



Assessment of Student Learning Plan (ASLP)

2019-2020 Academic Year (Revised September 2020)

Reminder: All Department/Program Chairs are responsible for completing an ASLP form by the end of this academic year for each academic program in your department. This campus-wide (annual) form is used to document the ongoing program assessment activities in each department/program. The form is designed to align with the NECHE (New England Commission of Higher Education) accreditation- assessment standards. If you have questions about this form, or need assistance with your program assessment plans, please contact Susan King, Director of Academic Assessment, 780-4681, susank@maine.edu. **Please email this form by May 31, 2020.**

Overview Information:

College _____ College of Management and Human Services

Department _____ Counselor Education _____

Degree Program _____ Masters and CAC _____

Contact Person for the Assessment Plan: _____ Adele Baruch _____

Current Date: _____ 7/22/20 _____

List the date of the most recent academic program review/self-study:

February 2020/CE retreat

Program Assessment Plan Information:

Do you have a Formal Program Assessment Plan? _____ Yes _____ X No

We do have a plan to review every student, each fall, using the Key Indicators (attachment 2a).

If **YES**, please attach your Program Assessment Plan/Cycle, or indicate the link on your website: _____ . Then, complete **Step 3** of this ASLP form (see **pages 4-5**) to describe how the assessment results were used for program improvement purposes.

If **NO**, your department/program does not have a Formal Assessment Plan (beyond this academic year), please complete all sections of this ASLP form.

*(Please see assessment website for an example/template of a 3-year assessment plan)

Mission Statement:

1. Provide your program's mission statement in the space below, or provide a link to the statement from your program's webpage.

This is listed in our handbook. Our webpage has a very abbreviated statement.

Our Mission: The basic belief of the USM Counselor Education program is that people often need assistance in addressing typical developmental transitions as well as difficult life situations. Mental health, rehabilitation, and school counselors are trained to help people with these challenges. The M.S. in counseling degree prepares its graduates to act as facilitators of change in the lives of individuals at all developmental levels. By modeling high standards of professionalism and offering a foundation of knowledge, skills, self-awareness, and practice, the program prepares counselors of the highest quality to work in schools, mental health agencies, businesses, hospitals, rehabilitation organizations, private practice, and other settings. Students study human development and behavior, individual counseling theory, group theory and dynamics, research methodology, and psychological measurement and evaluation, in addition to courses in individual concentrations—school counseling, clinical mental health counseling, and rehabilitation counseling. The Mental Health Rehabilitation Technician/Community (MHRT/C) post-bachelor's certificate program may be taken independently of the master's degree. The certificate of advanced study in counseling is a post-master's program for current counselors who are interested in pursuing advanced coursework. The primary mission of the counselor education program is to prepare counselors for ethical practice through high quality, nationally accredited graduate level training. The basic beliefs of the USM Counselor Education Program are (1) People often need assistance, including support and treatment, in addressing typical developmental transitions as well as difficult life situations. (2) Mental health, rehabilitation, and school counselors are trained to help people with these challenges. The program prepares its graduates to act as facilitators of change in the lives of individuals at all developmental levels. By modeling high standards of professionalism and offering a foundation of knowledge, skills, self-awareness, and practice, the program aspires to prepare counselors of the highest quality to work in schools, mental health agencies, businesses, hospitals, rehabilitation organizations, private practice, and other settings.

2. Briefly describe the ways in which your program's mission statement is aligned with the USM mission.

The Counselor Education Mission is aligned with USM's Mission in relation to the preparation of leaders in the field of counseling, as well as in community involvement and civic participation. As we track key performance indicators of the integration of core and specialty standards

across our program, we are promoting the highest standards of professionalism. In fact, many of our students become leaders in agencies, college counseling centers, schools, rehabilitation centers, and community support centers throughout Maine. Our upper level training is explicitly focused on community and field involvement, with input from field sites across the state. We integrate this focus on community involvement with an academic focus on student's developing professional identity throughout the program. In addition to academic standards, we promote dispositional standards, to further promote our mission, and USM's mission of educating professionals who can serve the community with the highest ethical standards.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

If your program has diversity, equity, and inclusion related goals, or a diversity, equity, and inclusion statement; please provide a link to the statement and/or goals. Then, briefly describe any assessment activities related to your program statement/goals regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Regarding student skill development related to working with diverse clients:

All students are assessed on their counseling skills through an assessment review with the Hanna Rubric. Two of the skills we assess both at mid-program during Practicum, and at the end of the program, are the skills of working with diverse clients and cultural sensitivity. We review these skill areas in a systematic way to inform program assessment and development. At our last review, we noticed an improvement in student scores in this area (up in the past year from a mid-grade score), and it is an area attended to in all of our skills based courses. Additionally, the syllabus for our foundational Multicultural course has been expanded and updated.

