WALDEN UNIVERSITY
## SET A COURSE FOR CHANGE™

2022–2023 Academic Year

SCHOOL OF COUNSELING (SoC) PROGRAM EVALUATION OUTCOME REPORT

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

INTRODUCTION

As part of our continual efforts to provide the highest caliber of training for counselors and counselor educators, Walden University's School of Counseling (SoC) is providing this report of data gathered and assessed in the 2022-2023 academic year (AY). Also included are the subsequent actions and program improvements made based on our comprehensive assessment plan and process. Below in Figure 1 is the conceptual model used by the SoC to drive our assessment practices and ultimately develop competent and confident counseling professionals from each of our programs.

Figure 1. SoC Conceptual Model
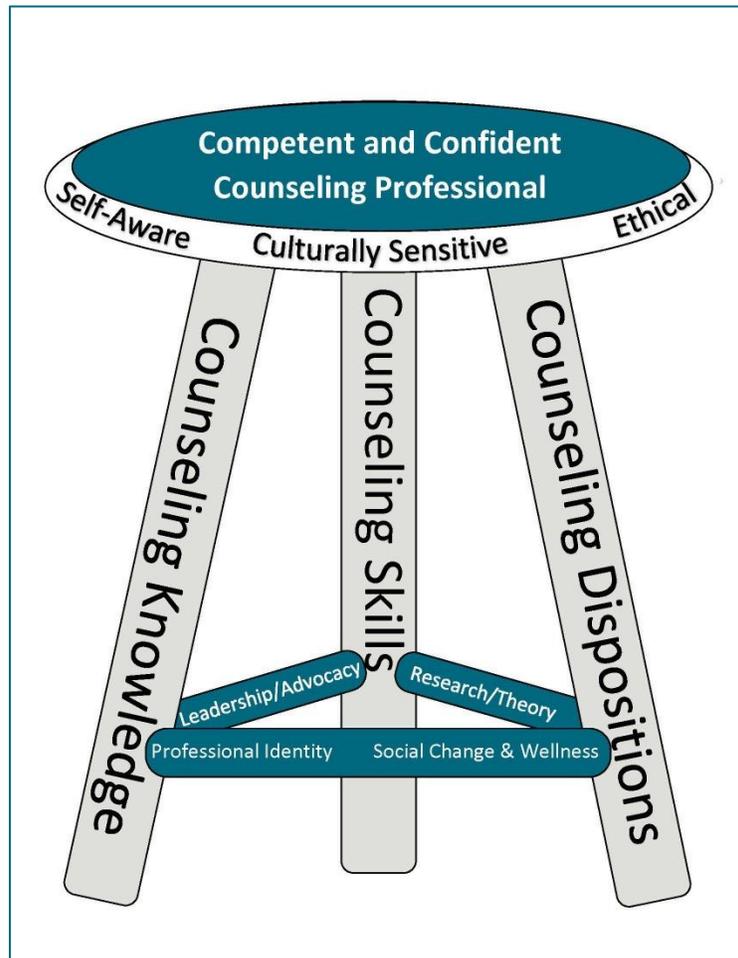
In addition, information can be found related to program changes that were made based on data gathered and analyzed throughout the year. Some of the data sources for this report include the *Assessment of Program Learning Outcomes* (*APLO)* report, Educational Assessment Corporation (EAC Visual Data Tool), and Meditrek. These sources are all designed to gather data on key student assignments linked to learning outcomes for each program, data from surveys conducted with current students, and data from pre-practicum/residency, skills courses, and field experience assessments. All this information supported actions that have either been completed or are in process in our efforts to facilitate ongoing improvements within the SoC.

MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

The SoC Mission and Vision statements reflect the overarching goals of the SoC. Goals are broad, generalizable statements of what an institution, college, school, or program seeks to accomplish. They may be incorporated in academic unit mission and vision statements or as separate statements. Their primary role is to provide overall guidance and direction to the academic unit. These statements were updated during the 2021-2022 academic year in response to the Academic Program Review (APR) from 2020.

