Human Development Counseling Program Evaluation Summary  
October, 2018; Evaluation Cycle (2015-2018)

This report includes stakeholder survey data from the most recent HDC program evaluation of alumni (2013-2017) and supervisors, and feedback from two town hall meetings and two advisory board meetings. Survey information is currently being collected on employers. This report is part of the HDC Program’s systematic performance review. The report will be made available at the program’s website.  

Student learning outcomes are assessed each year through comprehensive exams, national certifying exams, the internship experiences, and key assignments for each program area. Results of the most recent national certifying exams (NCE and Praxis) are included as well as results of student learning outcomes for the comprehensive exam. Job placement rates for the last three years are also included. For each area, a summary of findings is reported with actions taken and progress toward implementation. Results are used to guide new initiatives, address challenges and identify program strengths. A summary of findings below will be translated into actionable goals and included in planned improvements over the next two years.

EVALUATION RESULTS

National Counseling Certifying Exams and Job Placement Rates
In 2018, all School Counseling students (14/14) passed the PRAXIS exam, the national certifying exam for school counselor licensure. For each of three years of the evaluation cycle, all SC students passed the exam on their first attempt.

2016-2018 NCE Results
The NCE exam is the national certifying exam for counselors and the licensure exam for licensed professional counselors in many states including Tennessee. It is recommended that students take the exam while still in school. In 2018, all graduating students who chose to sit for the NCE exam (29/29) passed. In 2016-2018, HDC student mean scores in all eight areas of coursework exceeded the national mean when compared to other CACREP schools. During the three years of the evaluation cycle, all students passed the exam on their first attempt.

2016-2018 Degree Completion
Of the 63 students admitted to the CMHC Program, 56 students (88.9%) completed the degree in Human Development Counseling. The other seven students (11.1%) completed the degree in Human Development Studies. Of the 44 students admitted to the SC Program, 42 students (95.5%) completed the degree in Human Development Counseling and two students (4.5%) completed the degree in Human Development Studies.

2016-2018 Employment Data
Of students pursuing full time employment after graduation, 100% (42/42) of SC graduates obtained full time employment in counseling within 6 months of graduation and 100% (56/56) of CMHC graduates obtained full time employment in Clinical Mental Health Counseling or are pursuing doctoral studies within six months of graduation.
STAKEHOLDER REPORTS

Alumni Survey (Cohorts 2013-2018; N = 87; 63% response rate)
Alumni were asked to rate their perceptions of the program on a range of topics including relevance of coursework to career goals, preparation for career, instruction and mentoring, training compared to other counseling professionals, and overall satisfaction. They were also asked to rate how well coursework prepared them for their current position based on the CACREP core areas. Of the 87 students reporting, 96.55% agreed or strongly agreed that coursework was relevant to their career goals, 91.96% agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with instruction that they received, and 93.11% of students agreed or strongly agreed that they were as well trained as graduates from other programs. With regard to field training, 94.25% agreed or strongly agreed that internship training helped prepare them for their first professional position, 95.40% agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their experience overall, and 93% agreed or strongly agreed that they were as well trained as graduates from other universities.

In areas of faculty support, 93.11% of alumni agreed or strongly agreed that faculty treated students with respect and 94.25% of alumni agreed or strongly agreed that faculty demonstrated a genuine interest in helping students. Of students, 90.80% agreed or strongly agreed that faculty provided effective academic advising.

In areas emphasizing particular types of preparation, alumni indicated some areas of improvement related to multicultural training as well as career advisement and job placement. Of alumni, 74.72% agreed or strongly agreed that the program prepared them to work with clients from diverse cultural backgrounds, 80.46% of alumni agreed or strongly agreed that faculty were helpful in career planning and decision making, 75.86% of alumni agreed or strongly agreed that they knew where to look for jobs, and 66.67% agreed or strongly agreed that the licensure and certification processes were clearly explained. Weighted averages for all items are reported in Table 1.

