



Master of Arts in Counseling

The Master of Arts in Counseling Program 2025 – 2026 Annual Program Evaluation Report (Summer 2025-Spring 2026)

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Master of Arts in Counseling

Annual Program Evaluation Report

Academic Year 2025-2026 · Clinical Mental Health Counseling · Heidelberg University

Purpose and Scope

This report presents the results of the program's systematic evaluation for academic year 2025-2026 and the program modifications that followed from those results. The MAC program updated its data collection to align with the 2024 CACREP Standards beginning Summer 2024. Heidelberg University's academic year runs from summer through spring.

The program conducts multi-year trend analysis using a rolling comparison across academic years. The first full three-year comparison will be available following data collection ending Spring 2027.

The program operates a single delivery pathway and a single CACREP specialized practice area, Clinical Mental Health Counseling. Results are therefore not disaggregated by delivery type or specialized practice area.

Program Objectives

Academic quality indicators are aligned to the following program objectives. The MAC Program will:

1. Provide students with the knowledge and skills to successfully obtain licensure and employment as counselors.
2. Prepare students to use the highest ethical and legal standards in professional counseling practice.
3. Provide students with the curriculum to address the knowledge and skills identified in the CACREP eight core areas.
4. Emphasize diversity issues that will prepare students to be effective counselors in a global society.
5. Provide students with up to date and evolving curriculum to effectively address emerging and vital issues such as trauma, crisis, emergency preparedness, technology, neurocounseling, addictions, etc.

Academic Quality Indicators — Results Against Thresholds

Indicator	Minimum threshold	Result	Status
Key performance indicators (2.E.1.a)	80% of students earn 80% or higher on each measure	Threshold met on all measures. Two measures had one student each below the individual expectation: 91% met on the Diagnostic Assessment Exercise, 92% on the Fictional Case Treatment Plan.	Met
Professional dispositions (2.E.1)	Minimum rating of 3 on each disposition	All students met the threshold on all disposition categories at all scheduled measurement points. No additional disposition reviews were required.	Met
Credentialing examination pass rate (2.E.2.a)	80% of graduates attempting the NCE pass	8 of 8 students who attempted the NCE passed (100%).	Met

Degree completion rate (2.E.2.b)	80% of students complete the degree on time relative to their individual program of study	All 9 students in the graduating cohort completed the degree as anticipated and on time relative to their individual course plans (100%).	Met
Employment and doctoral admission rate (2.E.2.c)	80% employed or admitted to doctoral study within 6 months	8 of 9 graduates (89%) were employed within six months. The ninth graduate had not yet reached six months post-graduation at the time of reporting.	Met
Fieldwork placement rate — practicum (2.E.4)	80% of students completing Field Orientation placed in the requested semester	14 students began the placement process and 13 were placed in the requested semester (93%). The one student who was not placed did not complete the placement process by an extended deadline.	Met
Fieldwork placement rate — internship (2.E.4)	90% of students completing practicum placed for internship	All 13 students who completed practicum continued into internship at the same placement site (100%).	Met

Key performance indicators — detail

Two KPI measures had one student each fall below the 80% individual performance expectation. The first was the Diagnostic Assessment Exercise, measuring the Lifespan Development KPI. The second was the Fictional Case Treatment Plan, measuring the Clinical Mental Health Counseling KPI.

In both instances the aggregate threshold was met: 91% of students met the performance expectation on the Diagnostic Assessment Exercise and 92% on the Fictional Case Treatment Plan, against an aggregate threshold of 80%. No curricular modification was therefore triggered. Consistent with the program's individual student assessment process, faculty reviewed each student's performance individually and determined the appropriate response, including feedback, support, or remediation, in accordance with the program's retention, remediation, and dismissal policy. Faculty will monitor these two measures in subsequent cycles to determine whether the results reflect individual circumstances or an emerging pattern warranting curricular review.

Degree completion — note on method

The program measures degree completion against each student's individual program of study rather than against a single fixed timeframe, because the program enrolls both full-time and part-time students whose planned completion timelines differ. A student is counted as completing on time when they graduate in the term identified in their program of study, as established with their academic advisor at admission and reviewed at each subsequent registration. All nine students in the 2025-2026 graduating cohort completed on time by this measure.

Fieldwork placement — note on method

Practicum and internship placement rates are reported separately against their respective thresholds. Both were met. The single unplaced student did not complete the placement process by an extended deadline; the cause was process compliance rather than site availability, and no site development action was indicated. Internship placement reflects continuation at the practicum site for all thirteen students, which the program monitors as an indicator of site relationship stability.

Additional Data Collected

Site supervisor program feedback

Thirty-one site supervisors completed Supervisor Program Feedback forms during 2025-2026: Summer 2025 (9), Fall 2025 (9), Spring 2026 (13). The instrument asks whether the supervisor considered the student prepared in knowledge and skills, ethical and legal practice, diversity, specialized practice area, and emerging issues.

- Summer 2025: of 9 supervisors, 6 strongly agreed across all areas and 2 agreed across all areas. One supervisor rated strongly disagree across all areas.
- Fall 2025: of 9 supervisors, 7 strongly agreed and 2 agreed. The supervisor who rated strongly disagree in the prior term rated strongly agree in this term.
- Spring 2026: of 13 supervisors, 8 strongly agreed across all areas, 3 agreed across all areas, and 2 recorded a mix of strongly agree and agree.

Follow-up on an outlier rating

The Summer 2025 rating of strongly disagree across all areas was inconsistent with the supervisor's other feedback and with the pattern of responses from other supervisors that term. Dr. Bordner, Field Coordinator, contacted the supervisor directly. The supervisor reported that the placement had gone well, that he had valued hosting a Heidelberg student, and that he was satisfied with the student's preparation. In the following term the same supervisor rated strongly agree across all areas. The program treats this as an isolated response rather than an indication of dissatisfaction, and has retained the original rating in the aggregate data.

Student evaluation of site and supervisor

Thirty-one students completed Student Evaluation of Site and Supervisor forms during 2025-2026: Summer 2025 (9), Fall 2025 (9), Spring 2026 (13). Students rated agency setting and professional development on a five-point scale.

- Summer 2025: all 9 students rated all categories 5. Open comments were absent or requested training in specific populations.
- Fall 2025: all 9 students recorded a mixture of 4s and 5s across varied categories. Open responses were favorable.
- Spring 2026: of 13 students, 12 recorded a mixture of 4s and 5s and 1 rated all items 5. Open responses were favorable.

Review of this instrument identified that it did not separately evaluate the site supervisor. A supervisor-specific category was added effective Fall 2026.

Graduating student exit survey

Eight of nine graduating students completed the exit survey during 2025-2026 (89% response rate). One respondent was a part-time student; the remainder were full-time.

- Advising: feedback was positive overall. One student described difficulties where financial aid processing interfered with scheduling.
- Program strengths: small class sizes, preparedness for professional practice, faculty support, and the program's success in securing grant funding.

- Program improvement: more role play, more content and experience with specialized populations including developmental disabilities and substance use, and opportunities to practice skills closer to the start of fieldwork.
- Field experience: students reported feeling prepared and requested more practice with interventions.
- Other: students reported the group course structure was confusing and requested clarity on scheduling. Students reported feeling both supported and challenged.

Field placement process evaluation

This evaluation was established following the Spring 2026 Field Orientation. Data collection begins Fall 2026, with the first full cycle completing Spring 2027.

Enrollment and student demographics

Total enrollment for 2025-2026 was 25 students.

Enrollment group	Students
Fall 2024 cohort	11
Fall 2025 cohort	11
Part-time students	3
Total	25

Category	Male	Female	Nonbinary / gender fluid	Total
American Indian / Alaska Native	0	0	0	0
Asian	0	0	0	0
Black	0	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
Hispanic	0	0	0	0
Multiracial	0	1	1	2
Other / not listed	0	1	0	1
White	5	16	1	22
Total	5	18	2	25

Standard 2.E.3, addressing the program's diverse learning community, is currently suspended. Demographic data are reported here as descriptive context for the program's evaluation results rather than as an academic quality indicator.

Program Modifications and the Data That Prompted Them

The following modifications were made, or are under faculty consideration, as a result of the evaluation data reported above.

Modification	Data that prompted it
Supervisor-specific evaluation category added to the Student Evaluation of Site and Supervisor, effective Fall 2026	Student Evaluation of Site and Supervisor data, 2025-2026: the instrument assessed agency setting and professional development but did not separately evaluate the site supervisor
Academic advising evaluation implemented for enrolled students, administered each fall	Graduating student exit survey, 2025-2026: advising feedback was collected only at program exit, which did not allow the program to respond for students still enrolled
Field Placement Process Evaluation established following Spring 2026 Field Orientation	Field placement data and program review: no systematic evaluation of the placement process itself existed
Clinician Consortium established, convening January 9 and April 17, 2026	Advisory Board feedback, April 27, 2025: area providers identified a need for ongoing awareness of practice trends, service gaps, and placement capacity
Court-ready documentation content added to COU 610, delivered June 25, 2025 and opened to the community as continuing education	Advisory Board feedback, April 27, 2025: site supervisors identified documentation and legal defensibility as a development area
Documentation texts and terminology aligned across the full curriculum	Advisory Board feedback, April 27, 2025: supervisors identified inconsistency in documentation preparation; current students identified inconsistent expectations across courses
Trauma coursework and experiential components strengthened	Advisory Board feedback, April 27, 2025: board members identified a need for greater trauma awareness and preparation, and reported increases in acute crisis presentations
Program objectives revised from six to five	Institutional sunset of the school counseling program; faculty review: May 2025
Role play and applied skills practice expanded across the curriculum. Role plays are now incorporated in COU 537 (second semester), COU 503 (family assessment role play), COU 510 (assessment), COU 610 (treatment planning, third semester), COU 613 (trauma intensive), and COU 580 (practicum). An advanced skills option was added in the final semester.	Graduating student exit survey, 2025-2026: students requested more role playing and the opportunity to practice skills closer to the start of fieldwork
Specialized population content expanded across the curriculum. COU 537 now addresses specialized addictions processes; COU 609 added content on postpartum presentations; COU 512 covers advocacy, current legislation affecting special populations, and Narcan training; and content on the developmental disabilities population was added to the trauma course. The program also partnered with the Summit County Board of Developmental Disabilities to offer continuing education training for students and area providers on working with the developmental disabilities population.	Graduating student exit survey, 2025-2026: students requested more content and experience with specialized populations, including developmental disabilities and substance use

Intervention resource library established. The Field Coordinator built a shared drive of counseling interventions accessible to all students in COU 580 (Practicum) and COU 583 (Internship), from which students can review and download materials for use with clients.	Graduating student exit survey, 2025-2026: students reported feeling prepared for field experience and requested more practice with interventions
COU 508 (Group Processes in Counseling) was reworked and restructured in response to student feedback, with attention to the course structure and the clarity of the schedule communicated to students.	Graduating student exit survey, 2025-2026: students reported the group class structure was confusing and requested clarity on the schedule. Advisory Board feedback, April 27, 2025: current students identified inconsistent expectations across courses as a source of anxiety

Advisory Board

The MAC Advisory Board convened April 27, 2025. Attendance included program faculty (McBride, Kim-Appel, Bordner), a site supervisor and university counselor (Erin Jensen Skeel, LPCC-S), a program alumna (Makayla DeMoss, LPC), a private practice site supervisor (Russ Exlos-Raber, LPCC-S), and a current student (Aly Brugh). The board reviewed program enrollment, job placement and NCE pass rates, the sunset of the school counseling program, and anticipated impacts of Senate Bill 1.

Board feedback identified that students demonstrate strength in documentation relative to peers, and that development is needed in treatment planning, acute crisis response, and documentation that will withstand legal review. Board members recommended greater exposure to specialty modalities including EMDR and DBT, and reported increases in social and generalized anxiety, academic distress, acute crisis presentations, and specific family configurations including grandparents raising grandchildren and single-parent families. Current students identified faculty diversity and the comprehensive examination as program strengths, and identified inconsistent expectations across courses as a source of anxiety.

Modifications made in response to this feedback are recorded in the modifications table above. Individual consultation with board members continued between meetings, including consultation with Russ Exlos-Raber in February 2026 regarding state legislative activity on parental alienation and parental rights.

An email was sent to board members to schedule a fall 2026 meeting, proposing Sunday, October 4 or Sunday, October 18, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Board members previously identified Sunday afternoons as the most workable meeting time. The agenda will include reporting back on changes made in response to April 2025 feedback, program and accreditation updates, and current feedback from supervisors, alumni, and students.

Public Availability

This report is published on the Master of Arts in Counseling program evaluation page at <https://www.heidelberg.edu/academics/programs/master-of-arts-in-counseling/program-evaluation> and is available to the public. Annual program evaluation results, including key performance indicator data and academic quality indicator outcomes, are posted at this location.