The SoC faculty articulate their goals within the SoC Mission and Vision Statements. These statements are:

SoC Mission Statement – We improve lives by providing accessible, inclusive, and quality counselor education that empowers students to promote wellness and social change in a diverse world.

SoC Vision Statement – To create a healthier world through fostering wellness and transforming lives.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAMS

The School of Counseling at Walden University delivers four CACREP-accredited degree programs:

- MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC)
- MS in School Counseling (SC)
- MS in Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling (MCFC)
- PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision (CES)

Additionally, the SoC provides a program that offers students the opportunity to complete both the MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and MS in School Counseling simultaneously by meeting the requirements for both degrees in one program of study, (i.e., Dual Degree [DD]).

- MS Dual Degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and in School Counseling

TERM DATES IN REPORTING PERIOD

This report include data collected from all degree programs for the following terms in the 2022-2023 academic year. The following table provides the terms and dates of terms reflected in this annual report.

Table 1. Terms and Dates of the 2022-2023 Academic Year

Term	First Day of Term	Last Day of Term
Fall Quarter 2022	29-Aug-22	20-Nov-22
Winter Quarter 2022–2023	28-Nov-22	19-Feb-23
Spring Quarter 2023	27-Feb-23	21-May-23
Summer Quarter 2023	29-May-23	20-Aug-23

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Student demographic data provides the SoC information about the makeup of the student body. This information aids the SoC in identifying differences in program experience realized by different groups of

students. It also informs the school's efforts in student recruiting and admissions as well as student success and support.

The demographic make-up of the School of Counseling shows that in Fall 2022, 4,080 out of 4,901 students identified as female (83%). Students that identified as Black/African American represented 35% of the SoC student body. Students that identified as White represented 47% of the student body. Therefore, these two groups made up most of the student body. Students identifying as Hispanic or Latino represented 8% of the students, while the next highest population of a racial group were those who identify as being from two or more races, at 2%. Most of our masters-level students indicated ages between 24 and 49 years (84%), while most of our PhD students indicated ages between 30 and 59 (86%). Our students indicated that 98% of them are U.S. citizens.

ANNUAL SURVEY DATA

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Engagement, and Academic Progress conducts several surveys of various School of Counseling constituents including students, alumni, and employers. Many of the surveys are conducted annually, but year to year some fluctuations may occur due to transitions in organizational structure and other factors (e.g., the COVID pandemic, etc.). This report includes data from all three surveys for two to four years, depending upon the availability of data.

ALUMNI SURVEY

The Walden University Alumni Survey is sent to degree-obtaining alumni who graduated one, three, or five years from the survey date and gathers feedback on topics such as alumni satisfaction, the likelihood to recommend Walden, the Walden experience, the impact of their degree on their professional life, and participation in social change. The Walden University Alumni Survey was not conducted in 2021. Data are available for 2019, 2020, and 2023 for the masters-level degree programs, and the PhD program survey includes these three years plus the data from 2022. Response rates for the programs is not available, but the response rates for the university ranged from 6% to 10%.

Table 2. *Number of Responses to Alumni Surveys*

Program	2019	2020	2022	2023
CMHC	128	108	-	63
SC	6	2	-	6
MCFC	13	15	-	10
CES	6	14	6	11

Despite the low number of responses, the SoC may be able to deduce some information from the data. For instance, over the times that surveys were conducted, alumni reported high satisfaction with the programs as noted by about an average of 85% of alumni indicating they were satisfied with the degree programs and the same percentage responding that they were likely to recommend Walden and would likely recommend Walden to another person and choose Walden again. In relation to their experience at Walden, the vast majority of alumni affirmed that their degree was worth the time and effort, but only about half indicated that the degree was worth the expense of the program.

STUDENT SATISFACTION SURVEY

The Student Satisfaction Survey includes survey data from 2021 and 2022 with limited items reported for the 2019 and 2020 versions of the survey. Walden University conducts the survey annually every Fall quarter, inviting all enrolled students to respond. Overall response rates for each year were 36% for 2019, 43% for 2020, 22% for 2021, and 16% for 2022.