Supervisor Survey (N = 48; 43% response rate)
Supervisors were asked to rate their perceptions of students they supervised while working at their field placements. Supervisors assessed intern capabilities on core areas of practice including knowledge of professional roles, ethics, cultural competence, life span development, groups, assessment and research. Supervisors were also asked to compare HDC students to Masters level students from other universities.

Summary
Of the 48 supervisors reporting, 97.9% agreed or strongly agreed that students had an understanding of professional roles and relationships with other human service providers; 95.8% agreed or strongly agreed that students had an understanding of ethical and legal considerations; 83.3% agreed or strongly agreed that students had an understanding of the cultural context of relationships and strategies for working with diverse populations; 85.4% agreed or strongly agreed that students had an understanding of the nature of development across the lifespan; 68.8% agreed or strongly agreed that students had an understanding of career development theories and career counseling processes; 93.8% agreed or strongly agreed that students are able
to conceptualize client presentation and select appropriate counseling interventions; 81.3% agreed or strongly agreed that students had an understanding of group dynamics and group counseling; 60.4% agreed or strongly agreed students were familiar with strategies for selecting, administering and interpreting assessment and evaluation instruments; and 83.3% agreed or strongly agreed students were familiar with the use of research to improve counseling effectiveness. In comparing graduates with other Master’s level graduates, supervisors assessed 60% of graduates as much stronger or stronger and 40% as comparable to graduates from other universities.

Table 1. Human Development Counseling Alumni Perceptions Survey – Alumni

1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree

1. The courses in my program of study were relevant to my career goals……………………………………… 4.49
2. I am satisfied with the instruction that I received in the HDC program…………………………………… 4.37
3. I received sufficient training to make ethical decisions encountered since graduation………………………… 4.53
4. I was well prepared for my first job after graduating from the HDC program……………………………… 4.21
5. Equipment, facilities, and assessment resources were adequate……………………………………………… 4.33
6. The Vanderbilt library system had the resources I required to succeed in my program………………………… 4.22
7. Opportunities existed for mentorship relationships with faculty……………………………………………… 4.17
8. The faculty was helpful in my transition to graduate study……………………………………………………… 4.36
9. Faculty members cooperated with each other to ensure student learning, student success, and provision of consistent information……………………………………………………………………………… 4.13
10. The faculty was helpful in my career planning and decision-making………………………………………… 4.08
11. The faculty provided effective academic advising to ensure my timely completion of the program…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………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PROGRAM STRENGTHS

Program Quality
Based on quantitative data in the most recent evaluation of alumni, over 95% of students agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the program overall and 93% of alumni agreed or strongly agreed that they were as well trained as other graduates from other universities. All supervisors reported that Vanderbilt students compared favorably with other Master’s level graduates rating 60% of graduates as much stronger or stronger and the remaining 40% as comparable to graduates from other universities. Employment data and surveys show that graduates are gainfully employed and once licensed, achieve career advancement.

Instruction and Field Experiences
Of alumni, 96.55% agreed or strongly agreed that coursework was relevant to their career goals and 91.96% agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the instruction that they received. Of alumni, 94.25% agreed or strongly agreed that internship training helped prepare them for their first professional positions. Alumni noted that sites that offered good supervision and direct hours to see clients provided great training opportunities. Additionally, sites that included a variety of experiences and encouraged interns to take on appropriate levels of responsibility under supervision were helpful in building confidence and competencies.

Faculty Support
In areas of faculty support, 93.11% of alumni agreed or strongly agreed that faculty treated students with respect and 94.25% of alumni agreed or strongly agreed that faculty demonstrated a genuine interest in helping students. Of students, 90.80% agreed or strongly agreed that faculty provided effective academic advising. General comments suggest that students are able to meet with advisors and students felt faculty provided appropriate levels of support. Some comments suggest additional time each semester would be helpful in planning course of study and discussing career goals.

AREAS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Multicultural Training
Of alumni, 74% agreed or strongly agreed that the program prepared them to work with clients from diverse cultural backgrounds. Alumni and supervisors noted the importance of having experiences that are diverse including counseling with marginalized populations. Comments indicated that students could benefit from more exposure to diverse populations and settings and more discussion of diverse cases and contexts in classes.

Career Development and Licensure
Of alumni, 75.86% agreed or strongly agreed that they knew where to look for jobs and 66.67% agreed or strongly agreed that the licensure and certification processes were clearly explained. Students requested more information about state licensure requirements, and additional seminars on where to look for jobs.
CURRENT STUDENTS: TOWN HALL

Town Hall meetings are held annually to allow students an opportunity to discuss their recommendations for strengthening program processes. Feedback from students is helpful in gathering information about ongoing processes and can include curriculum, field experiences, instruction, advising, financial aid, program culture, or other topics of interest.

Summary
The most recent town hall in April 2018 included a focus on culture and context and ways to create a diverse, inclusive and engaging learning environment. Questions were organized to address training and instruction, curriculum and field experiences, and recruitment and admission. With regard to training and instruction, students suggested more time in classes to discuss culturally relevant experiences; more training for faculty including adjuncts and core faculty with a focus on creating a climate of safety to explore hot topic issues; modeling how to address different perspectives in class and more time for discussion of these issues; integration of multicultural competencies into curriculum as a whole; and more focused recruitment of students of color.

Additional feedback from the 2017 and 2018 Town Halls included specific suggestions for courses such as increasing skills-based classes, including more diverse speakers and panels, scheduling classes to avoid holidays, increase number of core faculty teaching core classes, increasing options for field placements, updating site contacts and providing additional support for the search process, providing financial assistance for conferences, and providing financial aid that is competitive with other universities. Students expressed concern about the new online SC program and how that might lead to very distinct groups.

ADVISORY BOARD

The Advisory Board is made up of current students, alumni, and stakeholders in community agencies and schools who can provide updates on trends in the field, recommend ways to address challenges and changes in program culture, and suggest future initiatives that fit with program goals. The Advisory Board met last in November 2017 and particular areas of discussion focused on enhancing skills and competencies at field sites and through coursework. Internship placements were discussed as one way to expand training opportunities that are diverse and offer opportunities for refining skills learned in class. Members also suggested reviewing practicum experiences with a goal of increasing hours through training that extends over both semesters or increased hours on site.

ACTIONS AND PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS

Based on results and feedback from surveys, town halls, and advisory board meetings, faculty focused on the following areas for program improvement.

Program Culture
Program faculty remain committed to training that encourages personal and professional development of students and continuing education for faculty. Areas of concern expressed by
students included discussion of the new online School Counseling program and how this addition might lead to less time with core faculty and a decrease in quality of the campus-based program.

- **Action**: The program has hired new faculty who will take on additional responsibilities in the on-line program. Roles are currently being evaluated so that the chain of command is clear and the program can have more control in how content is delivered. Faculty are investigating how online modules might be used in campus-based learning. It remains an important goal of program faculty that the personalized approach to learning and ability to continue to provide support and scaffolding for students not be lost as enrollments increase.

**Organization**

Student learning outcomes remain a part of assessment and the system for managing data (REDCap) is being updated to provide a more effective way of monitoring assignments and giving feedback. Students and faculty noted inconsistency in using key assignments for assessing Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and inconsistency in getting feedback on performance. Core and adjunct faculty noted the need for better management of paperwork related to assessment, site documentation and program related files. It was also clear that additional time was needed to address changes in the program, increasing enrollment, and integration of new faculty hires.

- **Action**: Key assignments for assessing SLOs are currently being evaluated and some assignments will be modified. Faculty workshops on scoring assignments to increase rater reliability will be added in the spring of 2019. Roles and responsibilities for scoring, input of data and feedback to students will be reviewed and a system for addressing online student SLOs will need to be added.

- **Action**: Electronic storage of documents now covers all CMHC files related to practicum and internship. Students can access materials in Brightspace. Actions are underway to move all student documents to electronic storage. Program forms (e.g., practicum and internship planning forms, hour logs, site agreements, proof of liability insurance, proof of six counseling sessions) are being converted from hard copy paper storage to secure online cloud storage (VU Box). This transition will allow instructors to more easily determine missing student document requirements, archive student documents, access archived student documents, and give current students immediate viewing and access to their own required documents.

- **Action**: Similar files are being created for School Counseling key assignments and program documents as well. Handbooks, program events and announcements are already updated on the HDC page in Brightspace. Roles and responsibilities are being assessed to streamline management of advising and admissions review for the online program.

- **Action**: Because of the new roles and responsibilities that emerged with the online program, each track now has separate meetings to address concerns specific to SC and CMHC objectives. Faculty need more time for planning, coordination and administrative oversight. Each coordinator will make a report of progress to date in the monthly HDC faculty meetings.

**Advising and Mentoring**

Qualitative feedback included requests for more opportunity to meet with advisors on career planning and licensure requirements. Advising procedures were modified at the last review. Additional opportunities for faculty to meet with students during the semester is encouraged. Additionally, responsibilities have not yet been clarified about how advising procedures and the
professional performance review (PPR) will be managed in the online program. The following areas are being addressed in track committees.

- **Action:** The faculty is working on ways to incorporate more coaching and professional development in meetings with advisees. CMHC students requested more information about licensure and career information. Advising handbooks are being updated to include information on licensure and application for licensure in Tennessee. Requirements in other states vary and a link to state boards will be added to the advising handbook as well as Brightspace.

- **Action:** Faculty teaching in the SC online program are working to develop advising guidelines that meet the needs of online advisees. Advisees are currently assigned to core faculty but this may change as the online program continues to grow. Procedures are currently being reviewed and the SC planning committee will make recommendations about how to proceed.

- **Action:** The Professional Performance Review (PPR) assesses students on a variety of dispositions related to professional development and academic performance. If concerns are raised about a student’s performance, an action plan is created to work on the areas outlined for modification. The PPR is conducted by HDC faculty at end-of-semester meetings. Procedures were updated at last review. Guidelines are being adapted to improve consistency in addressing performance as it relates to coaching and advising of online students.

**Course Instruction/Curriculum**
Requests for additional skill-based courses is an area that the program has been addressing over the past few years. Additional assignments added to applied classes and changes in course objectives have increased the focus on specific skills and core counseling competencies prior to beginning field experiences. In particular, finding ways to address multicultural themes in classes and generalize learning from one class to the next is an area that is being discussed.

- **Action:** In response to student feedback a new elective *Human Sexuality Theory and Intervention* was added to the schedule for Spring 2017. This course serves as an elective in both the SC and CMHC programs of study. It was offered again in Spring 2018. If the course continues to meet enrollment requirements, it will be moved from Special Topic to a permanent rotation in the elective offerings 2019. The SC elective *College Access* was moved from summer to spring and is now on every other year rotation.

- **Action:** *Key Assignments.* Faculty review and student feedback suggests that emphasizing case conceptualization skills from initial classes to field experiences could help students sharpen their skills in diagnosis and assessment without compromising their developmental and strength-based foci. Since multiple approaches to conceptualization are included in clinical classes, the faculty is reviewing modifications to this assignment. The HDC Faculty are reviewing the multicultural key assignments and coursework in experiential classes for ways to scaffold competencies so learning outcomes are intentional and build from one class to another.

**Field Placements**
As noted in qualitative comments from supervisors and the Advisory Board, increasing opportunities for counseling clients from diverse backgrounds can be expanded to sites that emphasize working with vulnerable or marginalized populations. Expanding opportunities at sites especially during the Practicum year was also discussed.
- **Action**: The awarding of the Behavioral Workforce and Education Training grant through Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) will allow the program to build infrastructure which will add additional sites with a specific focus on working with vulnerable populations in agencies and schools. The goal of increasing counselor competencies with evidence-based practices and exposure to diverse populations and settings is aligned with grant objectives. The program will be able to add trainings which are funded by the grant and interns who work with sites that are part of the grant will receive a stipend.

- **Action**: In the CMHC track, opportunities for extending practicum hours are currently being discussed and one option may be allowing students to increase hours at sites or move toward combining their practicum and internship sites if they determine that the site offers enough clinical hours and variety of experiences. In the SC track, the practicum experience has been changed to internship I and contact hours have been increased from 100 to 200 hours on site.