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**Master of Arts in Counseling**

**The Master of Arts in Counseling Program's  
2019 – 2020 Annual Report**

**Submitted December 2020**

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## Master of Arts in Counseling

### The Master of Arts in Counseling Program's 2019 – 2020 Annual Report

This report contains an overview of the Master of Arts in Counseling (MAC) Program, including data from courses, survey data, faculty information, and program data as outlined in the Comprehensive Evaluation Plan for the Masters of Arts in Counseling Program. As part of MAC's ongoing comprehensive program evaluation, this report includes updates, summary data, findings from the formal comprehensive evaluation, and program modifications made as a result of these findings.

#### Getting to Know the MAC Program

##### MAC Program Summary

The Master of Arts in Counseling (MAC) Program offers a 60-semester hour program for the Clinical Mental Health Counseling concentration and a 50-semester hour program for the School Counseling concentration. Both concentrations are designed to meet the national academic and field placement standards set forth by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP); the Ohio Counselor, Social Worker, Marriage/Family Therapist (OCSWMFT) Board; and the Ohio Department of Education (ODE); and Ohio Department of Higher Education requirements for students who are seeking licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC), and/or Licensed Professional School Counselor (LPSC).

##### MAC Vision Statement

The Master of Arts in Counseling (MAC) Program is an elite counseling program that will set the standard for training future and current counselors to address the rapidly changing mental health needs throughout the world. The MAC family creates a transformative learning environment that challenges students to evolve professionally and personally and emerge as leaders in counseling. To reach this vision, Heidelberg's Graduate Counseling Program will:

- Create a culture of excellence with collegiality and high expectations
- Attract and develop a diverse, talented, counseling workforce
- Learn from expert faculty that are engaged in scholarship and leaders in the profession
- Collaborate with the Tiffin community to provide support, education, and action to address issues related to counseling and mental health in the community
- Use high impact learning experiences to develop critical thinking skills that will help solve the world's most complex mental health problem
- Have students engage in research and others forms of scholarship to emerge as leaders in the counseling field
- Develop and maintain excellent counseling skills to provide outstanding care
- Observe the highest standards of ethics, integrity and cultural competency
- Continuously update curriculum using the collective expertise of MAC faculty and other stakeholders to ensure that students are prepared for the rapidly changing counseling needs

## MAC Updates

The biggest change that the MAC Program faced during the 2019-2020 academic year was the rapid transition to virtual learning due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Faculty transitioned from in-person instruction to remote learning instruction during Spring Break and most faculty used Zoom to facilitate synchronous course environments to finish the Spring Semester. During the summer semester, MAC delivered the entire curriculum online in accordance with the special provisions allowed to counseling programs during the pandemic according to The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

In addition to the course curriculum, the MAC Program also had to address the impact on field experience for all students. Since K-12 schools went to remote learning, all school counseling students were required to find other ways to get hours. Most schools allowed for some telehealth and all students were able to finish their hours in time for graduation, albeit some needed to take an incomplete and finish later. Similarly, clinical students were completely remote for the duration of the Spring semester and engaged in telehealth counseling. Once the summer semester began, some students returned to their sites while most students completed some in-person counseling and some telehealth counseling. MAC is proud to be one of the programs that switched quickly during the beginning of the pandemic. MAC quickly had all students currently enrolled in field trained in telehealth and all faculty received certifications in telehealth, as well.

## Applicant and Enrollment Data

### Demographic Data for Applicants

Race/Ethnicity					Gender	
Black/AA	Hispanic/Latinx	White	Multiracial	No Response	Female	Male
10.7%	5.4%	80.4%	1.8%	1.8%	67.9%	32.1%

A total of 56 prospective students applied to the MAC program during the 2019 – 2020 academic year. The data shows that the majority of applicants were White (80.4%), followed by Black/African American students at 10.7%. The program continues to explore ways to attract more underrepresented students. However, the percentage of Black/African American applicants increased from 4% in the 2017 – 2018 academic year. Additionally, the majority of applicants identified as female (67.9%) and the program continues to explore more ways to attract more males to the program. The percentage of male applicants increased from 24% in the 2017 – 2018 academic year to 32.1%.

### Demographic Data for Enrolled Students

Race/Ethnicity					Gender		
Black/AA	Hispanic/Latinx	White	Multiracial	International	Female	Male	Transgender/Non-Conforming
8.2%	1.4%	78.0%	9.7%	2.8%	74.0%	23.4%	2.6%

The total enrollment for the 2019 -2020 academic year was 77 students. Similarly, to the application data, the majority of enrolled students were White, however they make up a 78.0% of the enrolled population. The next highest group is Multiracial at 9.7% and Black at 8.2%. Similarly, the majority of enrolled students were female (74%).

## Data Sources

The *Comprehensive Evaluation Plan for MAC* is an ongoing assessment and evaluation on the program, its practices, and its policies. Data used to evaluate the program come from a variety of sources:

- Key Performance Indicator Data used to evaluate Student Learning Outcomes
- Exit Survey
- Program Evaluation from Site Supervisors
- Alumni Data (not collected this year, collected every three years)

- Employer Data (not collected this year, collected every three years)
- Site Visits
- Student Evaluations

### Evaluating Program Objectives

This section provides a summary of the program objectives and the information used to evaluate them over the 2019 - 2020 academic year. It should be noted that all scales referenced on surveys and evaluations use the following Likert scale: (1) = Below Expectations, (2) = Approaching Expectations, (3) = Meeting Expectations, (4) = Exceeding Expectations.

**Program Objective 1.** Provide students with the knowledge and skills to successfully obtain licensure and employment as counselors.

During the 2019 – 2020 academic year, students were evaluated by their supervisors and on average fell between meeting expectations (3) and exceeding expectations (4). Additionally, MAC had an 86% first-time pass rate for first-time examinees taking the clinical licensure exam and a 60% pass rate for examinees taking the school licensure exam. It should be noted that due to the challenges with studying for the exam and taking the exam during the COVID pandemic, less students took the exam with several taking it before graduations. Additionally, the first-time pass rates are lower than usual. In response to these issues, the Ohio Department of Education is allowing for a temporary license for one year to help students deal with the stress and challenges associated with taking a licensure exam during the pandemic.

MAC graduates in the clinical program had a 100% employment rate for those looking for jobs within the first six months of graduation over the past year. MAC graduates in the school counseling program had a 80% employment rate for those looking for jobs within the first six months of graduation over the past year. According to the exit survey, 47.5% of students that responded had accepted a job before they graduated.

Additionally, site supervisors rated the program a 3.8 when asked about the preparation for students to obtain licensure and employment as counselors, which falls between meeting expectations (3) and exceeding expectations (4).

**Program Objective 2.** Prepare students to use the highest ethical and legal standards in professional counseling practice.

All students received a score between meeting expectations (3) and exceeding expectations (4) on the student evaluations by site supervisors in Internship I and Internship II on questions related to ethical and legal practice. Additionally, the average score on Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 2 (Apply and adhere to ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling.) was 3.3, which falls between meeting expectations (3) and exceeding expectations (4).

Additionally, site supervisors rated the program a 3.8 when asked about preparing students to use the highest ethical and legal standards which falls between meeting expectations (3) and exceeding expectations (4).

**Program Objective 3.** Provide students with the curriculum to address the knowledge and skills identified in the CACREP eight core areas.

The eight core areas are assessed using 1 – 11 of the 13 Student Learning Objectives. Details are provided in the Measuring Student Learning Outcomes section; however, on average, students met expectations and had scores between meeting expectations (3) and exceeding expectations (4).

**Program Objective 4.** Emphasize diversity issues that will prepare students to be effective counselors in a global society.

MAC faculty emphasize diversity issues throughout the courses and curriculum. Additionally, this is measured in SLO 3: Demonstrate an understanding of social and cultural diversity in counseling practice within a global society. The average score for SLO 3 for this academic year was 3.7. All students received a score between meeting expectations (3) and exceeding expectations (4) on the student evaluations by site supervisors in Internship I and II on questions related to diversity. Responses from the Exit Survey also echoed the emphasis on diversity.

Additionally, site supervisors rated the program a 3.8 when asked about preparing students be effective counselors in a global society which falls between meeting expectations (3) and exceeding expectations (4).

Diversity and cultural competencies are interwoven in 100% of the courses offered. Also, listed below are some examples of ways that that diversity has been emphasized in the curriculum.

- Faculty incorporated a diversity travel experience in to the Cross-Cultural Counseling course to broaden experiences, add service-learning component, and prepare students to serve in a global society (many of our student have never left the area or the state).
- Faculty added a focus on advocacy after interview data regarding counselor identity.
  - Through the 2019 - 2020 academic year faculty and students incorporated advocacy work within the campus and community. MAC students listened to undergraduate experiences and advocated for gender neutral bathrooms, helping to identify and get inclusive signage for 21 gender neutral bathrooms on campus.
  - Students worked collaboratively with community members to plan a Pride caravan to ensure representation in the community while maintaining the appropriate health guidelines.
  - MAC students organized an inclusive art event downtown to raise awareness for Black Lives Matter and for ways the rural community can support and rally behind the movement.
  - Students and faculty collaborated with community Suicide Prevention Coalition to advocate at the local Heritage Parade.
- Through the use of digital mediums students were guided to explore bias, build awareness and knowledge, research skills and ways to advocate for identified populations.
- Diversity and cultural competencies are interwoven in 100%) of our courses than the previous year.

**Program Objective 5.** Prepare students to develop in-depth knowledge of self-selected specialized areas of counseling, such as clinical mental health counseling, and/or school counseling.

This objective is measured using SLO 12 for school and SLO 13 for clinical mental health. Students scored an average of 3.75 on the school specialization and an average of 3.5 on the clinical specialization. Additionally, comments from the exit survey suggest that students were able to develop the knowledge in their chosen specialty areas.

Additionally, site supervisors rated the program a 3.7 when asked about preparing students to develop in-depth knowledge of their self-selected specialized areas of counseling which falls between meeting expectations (3) and exceeding expectations (4).

**Program Objective 6.** Provide students with up to date and evolving curriculum to effectively address emerging and vital issues such as trauma, crisis, emergency preparedness, technology, etc.

Program evaluations from site supervisors suggest that students are getting updated curriculum. Site supervisors rated the program a 3.7 when asked about providing students with up to date and evolving curriculum to effectively address emerging and vital issues which falls between meeting expectations (3) and exceeding

expectations (4). Trauma and crisis curriculum have been embedding into the program and is covered in several courses including, Theories and Advanced Techniques, Counseling Issues in a Global Society, and the field experience courses.

In response to the rapidly increase of substance use in Ohio, MAC offered a Substance use course for all students. Similarly, ethical technology use has also been embedded into the program. Additionally, all MAC students in the field experience course completed a 12-hour CEU certification training during the first few weeks to the transition to telehealth counseling. This training was called TeleMental Health: The New Standard – Ethical, Legal, Clinical, Technological, and Practice Considerations. In the site supervisors’ evaluations of the program and in site visits, many of our supervisors highlighted the training that students had on telehealth, which was often more than what the supervisor had received.

The pandemic and increased awareness of racial injustices provided some unique opportunities for relevant and important curriculum. Vital issues such as the health pandemic, racial pandemic, natural disasters/climate change were incorporated into clinical assessment to guide students how to broach and ask pertinent questions regarding emerging issues. These topics were addressed in practicum and internship in a variety of ways including broaching with the client, crisis and emergency preparedness (having discussions with supervisors regarding COVID protocols, safety protocols, etc), and the longitudinal impacts of these experiences.

**The switch to telehealth and virtual learning has also allowed some unique opportunities as listed below:**

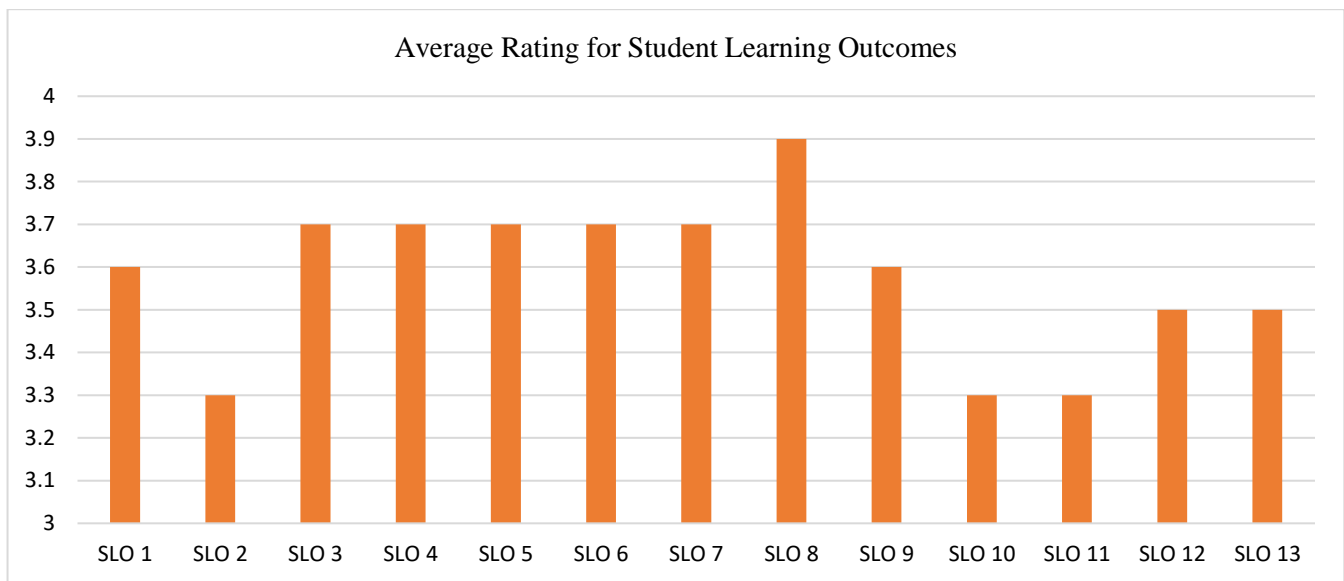
- With the switch to virtual learning MAC is now training students to complete interviews and network virtually, and in the use of various types of digital platforms they might use in a clinical setting or school setting.
- As legislation has changed (i.e. revised code updated regarding confidentiality and court cases with minors, telehealth and insurance, etc.), the MAC program works with a local attorney to do a brief update with students, faculty, and/or supervisors). This allows the program to evolve with the ever-changing counseling field, while modeling transparency, addressing documentation, collaborating with other fields, and adjusting curriculum as needed.
- The Techniques of Counseling course introduced Telehealth and used Zoom for lab practice.

Additional trainings that the student received were provided as workshops as listed below:

- Children of Trauma & Restorative Supervisory Relationships
- Integrated Behavioral Health Colloquium
- Creativity in Counseling & Supervision
- Street Smart Ohio and Addiction Treatment

### Measuring Student Learning Outcomes

The MAC program has identified thirteen Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) based on the 2016 CACREP Standards and the MAC program objectives. Students were assessed on the degree to which they demonstrate introductory, practice, and mastery-level competence on these thirteen areas. A Key Performance Indicator (KPI) is aligned to one of the three SLO levels, and student learning was assessed regarding the degree to which the student demonstrated competence of that SLO. Students were rated on the following four-point scale for SLOs: Below Standard (1), Approaching Standard (2), At Standard (3), and Exceeds Standard (4). An average of the score for each Student Learning Outcome is summarized below in the chart.



The KPI data suggests that on average students fell between meets expectations (3) and exceeds expectations (4) for all student learning outcomes. Each student learning outcome is also provided below with its rating.

