

## Western Carolina University Counseling Vital Statistics Report 2023-2024

### Programs

Western Carolina University's Counseling Program includes two separate but related and integrated degree programs:

M.A.Ed. in School Counseling (SCH), and

M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC)

Both programs are CACREP accredited and lead graduates toward the post-master's Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor (LCMHC) licensure, and for SCH students additional K-12 School Counseling licensure through the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

A school counseling licensure-only pathway is also offered for post-master's graduates; however, this is not an accredited program for a counseling degree.

### Enrollment

In 2023-2024, an average of 70.3 (full-time and part-time) students enrolled in our program:

Fall 2023 – 90 (63 CMHC, 24 SCH + 3 SCH licensure-only)

Spring 2024 – 73 (57 CMHC, 16 SCH)

Summer 2024 – 48 (39 CMHC, 9 SCH)

Fall 2023: FTE: 90 students (57 @ FT [42 CMHC; 15 SCH] & PT 33 [ 21 CMHC; 12 SCH] = FTE 57 + 16.5 = 73.5 students with 8 faculty (7 core and 1 non-core) = 9.2 student to 1 faculty ratio (**9.2:1**)

Spring 2024: FTE: 73 students (57 @ FT [46 CMHC; 11 SCH] & PT 16 [8 CMHC; 8 SCH] = FTE 57 + 8 = 65 students with 8 faculty (7 core and 1 non-core) = 8.1 student to 1 faculty ratio (**8.1:1**)

Summer 2024: 48 full-time students enrolled (all registered students have full-time status) and 5 faculty (4 core, 1 non-core):  $48/5 = 1$  faculty to 9.6 student ratio (**9.6:1**)

This represents an average ratio of faculty to students of **1:8.9**. CACREP compliance is 1:12.

### Graduation

In 2023-2024, WCU Counseling graduated 36 students:

Summer 2023 – 1 CMHC, 1 SCH

December 2023 – 9 CMHC, 5 SCH

May 2024 – 13 CMHC, 7 SCH

This represents an 87% overall completion rate (86% CMHC students, 89% SCH) due to four students withdrawing from the program for personal reasons (3 CMHC, 1 SCH student).

### Licensure Exams

National Counselor Exam (NCE) – 100% pass rate for 25 students (19 CMHC, 6 SCH) who took the exam (Fall 2023: 10 CMHC, 4 SCH; Spring 2024: 9 CMHC, 2 SCH)

Praxis II Subject Test: School Counselor – 100% pass rate for 6 SCH students who took the exam (Fall 2023: 4 students; Spring 2024: 2 students)

### Job Placement

Among 36 graduates in 2023-2024, and with a 94% response rate, 100% of those seeking job placement in a professional counseling role obtained employment within 3 months of graduation (19 CMHC, 15 SCH).

### Student Scholarship and Related Awards

1 recipient of WCU Carole Hearn Curtis scholarship  
1 recipient of WCU Mary Deck/Break by the Lake scholarship  
1 recipient of WCU Dan Saddler scholarship  
22 recipients of WCU Graduate Assistantship positions (Fall and/or Spring)  
6 recipients of WCU Graduate Excellence Award  
2 recipients of WCU School out-of-state tuition awards  
2 recipients of WCU Graduate School in-state tuition awards  
4 recipients of WCU Invest in Teacher's Award  
17 recipients of the Behavioral Health Workforce Education & Training (BHWET) scholarship grant awards  
3 recipients/participants of School University Teacher Education Partnership (SUTEP) grant for Question Persuade Refer (QPR) training  
19 initiates into Chi Sigma Iota WCU chapter Chi Beta Chi

### Program Modifications Based on Data Findings

From input from the program's stakeholders (i.e., advisory council: faculty, students, site supervisors, alumni, employers) the program's mission statement has been updated to better reflect our mission and align with CACREP standards. Faculty will continue addressing topics/trends in counseling courses and during practicum and internship supervision sessions/classes (e.g., changes in state legislation affecting school counselors and school-based therapists), and faculty will create a course-pathway for current students and professional school counselors to take additional required courses for LCMHC licensure due to NC licensing changes beginning July 1, 2025. In addition, continued recruitment efforts will be made for the school counseling specialty track and the program will continue a feasibility study for creating a counseling program clinic.