For all four survey years, two survey items included a 10-point Likert-type scale to assess student satisfaction. The first item asked students to rate their level of satisfaction for Walden University overall, and the second item asked students their likelihood they would recommend Walden to others. For both items, the CMHC program received relatively high average scores ranging from 8.17 to 8.51 throughout the four years. Likewise, the SC program received ratings between 8.11 and 8.71 except in 2019 where the average rating for likelihood to recommend Walden was 7.91. The DD program received the highest ratings with scores ranging from 8.18 to 9.24 in 2020, 2021, and 2022. The MCFC and CES programs received scores ranging from 7.69 to 8.3 and 7.64 to 8.24, respectively, with the lower scores occurring in 2021 and 2022.

When asked how clearly the students understood the mission of social change, 90% to 98% of responding students across the different survey years indicated they clearly or very clearly understood this mission. When asked the extent to which their educational experience helped them to promote positive social change with items such as "Reviewing your ongoing efforts to improve your effectiveness in social change" and "Taking the broad view of the multiple causes and solutions needed for complex social problems," 83% and 80%, respectively, responded with "helpful" or "very helpful" in 2021. These two numbers decreased to 79% and 76% in 2022. Likewise, for items such as "Raising awareness in others of an issue or need" and "Studying and researching real needs in the community" received responses of "helpful" and "very helpful" 81% and 77%, respectively, in 2021 and 77% and 73% in 2022. This decreasing trend may be difficult to assess due to the fact that these data have been collected over only two years and the relatively low response rates. Given Walden University's focus on a mission of social change, these data points will need to be followed closely for future planning of policy and curriculum to promote student development in social change.

EMPLOYER SURVEY

Finally, the Employer Survey includes annual data from 2021 through 2023. For all three surveys, university-wide response rates are relatively low at 14.7%, 6.5%, and 15.8%, respectively, and the number of university-wide participants decreased significantly, from 319 in 2022 to 74 in 2023. When reviewing program-level data within the SoC, the number of participants very low. Most notable is the consistent pattern of the responding employers' ratings of their overall satisfaction with Walden graduates, with 100% indicating "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied." With the exception of one employer, all employers indicated they would be willing to make available their site for field experience placements, indicating a high level of support for student support in the workplace. The level of support was indicated with several measures including tuition reimbursement or other financial support, allowing an alternative work schedule, providing regular motivation and encouragement. New to the 2023 survey, employers were asked to indicate which "Hard" and "Soft" skills employees needed in their work settings, and 100% selected hard skills items such as computer skills, presentation skills, project

management skills, and professional writing skills and 100% selected soft skills such as adaptability, listening and speaking, critical and strategic thinking, and problem solving.

ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES (APLO)

Building upon a strong foundation of assessment expertise and rigorous evaluation at Walden University, the SoC has a systematic process for measuring the program learning outcomes for each degree program. These learning outcomes find their roots in the SoC's Mission and Vision, which are connected to the larger umbrella of Walden University's Mission and Vision, focused on social change and the social determinants of health. In addition, each program learning outcome aligns with the university's goals and the 2016 CACREP Standards. It should be noted that in anticipation of our upcoming reaffirmation process, we began planning how to transition to the 2024 CACREP Standards, which CACREP adopted in July 2023.

To track student learning through assessment of outcomes, the SoC carries out the university's **Assessment of Program Learning Outcomes (APLO)** plan. The APLO is completed on an annual basis to document the assessment processes for outcomes, the measures used to assess these outcomes, the results of assessment, and the action steps for continuous improvement. Assessment runs on a 3-year cycle, assessing different artifacts/outcomes each year, but all within the 3-year cycle. The assessment process begins in September and concludes approximately in March.

Three primary areas are assessed across the SoC curriculum for all programs – student knowledge, skills, and dispositions. For each program learning outcome (PLO), two-to-three graded activities and/or Meditrek assessments are measured across four quarters (Fall to Summer). For the knowledge PLOs, activities were chosen to reflect different levels of knowledge attained throughout the program's curriculum – an "introductory" activity, one that "reinforced" the knowledge needed, and one to show students had "mastered" the content. To establish excellence, the SoC set benchmarks including 90% of students who complete each activity will make an 80% or higher on the graded activity for knowledge assessments, 90% of students receive a rating of "proficient" or higher for skills assessments, and 90% of students receive a rating of "consistent" for disposition ratings. Where benchmarks are not met, special attention is given to improve upon the results through modifications in the program. A review of the activity to determine the cause of the shortfall occurs, and then an action plan is created to address the shortfall in the following year. These actions are then reviewed at the end of that year's assessment to determine results of the plan. Beginning in 2024, these data will be shared with stakeholders such as students, alumni, and faculty at an annual stakeholder's meeting. This stakeholder's meeting is informational but is also intended to gather feedback to help inform decisions related to resource allocation and the budget process. Assessment results, analysis of the results, and the stakeholder feedback will be shared with three college-level leadership groups: 1) the college/school level assessment committee made up of college faculty and administrators, 2) the SoC leadership, and 3) the college/school level Curriculum and Policy Committee (CAP) made up of faculty, staff, and administrators from the college. This review process takes place during college summit planning in the spring of each year. Feedback and comments from the annual summit are used to refine the action plan and APLO documentation.

KNOWLEDGE

While most courses that relate to the knowledge outcomes are cross-listed for all three of the MS degree programs, the assessments reflect outcomes for the students within each of the MS degree programs exclusively. In other words, while all SC, CMHC, and DD students enroll in the same ethics course, the reported assessments for each outcome are specific to students in the program. Therefore, assessment results may be different between MS programs for the knowledge learning outcomes. The MCFC program is nearing the completion of a teach-out, and there are limited data available as most students are in their last terms of the program of study. All eight of the MS CACREP foundational curriculum areas are evaluated, and curriculum for each of the entry-level specialized practice area curriculum areas are evaluated. The curriculum reflecting the five domains of the PhD program are evaluated, too. The knowledge PLOs assessed this year were 1 and 4 for the MS programs, and PLO 1 and 2 for the PhD program. For each knowledge outcome, the graded activity results were computed by identifying the percentage of students that completed the activity and achieved a grade of 80% or higher, then determining if that falls below the 90% benchmark.

As in 2021-2022, there were several aspects of assessment that changed or were in transition specifically related to assessment of knowledge. The 2022-2023 AY is the final year of the three-year assessment cycle for the university. However, this is the first year we evaluated our new PLOs, adopted in Fall 2022. Because of this we are unable to show trend data on PLOs, but plan to include trend evaluations in the coming years. Other changes include assessment leadership, transition to a new Learning Management System (LMS), and changes to the assessment system for the university. As a result of these changes, we used two different methods of assessing our PLOs for the 2022-2023 AY. In Fall 2022, the university used Blackboard as its LMS, but transitioned to Canvas in the Winter of 2022-2023. Therefore, Fall 2022 data were pulled in Winter 2023 using the university's EAC tool through Blackboard while the Winter 2022 through Summer 2023 results were manually calculated using a random sampling technique with data pulled from Canvas. We gave more credence to Winter-Summer results given the longer period (3 terms) and difference in how the university treats data in Canvas versus Blackboard. Also, during the transition to Canvas, data were cleaned up and verified by the university as a part of continuous improvement, so data should be more reliable after that point. The explanation of results below is preliminary, as we will not finalize the process until our assessment summit and annual stakeholder's meeting in the first quarter of 2024.

For the masters-level programs, PLOs 1 and 4 specifically reflect counseling knowledge. The other PLOs reflect counseling skills and counseling dispositions, and those PLOs will be discussed later. The PhD in CES program PLOs 1 and 2 also reflect counselor education knowledge, and PLOs 3 and 4 address counselor education skills and dispositions, respectively. Masters-level PLOs 1 and 4 will be reviewed first followed by the PhD in CES PLOs 1 and 2.

CMHC

Results from assessing PLO 1 for CMHC show lower scores than anticipated in the foundational areas, with five out of eight areas missing the 90% benchmark. One area (Group Counseling) marginally missed the benchmark, and another area (Helping Relationships) was substantially below the benchmark. For PLO 4, we assessed one activity as an "introductory" learning experience (6100), one that "reinforces" learning (6306), and one that showed "mastery" of the knowledge needed (6785). Two of three

benchmarks were met. The introductory activity exceeded expectations, while the mastered course/activity fell well below the benchmark.

SC

For PLO 1 for SC, we had similar results in the foundational courses as in CMHC, with five out of eight activities below the benchmark. The Career Counseling activity results exceeded expectations, while Helping Relationships, Counseling Orientation/Ethics, and Lifespan Development were substantially lower than expected. The Research area marginally missed the benchmark. We assessed two additional activities for PLO 1 outside of the foundational courses, with one falling well below the benchmark. Similar to CMHC, for PLO 4, we assessed an "introductory" activity, two "reinforced" activities, and a "mastered" activity. The introductory activity exceeded expectations, while the reinforced both fell below the benchmark. The mastery activity could not be reported on due to missing data.

DD

We continued to see lower scores for the foundational areas for DD as in CMHC and SC. In this program, five out of eight activities failed to meet the benchmark. The beginning courses (Helping Relationships, Orientation and Ethics, and Assessment) were all substantially below the benchmark. As with the CMHC program, the "Group Counseling" area yielded the highest resulting scores, just under the benchmark. For PLO 4, the "introductory" activity exceeded expectations, "reinforced" was just below the benchmark, and "mastered" was substantially lower.

CES

For the CES program, the "Counseling" domain met expectations across the three activities assessed. The "Teaching" area had one activity out of three that missed the benchmark. "Supervision" had the lowest results, with all three activities assessed missing the benchmark, two by a small margin. The "Research" area missed the benchmark for all three activities assessed in the Fall, but met the benchmarks for Winter-Summer, with the "introductory" and "reinforced" activities exceeding expectations considerably. For PLO 2, we assessed five activities – three "introductory," one "reinforced," and one "mastered." Three out of five are well above the benchmark (two with perfect scores).

Summary

The Fall 2022 results show that for PLO 1 we had lower scores than anticipated in "Helping Relationships" and "Orientation/Ethics" for the CMHC program. SC missed the benchmark for "Helping Relationships," but exceeded the "Orientation/Ethics" area. These lower results are most likely due to these two areas being the beginning courses in the program. Results for the Fall 2022 term had few instances overall where benchmarks were not met, but Winter-Summer showed several areas that were lower than anticipated. For the MS programs, we will pay particular attention to the activities that are used to assess each PLO to ensure they are measuring the PLO effectively (validity) and showing similar results across course sections, instructors, and over time (reliability). We will also consider how the developmental level of students may impact missed benchmarks. Next year, we will be able to compare results to see if there are trends in our findings.

In the CES program, we are watching the "Supervision" courses moving forward, given the lower scores. The courses where this is assessed are slated to be updated in 2023-2024 and we will take these results into consideration during that update. Otherwise, the CES program met most of the expectations we

were hoping for. For the lower scores, it could be that the assignments used need to be updated or that a better assignment could be used to assess the PLO.

Examinations

National Exams for the MS programs include the National Counselor Exam (NCE) for CMHC, SC, and MCFC graduates and the Praxis Exam for SC graduates. While the NCE and Praxis Exam results are not included in the evaluation of the PLOs, the results serve as a possible source for considering program and curriculum planning.

National Counselor Exam: Between Fall 2020 and Spring 2023, the national NCE pass rate has remained close to 80% with only one exception, in Spring 2022 the national pass rate was 63%. Throughout that same time, the Walden students that completed the exam for the first time had pass rates that range from 51% to 76%, the highest of those rates occurring at the same time the national pass rate was at the lowest point, in Spring 2022. Given that about 25% of those eligible to take the test self-select to do so, this may be a less than accurate reflection of the SoC students' counseling knowledge.

Praxis Exam: Using the cutoff of a score of 145, the national rate remained just above 98% for 2020 through 2022. At the same time, Walden students passed at a rate of 96% to 100% during that same period. In 2023, the Praxis national pass rate at the 145-cutoff was 98.26%. Eighteen out of the 20 (90%) Walden students that completed the Praxis exam met the 145-cutoff score. As with the NCE, this may be a less than reliable reflection of the outcomes from the Walden programs as the number of participants each year was very low, only 8 to 36 students, and the sampling method, self-selection, does not provide assurance of a representation of all students in our programs.

