56	6.61%	5.96%
Race unspecified/unknown	.12%	2.78%	4.13%	2.83%
Two or more races	3.02%	2.5%	1.65%	3.36%
White	67.71%	69.72%	68.6%	68.45%

\*Program columns reflect the percentage of the total number of site supervisors in the program in 2020-21 who self-identified as each ethnicity.

\*\*\*The CEU total column reflects the percentage of the total number of site supervisors in the unit in 2020-21 who self-identified as each ethnicity.

Gender	CMHC*	SC*	CES*	CEU Total**
Female	76.89%	86.11%		79.83%
Male	21.37%	12.78%		18.41%
Unspecified	1.74%	1.11%		1.76%

\*The program columns reflect the percentage of the total number of site supervisors in the program in 2020-21 who self-identified as each gender.

\*\*The CEU total column reflects the percentage of the total number of site supervisors in the unit in 2020-21 who self-identified as each gender.

### PROFESSIONAL STAFF

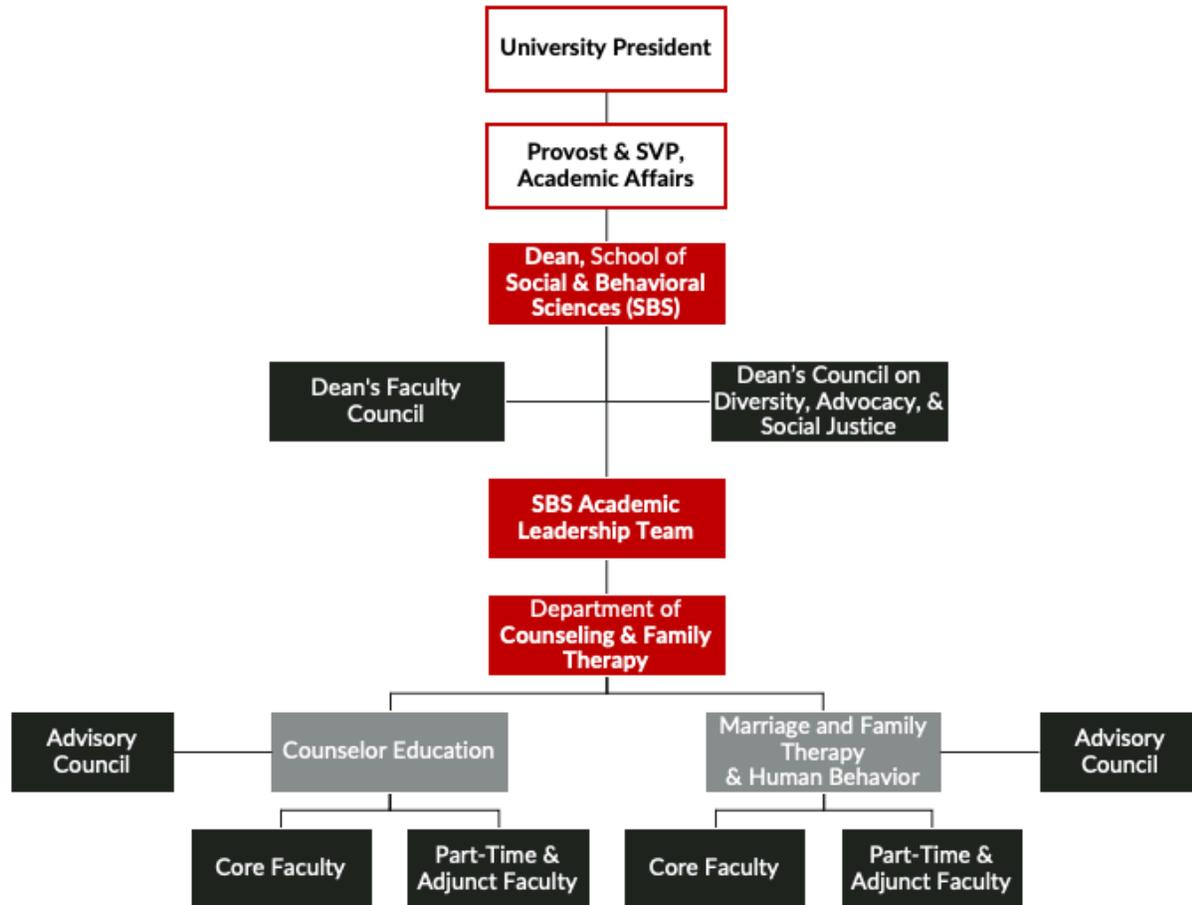
On October 19, 2020, Capella University completed a reorganization of its academic infrastructure, including its schools. The purpose of this reorganization was to increase effectiveness and allow faculty, academic leaders, and professional staff to better support learner experience, encourage persistence, and improve outcomes. As part of this reorganization, the School of Counseling and Human Services and the School of Psychology were merged to form one school, the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Within the new school are two separate departments: the Department of Counseling and Family Therapy and the Department of Psychology. Within the Department of Counseling and Family Therapy, there are two distinct academic units: the Counselor Education academic unit and the Marriage and Family Therapy academic unit.