Student Learning Outcome	Average Rating
<b>SLO 1.</b> Articulate the roles and responsibilities of a counselor and demonstrate a strong professional identity.	<b>3.6</b>
<b>SLO 2.</b> Apply and adhere to ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling.	<b>3.3</b>
<b>SLO 3.</b> Demonstrate an understanding of social and cultural diversity in counseling practice within a global society.	<b>3.7</b>
<b>SLO 4.</b> Apply lifespan developmental, social, and psychological processes that underlie human development and family life cycle transitions to the case conceptualization of clients.	<b>3.7</b>
<b>SLO 5.</b> Use theories of career development to assist with career development, planning, and counseling.	<b>3.7</b>
<b>SLO 6.</b> Demonstrate knowledge of counseling theories, techniques, and skills to establish and maintain an effective relationship.	<b>3.7</b>
<b>SLO 7.</b> Demonstrate a general framework for assisting with crisis intervention, trauma informed care, and community-based strategies.	<b>3.7</b>
<b>SLO 8.</b> Demonstrate knowledge of counseling theories, group dynamics, techniques, and skills necessary to effectively facilitate group counseling.	<b>3.9</b>
<b>SLO 9.</b> Demonstrate the ability to administer and/or interpret the results of instruments that measure career, aptitude, personality, achievement, and interests.	<b>3.6</b>
<b>SLO 10.</b> Evaluate counseling outcomes using research and program evaluation concepts.	<b>3.3</b>
<b>SLO 11.</b> Demonstrate the ability to function and perform professionally and competently in a field setting.	<b>3.3</b>
<b>SLO 12.</b> Demonstrate an understanding of professional school counseling and P-12 comprehensive school counseling programs including the use of data to assess program and student outcomes.	<b>3.5</b>

### Program Modifications and Substantial Changes Based on Findings

As MAC faculty reviewed the data, several modifications were suggested and many were implemented. Some modifications were taken directly from the data while others evolved through discussion from a position of ongoing growth and reflection. The program modifications that arose based on findings are outlined below:



- Discussions revealed that the current way we are collecting and analyzing data is cumbersome for both the faculty entering the data and the person collecting data. The faculty will use the Spreadsheet tools in Google to attempt a more efficient process and will re-evaluate at the end of the year.
- Based on the lower pass rates this year, faculty are developing a plan to help students begin preparing for the exams earlier. Faculty will also work with students to develop test-taking strategies because many students identified the overall stress of the pandemic as the reasons for the struggles they had with testing. working with students.
- The MAC Program added a course (COU 502: Introduction to Professional Counseling Identity) to address some of the challenges with graduate-level preparedness.

### **Program, Faculty, and Student Accomplishments**

The pandemic created a variety of challenges, but the Graduate Counseling Program has a lot to celebrate as well.

- MAC student Quinn Sparks was awarded the Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues in Counseling (ALGBTIC) Graduate Student of the Year Award
- MAC alum, Mo Stohlman was voted as the Ohio Association for Spiritual, Ethical, & Religious Values in Counseling (OASERVIC) President-Elect
- Two MAC alums enrolled into PhD programs.
- Two MAC students were named ALGBTIC-Ohio Emerging Leaders -Autumn Crawford & Courtney Hughes Ksenich.
- MAC students Quinn Sparks and Mariah Payne presented a poster presentation at the All Ohio Counselors Conference.
- MAC students, Savannah Long, Kaitlyn Bilsing, Alexis Flores, and Alyna Lewis were granted scholarships to attend the State Inaugural Human Trafficking Summit by the office of Ohio's Attorney General.
- MAC faculty member DoHee Kim-Appel was voted the Ohio Counseling Association President Elect.
- MAC faculty member Marjorie Shavers was nominated for the 2019 Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Supervisor of the Year Award.
- MAC faculty member Meagan McBride was elected to the local school board.
- MAC faculty drove over 600 miles on a "Graduation Caravan" to celebrate MAC graduates in a socially distanced manner.
- Heidelberg's MAC Program continues to be ranked as the #1 Best Value Program in Ohio.