Regarding diversity of faculty and students:

As faculty, we created goals and objectives for a three year plan to contribute to the colleges ongoing strategic planning, we noted the current efforts to recruit diverse faculty and students. For faculty, we asked faculty applicants to create a diversity statement in their applications, and we added questions related to diversity on our candidate assessment forms. A grant has been developed and submitted to create a focus on diversity for our future vocational rehabilitation track as well as added focus on diversity for our foundational courses in Career Counseling.

Assessment of Student Learning: Program Assessment Steps

Step 1: Program-level Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's)

- a. Please provide the **URL** for your **program-level student learning outcomes** as published on your department's website:
<https://usm.maine.edu/counselor-education/accreditation-and-program-outcomes>

- b. Please provide the **URL** of your **curriculum assessment map** showing when your student learning outcomes are assessed and in which courses:
Please see Attachments 2a, b & c: Key performance Indicators for the Counselor Education Program; Hanna Rubric 7 assessment areas for CACREP

Also, relevant to our assessment plan, is the chart that indicates the alignment of our key indicators with (CACREP) core and specialty standards across the Counselor Education program, attachment 1

If your program's curriculum assessment map is **not** published, please complete the template (on page 6 of this document), and include it with your ASLP, or attach your own version. (Our own version is attached)

- c. Please list the program learning outcomes which were assessed since the submission of your last ASLP (May 2019).

The learning out comes that were assessed are summarized in Attachments 2a, 2b, and 2c. As a result of our faculty review of those assessments, we had a faculty retreat in Feb. 2020 to address those learning outcomes that appear to need improvement, as well as the learning outcomes that were meeting or exceeding expected standards.

One learning outcome that appears to need improvement, as indicated by an analysis of our Hanna Rubric (one of our core indicators of student learning), is the acquisition of skills for working with strong client affect.

One learning outcome that had been the focus of our attention in 2018-2019, diversity awareness, which previously fell in the mid-level range of assessment, has improved in the past year.

Step 2: Assessment Methods Selected and Implemented /Summary of Results

- a. **Identify the assessment measures (evidence of student learning) that were used to determine whether students achieved the stated learning outcomes for the degree.**
Please check all the measures used since the submission of your last ASLP (May 2019), on the chart below. Also indicate when you implemented the assessment activity.

<u>Check Assessment Methods Used this Academic Year</u>	<u>When Implemented</u>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Artistic Exhibition/Types of Performance	Fall	Spring	Summer
<input type="checkbox"/> Class assignments/Exams/Papers (completed in course)	Fall	Spring	Summer
<input type="checkbox"/> Capstone Project (written project, non-thesis paper)	Fall	Spring	Summer
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comprehensive or licensure exam (created by external org)	Fall (x)	Spring(x)	
Summer(x)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Exit Exam (created by department or program)	Fall	Spring	Summer
<input type="checkbox"/> Exit Interview (individual or indiv self-reports of outcomes)	Fall	Spring	Summer
<input type="checkbox"/> Employer meetings/discussions on student outcomes	Fall	Spring	Summer
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus Groups (self-reports of outcome attainment)	Fall	Spring	Summer
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Internship/Fieldwork (evaluations of performance)	Fall(x)	Spring(x)	
Summers			
<input type="checkbox"/> Oral Performance/conference presentation	Fall	Spring	Summer
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Portfolio of student work	Fall(x)	Spring(x)	Summer(x)
<input type="checkbox"/> Reflection Essays (self-report of outcome achievement)	Fall	Spring	Summer
<input type="checkbox"/> Research Papers (used for course & program assessment)	Fall	Spring	Summer
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supervisor/Employer Evaluation (performance outside of class)	Fall(x)	Spring(x)	Summer(x)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Student Survey information (student self-reports on outcomes)	Fall(x)	Spring(x)	Summer
<input type="checkbox"/> Thesis/Dissertation (used for course & program assessment)	Fall	Spring	Summer
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: please explain			
We have a yearly review of student progress in the fall, and we discuss current scores for			
We also have a Candidacy Scale, evaluated by our Skills course Instructor to assess readiness for			
Practicum. Additionally, we look at Dispositional scores (scales are described in our Student Handbook.			

- b. **Briefly describe the implementation process** (i.e. where were students assessed, what courses, what class levels, or any other specific details, etc).
Students are assessed for their readiness for the field by the current Skills Instructor, on a Candidacy Scale (attachment 3). This scale is discussed during a faculty review meeting, prior to the following semester Practicum, in both fall and spring. During both Practicum and Internship, students are assessed on a counseling skills rubric, the Hanna Rubric. During Internship, there is a special focus on 7 key assessment areas, that the students discuss both with their field supervisors and their Internship Instructors (Compilation, attachment 5). Prior to Internship, students must take a formal Pre-practice exam, the CPCE, to determine

basic readiness in terms of knowledge, for their Internship field experience (compilation, attachment 4). At the conclusion of Internship, students create and present their Portfolios, with a focus on professional learning and development, and these are given qualitative assessments, aligned with a rubric, by Internship Instructors (attachment 6). We also sent out an additional survey to our Alumni last fall to specifically assess their satisfaction with professional preparation once they began work in the field (attachment 7).

- c. **Provide a brief summary (numerical or narrative) of your assessment results** (e.g., . an illustration of the rubric-based scores, percentage of those who met the learning outcome you assessed, number of students assessed and findings, copies of instruments or rubrics used, etc.)

Please see attachment 4 for the aggregated results of the CPCE exams, attachment 5 for an example of the analysis of one of our Hanna Rubric assessment areas, “working with client affect”, and attachment 6 for an example of our portfolio evaluation rubric** As a result of our program reviews in 2019 and 2020, we have decided to augment our portfolio rubric to include 2 specific assignment assessments from each concentration, and that new rubric is in development, with plans to introduce it in the fall of 2020. (New rubrics, attachments 6a and 6b)

Since we have multiple areas of assessment, multiple results were considered at our retreat. Our student’s CPCE score are consistently above national averages, so we have confidence that we are delivering basic foundational knowledge. In prior years, our Career Development scores tended to be a bit lower than others, and we have revamped that syllabus for the 2019-2020 year. We noted a slight dip in the Group and Ethical Practice sections, and we will continue to watch these areas in coming program reviews.

Two areas in our survey results with greater percentages of poor and marginal scores were the areas of career readiness and connection to other service providers. There were generally higher scores relating to general counseling skills and preparation for ethical practice and self-awareness.

For the Hanna Rubric scores, the only area with lower scores is #9 – “working with client affect”

While we have been reviewing Dispositional Scores each fall for the past two years, at our yearly student review, we have not yet compared scores across multiple

years. Currently, these scores inform our programmatic decisions to establish remediation plans if they are assessed at 3 or below.

- d. **Provide a brief summary of what your program learned or concluded from the evidence you collected** (e.g., did your program meet the expected goal or benchmark, does the new knowledge raise additional questions, do you need to collect additional types of data, did you get insights about the assessment procedures or about teaching and learning in your program?, etc.)

Looking over the Hanna Rubric scores over the past couple of years, we could see that working with client affect is an area to be augmented. It also appears that working with issues of diversity has improved, as mentioned above. As we reviewed the survey results of recent graduates, it appears that a number of graduates want more guidance around their transition into their professional roles, specifically during their first years after graduate school. Additionally, the survey indicated some weak spots in the program with advising (though most were satisfied, a number were not satisfied.) Graduates generally expressed a high degree of satisfaction around skill training and preparation for ethical practice.

The feedback from our Portfolio scores seemed rather general, and we have been working towards more specificity to Portfolio requirements and the assessment of those requirements. Our CPCE scores tend to run well above the national average, and this mirrors the feedback from our recent graduates, in terms of foundational skill and knowledge acquisition.

Step 3: Using the Assessment results to Improve Student Learning

- a. Who interpreted or analyzed the results that were collected this past year? (check all that apply)

- Program instructors/faculty
- Faculty committee
- Ad hoc faculty group
- Dept Chair/Program Director/Dean
- Faculty advisor
- Students (assistants, interns)
- Other: please explain

b. How did they evaluate, analyze, or interpret those results? (check all that apply)

- Used a rubric or scoring guide(s) for an assignment, paper, etc.
- Scored exams/tests/quizzes
- Used professional judgments (no rubric or scoring guide)
- Compiled or reviewed survey results
- Reviewed qualitative methods (interviews, focus groups, open-ended responses)
- External organization scored/analyzed data (licensure, comp exams)
- Other: please explain: Included the comparative analysis of Hanna Rubric scores over time.

c. Indicate how the program will use (or has used) the results (check all that apply):

- Assessment procedure change (student outcomes, curriculum map, rubric, evidence collected, sampling procedure, communications with faculty, etc.)
- Course changes (course content, courses offered, new course, pre-requisites, course requirements, etc.)
- Course pedagogy changes (teaching)
- Personnel or resource allocation changes
- Program policy changes (admission requirements, student probation policies, course feedback forms, etc.)
- Student's out-of-course experiences (co-curricular requirements, program website, program handbook, student workshops, etc.)
- Student Advising experiences (advisor-advisee relationship, communication of changes or expectations, etc.)
- Results indicated no action needed, students met expectations
- Other: please explain

We also plan to add recent graduate focus groups to our yearly networking meetings to add qualitative data to our survey responses.

d. Briefly explain each of the program changes/improvements indicated above.

-In response to the lower survey results connected career and early professional preparation, we initiated further changes to our Career course to add more focus on early professional issues. (This is a foundational course, taken by all students.) We also further

formalized a “mentorship” program began a couple of years ago, linking advanced students with recent CE graduates.

-We noted a small but significant minority of students dissatisfied with responsiveness related to advising. As a result, we have instituted a “student questions” email process, where students can send in any unanswered questions. This email is monitored weekly by faculty, and any questions that cannot be answered right away will be taken to the next faculty meeting.

- In response to the need to augment training around work with client affect, we have begun plans for the development of an Advanced Skills class. We plan to propose this curriculum change in the spring of 2021, with a course that will not only work more deeply with affect, but will also provide opportunities to practice specific counseling approaches.

-We also planned an opportunity for resource and skill sharing for all Practicum and Internship supervisors.

--Two additional areas of program change were initiated this year.

One, that included further training from professional experts around the area of professional gatekeeping, came about as a result of our discussed needs as supervisors during monthly peer supervision.

Another resulted in substantial syllabi augmentation around domestic and interpersonal violence to more fully prepare students to address these issues, and to provide them with this training (required for all conditionally licensed professionals) even before they become conditionally licensed.

- e. Indicate when the program improvements (noted above) will be implemented or if you already made program changes (e.g., during the summer months, beginning of the fall semester, etc.).

The Career course changes, and the further formalization of our mentorship program has already begun this past spring. Similarly, our advising email has been initiated. As noted above, we have begun the development of an Advance Skills course, to be proposed to the Curriculum

Committee this coming spring. We held a resource sharing hour for all supervisors this past
Following a workshop on gatekeeping, provided by experts in the field.

In response to the need for further training in DV/IPV, augmented our curriculum in relation to DV/IPV
in 5 of our courses. For those students graduating before those changes are offered, we also offered 15
hours of additional DV/IPV to students and area professionals.

Other Assessment Activities: Briefly describe any additional assessment-related activities being
done at the course level (e.g., common assignments and/or assignment rubrics for use across
different sections of required courses, examining student progress in entry-level, capstone, or
other courses, other assessment projects implemented by individual faculty, etc.)

Every year, the faculty spends 5-6 hours in meetings reviewing each student's progress in the
program, reviewing the key performance indicators for each student, and also discussing any
special strengths or challenges. This review is reflected in changes to student dispositional
scores (when appropriate), as well as in meeting notes provided to each advisor.

We also review student progress in monthly peer supervision meetings, for those students in
the field.

No assessment activities: If your program did not engage in any assessment activities this past
academic year, please explain, and please indicate what assistance you need.

Reminder: Please complete and submit this form by May 31, 2020.

Curriculum Assessment Map of Student Learning Outcomes –Template

Curriculum Map						Required Courses- Used for Assessing Program-Level Student Learning Outcomes					
Program-Student Learning Outcomes	Course #	Course #	Course #	Course #	Course #	Capstone/ Internship Course					
Outcome 1	Introduced & Practiced	Reinforced	Outcome assessed using Quiz/Exam items			Outcome assessed using community-based project					
Outcome 2		Introduced & Practiced	Reinforced	Outcome assessed using research project							
Outcome 3	Introduced	Practiced & Reinforced	Outcome assessed using Essay/Paper			Outcome assessed using community-based project					
Outcome 4	Introduced	Practiced	Reinforced	Outcome assessed using research project							
Outcome 5	Introduced	Practiced		Reinforced		Outcome assessed using community-based project					

Details/Description:

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's) can be assessed on a 3-year cycle:

*SLO's 1 and 3 assessed in Year 1, SLO's 2 and 4 assessed in Year 2, SLO 5 assessed in Year 3

Program improvements are made before the next assessment cycle.