The following leadership changes resulted from the reorganization:

- **Dr. Joshua Stanley** serves as dean for the School of Social and Behavior Sciences, providing broad strategic and operational oversight for the school and its departments.
- **Dr. Jody Neuman-Aamlie** serves as assistant dean and administrator for the Department of Counseling and Family Therapy.
- **Dr. Theresa Kasczak** serves as program director for counselor education. In this capacity, Dr. Kasczak also serves as CACREP liaison.
- **Dr. William Attridge** serves as assistant academic program director for counselor education.
- **Dr. Nicole Holby** serves as assistant academic program director and clinical training coordinator for the academic unit. In this role, she coordinates counselor education practicum and internship experiences.
- **Dr. Teresa Smith** serves as faculty director for counselor education. The faculty director supports learner success by ensuring faculty excellence through onboarding, professional development and sharing online teaching best practices, and coaching faculty who need additional support.

In the new organizational structure, core faculty report directly to the program director, Dr. Theresa Kasczak. Part-time and adjunct faculty report to both the program director and a faculty director. The faculty director supports excellence in teaching through the activities described above. The program director retains full oversight of the counselor education programs, including: curriculum; learner concerns and professional fitness; assessment and evaluation of learner and program performance; recruitment, selection, and retention of diverse core, part-time, and adjunct faculty; and determining which faculty are qualified to teach which courses.

The following organizational chart represents the governance structure for the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences, the Department of Counseling and Family Therapy, and the Counselor Education academic unit:



## INNOVATIVE PROCESSES SUPPORTING THE CEU

### Action Analytics and CEU Assessment System

The Counselor Education Unit's assessment system provides a framework for the quarterly faculty-led review of curriculum, program procedures and policy, and learner development for the Clinical Mental Health Counseling, School Counseling, and Counselor Education and Supervision programs. The Assessment Plan establishes the guidelines for the Action Analytics process. Within this comprehensive assessment plan, faculty from each program review quarterly data to identify the program's strengths and areas of opportunity, and to assess the program's effectiveness in meeting its outcomes and professional standards.

### Faculty Advising Forum

Learners in the CEU are assigned a faculty advisor who provides guidance and support throughout the program. The Faculty Advising Forum (FAF) is the online courseroom available to learners throughout their programs to provide important program information, including academic, residency, and internship topics, and to support the learners' personal and professional development. Each FAF courseroom is structured by geographic region, which allows for the sharing of regionally specific information and resources and an opportunity for

learners to build their professional network. The FAF courserooms are aligned by program area and facilitated by a CEU faculty advisor.

The Academic Learner Review (ALR) that takes place within the FAF provides an opportunity for learners to consult with their program faculty advisor at key milestones throughout their graduate program. The key milestones for MS learners occur during their first quarter of enrollment in the program, and three additional times throughout the duration of the program. Similarly, for doctoral learners the first milestone is the first quarter of enrollment, followed by the quarter targeted for clinical practice planning, and then the last quarter of clinical practice before the learner transitions to focusing on the dissertation.

In the ALR, the faculty advisor and learner meet to discuss the learner's professional and personal development to define goals, address opportunities, and articulate the learner's strengths. As part of the ALR, faculty review learner progress and development as measured by key performance indicators and professional disposition assessments and create plans for strengthening future performance and professional identity development. For learners who do not attend the meeting, faculty advisors complete an ALR based on the learners' academic transcript and other documentation as needed.

### **HONOR SOCIETY**

Capella's Chi Sigma Iota chapter, Chi Upsilon Chi (CUC), is led by the Executive Board composed of Capella learners and guided by faculty advisors. CUC inducts new members during quarterly virtual induction ceremonies. Capella inducted 381 learners into Chi Upsilon Chi during 2020-2021.

### **LICENSURE**

The academic leadership team partners with the Research, Legal, Regulatory and Licensure department to support the licensure questions and needs of learners and alumni. An interactive licensure tool is also available for learners who wish to research requirements for licensure by state and type of license sought. The site maintains current information regarding alignment of program coursework with licensure requirements as well as links to state licensure board websites. Learners can submit a webform requesting assistance with state licensure concerns or questions and one of the licensure specialists will provide the information that is needed.

### **NATIONAL COUNSELOR EXAM**

Through the Graduate Student Application for the National Certified Counselor (GSA-NCC) program, Capella facilitates the application process for learners seeking this voluntary professional credential (the NCC). One requirement for attaining the credential is passing the National Counselor Exam (NCE). Though this is not an application for state licensure, the NCE is one of two exams that many states use for evidence that a practitioner is ready to practice independently. Learners enrolled in a CACREP-accredited program are permitted to apply for the NCC and take the NCE in the final year of their program or up to one year after graduating as a student applicant.

The NCE is offered twice each year (April and October). Capella's campus coordinator for the NCE works with qualified graduate learners in the CEU to register for and take the NCE during the final stages of their counselor education program. Results of the NCE are provided to Capella and are reviewed by faculty to inform potential curriculum revisions.

### **CEU ADVISORY COUNCILS**

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling/Counselor Education and Supervision and School Counseling Advisory Councils each comprise key stakeholders such as faculty, practitioners/site supervisors, and learners/alumni. The councils meet biannually to review program and accreditation updates, and to explore topics that are relevant to the enhancement and further development of the programs. Reports from the Advisory Council meetings are maintained on SharePoint and presented to school program leadership teams.

### **Academic Standards and Professional Fitness Committees**

The Counseling Programs Professional Standards and Academic Faculty Review Panels continue to support a growth-based review of learner needs, strengths, and academic/professional requirements. The committee is composed of faculty members representing the programs within the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences.