

WCU Counseling Program Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

November 3, 2023

The 2023-2024 WCU Counseling Program Advisory Council meeting was held at the Biltmore Park-Asheville instructional site on November 3, 2023, from 4:00-4:30 p.m. The advisory council meeting occurs during the program's annual Supervision Symposium, and this year's symposium topic included best practices in supervising counselors-in-training with different dispositions, strengths, challenges, and blind-spots. During the advisory council meeting, 14 participants were in attendance, including two of the Counseling program faculty and 12 participants who represented roles as site supervisors, alumni, and employers of our graduates, and who represented both clinical mental health agencies, college counseling centers, intermediate and elementary schools, and those in private practice (which corresponds to our specialty tracks of clinical mental health and professional school counseling).

Overall, participants reported positive experiences working with our program and identified strengths of our counseling students/interns. Ongoing discussion will continue regarding the agenda topics listed below. The council will meet annually to review current/relevant program operations. As part of our accreditation requirements, participants who are alumni and/or employers of WCU Counseling program graduates were given a survey for additional feedback on student learning objectives and program initiatives. Site supervisors and students have separate opportunities to provide feedback either with intern evaluations or course evaluations, respectively, and those are provided to them at the end of each semester. Listed below are the name of participants, agenda topics, and notes from the discussion.

Participants (12): Participants include site supervisors for the program's practicum/internship students who are also alumni and/or employers of graduates of our program.

Felicia Carter (T.C. Roberson High School)
 Holly Cattanach (Claxton Elementary School)
 Paula Demonet (Trillium Clinical Counseling)
 Luke Gill (Alum/Insight Human Services-employer)
 Katie Green (UNC-Asheville)
 Valerie Krall (MAHEC)
 Jennifer Laite (Edneyville Elementary School)
 Courtney Mayse (Alum, Blue Ridge Health-employer)
 Greta Metcalf (HIGHTS)
 Jamie Oxendine (Alum, Private Practice)
 Liz Parker (Hominy Valley Elementary School-employer)
 Jerri Womack (Alum, Cane Creek Middle School)

Faculty present (2): Russ Curtis & Melodie Frick

Meeting Agenda:

- Welcome and Introductions
- Review Counseling program data/annual reports and student learning outcomes
- Review program modifications based on data findings

Meeting tasks/new business:

Identify counseling trends and areas for program/student growth

Notes:

- Topic: Program News: New faculty introductions, Chi Sigma Iota/Chi Beta Chi chapter re-established Spring 2023, exploring feasibility of program lab/clinic, QPR suicide assessment trainings with school personnel, student participation in BHWET grant during internship (social work program initiative), faculty presentations at national conference, and new program Instagram account.
Action plan: Alumni invited to join/participate in chapter activities and program will post program news and events via both Instagram and Meta accounts.
- Topic: NC Licensing Board requirements regarding LCMHC licensure for those with school counseling degrees beginning July 2025.
Action plan: Need for continued recruitment for school counseling students and plans for current students and non-degree seeking students' pathway for licensure.
- Topic: Mental health trends at participants' sites/schools. Participants discussed:
 - Counselor turnover
 - Navigating new state legislation (e.g., parents bill of rights)
 - A need to have more counselors working with young children and more multilingual counselorsAction plan: Next supervision symposium (Spring 2024) will focus on how to work with new state legislation and what it means for school/school-based counselors. Continue recruitment efforts, especially with decline seen across NC (and other states) in school counselors.

Plan:

- Feedback received via survey during council meeting, and from alumni who were not in attendance, will be analyzed for perceptions of student preparedness upon graduation pertaining to our student learning outcomes and program initiatives.
- Feedback will be sought from students on program mission statement, objectives, and needs
- Continued feedback will be sought with students' graduate exit surveys at the end of each semester on the same factors/program learning outcomes.
- Advisory members to contact Dr. Melodie Frick (program director) or other faculty with additional feedback.
- Advisory council next meeting- at Fall 2025 or Spring 2026 supervision symposium