SKILLS

PLOs 2, 5, and 6 for the MS programs are evaluated utilizing skills assessments conducted through Meditrek. For the CES program, PLO 3 is assessed in the same fashion. For the MS programs, faculty and site supervisors assess students' counseling skills at multiple points throughout the program of study. For each skill, raters select responses ranging from 0 to 4 representing "Not Present," "Emerging," "Progressing," "Proficient," and "Exemplary." Training for specific counseling skills is introduced through the Techniques in Counseling course (COUN 6316/6302S), Pre-Practicum I, Group Techniques (COUN 6250/6320S), and Pre-Practicum II, and assessments for the skills are included in each course (except the Group course). The skills assessments conducted in the Techniques course include only items associated with skills taught in that course. Then in Pre-Practicum I, the skills assessment repeats the Techniques course items and includes items associated with skills taught in Pre-Practicum I. The same is the case for Pre-Practicum II. Later in the field experience courses, the same items covered in Pre-Practicum II are assessed by both the site supervisor and the faculty supervisor at multiple points. In the masters-level programs, the counseling skills a student acquires develop over time. Initially, faculty anticipate that many students will demonstrate skills at the lower end of the scale, sometimes failing to show the skills, other times displaying an emerging ability to demonstrate the skills and continuing to progress until demonstrating proficiency and sometimes exemplary ability. Therefore, the aggregate ratings should show this progression over time with lower scores in the early courses but substantial proficiency in the later courses of the program of study.

As with the APLO knowledge assessments, students are cross-listed in courses where SoC faculty and site supervisors assess student skills, but the assessments differentiate students by enrolled degree

program. Skills ratings for the three content courses demonstrated developmental improvement for each of the three MS degree programs measured (There were no MCFC students enrolled in Techniques, Pre-Practicum I, and Pre-Practicum II during the 2022-2023 AY.). For example, the item "Demonstrates the appropriate use of open and close-ended questions" showed improved CMHC mean ratings of 2.1, 2.3, and 2.6 on the 0 to 4 rating scale across the three consecutive courses (i.e., COUN 6316, Pre-Practicum 1, and Pre-Practicum II). Most students across all MS programs rated "Progressing" (a score of 2) in Techniques and Pre-Practicum I. In the Pre-Practicum II course, we begin to see even higher scores in "Progressing" and "Proficient" (a score of 3). We also see scores in the "Exemplary" (a score of 4) category increasing as well, demonstrating progressive improvement as expected. Interestingly, compared to the 2021-2022 AY, mean scores were mostly the same or lower in the Techniques and Pre-Practicum I courses. However, in Pre-Practicum II, scores were mostly the same or higher this year compared to 2021-2022. Further, as students moved into the field experience courses, site supervisors and faculty supervisors provided multiple assessments in each course. Again, percentages show consistent progression of a higher percentage of students being rated "Proficient" or "Exemplary" over time. For example, for the item "Demonstrates the appropriate use of open and close-ended questions," percentages of students rated as "Proficient" or "Exemplary" on the evaluation by site supervisors increased from 73% to 99.3% as students progressed from Practicum to the end of Internship II. This is similar to 2021-2022, showing students generally do become more proficient in skills as they progress through field experience.

For the PhD program, faculty and site supervisors assess the counseling, teaching, supervision, and research skills demonstrated as part of activities in the teaching, supervision, and various research content courses. Faculty and site supervisors provide assessments for CES students' counseling skills during the Practicum course. These skills are identical to skills assessed for the CMHC program (for the Counseling skills section). In the field experience courses, CES students derive the language for their own skills for the counseling, research, teaching, supervision, and leadership and advocacy domains, and the students, along with their faculty and site supervisors, provide assessments indicating the level of presence of the skill on a scale of 0 to 4. Consistently, the skills across all five CES domains show that the CES students are demonstrating the necessary skills, with most students scoring a 3 ("Proficient") or 4 ("Exemplary").

PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS

PLO 3 for the MS programs and 4 for the CES program is evaluated using assessments for professional dispositions conducted through Meditrek. Professional dispositions are measured on a scale ranging from 0 to 2 representing "Absent" to "Consistent" indicating the presence of a specified behavior among students in all MS and PhD programs. At numerous points throughout the content and field experience courses, faculty, and site supervisors measure student dispositions alongside the skills assessments. Scores throughout the programs of study for all degree programs show consistently low incidents of ratings of 0 or 1, indicating that nearly all students consistently demonstrate the professional dispositions of the counseling profession. To demonstrate this point, out of more than 11,000 assessments conducted throughout the 2022-2023 academic year across all the programs, there were only 39 students identified with a deficiency in professional dispositions as indicated by at least one zero "Absent" scored on a Student Development Assessment.

We note that the Techniques courses in the MS programs are the first courses where dispositions are assessed, and this is where 28% of the deficiencies were identified. This is historically an issue explained by the level of development for students at this stage of their matriculation in the MS programs. Additionally, another 26% were identified at Practicum which is the first field experience course, the first experience students have working with the public. The CMHC program has the highest total number of deficiencies identified out of the programs in the SoC, at least partially due to the overall size of the program versus the others. The PhD in CES program had no deficiencies identified for the academic year. Students that scored a zero for any one assessment point were referred to the Student Development team, a coordinator and committee of core faculty, for consideration of implementing a Student Development Plan.

PROGRAM CHANGES

The School of Counseling made several changes in the 2022-2023 academic year. The assessments reported in this document along with similar assessments reported in previous academic years serve as a source for considering program policy and curricular changes. In most cases, the planning and implementation of these changes occur over several academic years. For instance, in the Fall 2022 quarter, the SoC launched the new PLOs for the MS in SC, MS in CMHC, DD, and CES programs. This update occurred after the Academic Program Review, a multi-year cycle of program and curricular review and updates, that was initiated with a self-study written in 2019, the site visit with outside consultants in 2020, and the development and approval of the new PLOs in 2021 and 2022. Therefore, the 2022-2023 academic year reflects the first full year of data to assess these new PLOs after three years of development. The PLOs update was initiated by the review of data that were included in the APR self-study which called for a better approach to assessing the skills and disposition achievements of students in addition to the foundational and special practice areas of MS-level counseling students and domains of PhD-level counseling students. The SoC looks forward to continuing the collection of these data in order to identify trends and assess the changes to be made going forward.

The 2020 APR served as the foundation for proposing updates to numerous courses in both the PhD and MS programs. The process for updating courses requires nine to 12 months of development beginning with planning, creating, uploading, and then launching the new course shells. Subject matter experts (SMEs) plan and create the courses, and then learning architects build the back end of the courses to be uploaded in the LMS. Once all this is complete, the courses are launched. Generally, three to five courses are initiated each term once the proposed update is approved and implemented. The current round of course updates was initiated in Summer 2023.

As part of the update to the PLOs, the SoC has initiated an effort to scaffold the skills development of students throughout the MS-level programs of study. In the past years, the skills assessments of students have reflected that nearly 100% of students have developed proficiency in all counseling skills by the time they reach the end of their clinical experience in Internship II. Despite this success according to these assessments, the SoC leadership initiated a process of updating the skills training throughout the programs of study for the MS programs. The goal has been to identify evidence-based development of skills, train and assess students for those skills at developmental steps through the program, and build upon those skills up to the start of the students' clinical experiences. The new approach has resulted in

an improved method of assessing students' skills based upon current evidence-based skills training literature. Rather than assessing students on specific micro-skills throughout their development, the new approach will assess the micro-skills when they are first introduced and practiced, then the macro-skills (the integration of several related micro-skills) will be assessed in subsequent evaluations. The new skills training and assessments are anticipated to be launched in the Spring 2023-2024 academic year.

The PhD program outcomes focus on enhancing the faculty's ability to assess counseling knowledge, skills, and dispositions. The knowledge and skills outcomes reflect the five domains of the counselor education profession. These PLOs were launched in the 2022-2023 academic year.