The Graduate Studies in Counseling (GSC) program engages in a systematic evaluation on a regular basis of its two primary program offerings: professional school counseling and clinical mental health counseling. The evaluation process includes data collected by the Carson-Newman University evaluation processes and by the GSC program faculty to assess each counseling program track. One purpose of this evaluation is to align both Masters of Science in Counseling (MSC) programs with the national standards of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs (CACREP). The MSC programs are Professional School Counseling and Clinical Mental Health Counseling. Additionally, we offer a dual degree program (MSC and EdS) leading to dual licensure in school counseling and mental health counseling that is aligned with new CACREP standards. Analysis of evaluation components include:

- Alumni survey evaluation results (biennial)
- Employer survey evaluation results (biennial)
- Clinical Field Experience Evaluation Results from site supervisors of GSC interns (annually)
- Course evaluations from current graduate students (annually)
- Exit survey results from graduating students (annually)
- Comprehensive exams by students in final semester (annually)
- PRAXIS Professional School Counselor exam (annually)

Survey of GSC Program Graduates
May 2014 Summary Results

In May 2014, we conducted a survey of C-N Graduate Studies in Counseling alumni who graduated within the past five years, i.e., 2009-2013. Summary of survey results, found the following:

- Over fifty percent (22/43) of PSC graduates surveyed completed the survey evaluation that was distributed via email.
- Over forty-four percent (15/34) of MHC graduates surveyed completed a program evaluation survey.
- One hundred percent (100%) of school counseling graduates hold state licensure as a professional school counselor.
- One hundred percent (100%) of mental health alumni responding hold (or are earning) professional licensure as LMFT, LPC, LPC-MHSP or NCC. Many hold multiple credentials.
One hundred percent (100%) of both PSC and MHC graduates are employed in public schools (57%), private schools (3%), community agencies (26%) or private practice settings (14%).

Over ninety-seven percent (35/36) of program graduates indicated they were satisfied with their overall educational experience in GSC program.

Over ninety-seven percent (35/36) of program graduates report having a satisfying mentorship with a professor in the GSC program.

In comments, MHC alumni suggested the following: insight into the post graduate licensure process, more internship experiences, writing assessments, and designing treatment plans. PSC alumni suggested the following: more training on 504 plans and college application process.

The following table provides further analysis of GSC graduate satisfaction with their counselor education at Carson-Newman University.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall, faculty members were interested in the professional development of counseling graduate students</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Avg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would recommend the CN Graduate Studies in Counseling program to prospective students</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with the quality of academic advising and feedback that I received</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had opportunities to participate in counseling faculty member’s research and presentations</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt supported and had at least one mentoring relationship with a counseling faculty member</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rating scale: 1=very unsatisfied; 2=unsatisfied; 3=neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; 4=satisfied; 5=very satisfied

IMPLICATIONS: For mental health counseling students, GSC faculty should explore ways to increase clinical field experience, designing treatment plans, and conversation about the licensure process. For school counseling students, GSC faculty should increase learning opportunities about the 504 Accommodations process and the college application process.

**Employer/Supervisor Survey of GSC Graduates**

**May 2014 Summary Results**

In May 2014, GSC faculty designed separate surveys for PSC supervisors and for MHC employers to collect evaluation data relevant to each program. GSC program graduates were asked to provide contact information for their employers and/or supervisors. Based on this request, twenty-three (23) email addresses were received. Some PSC graduates have the same school administrator; which explains the number of principal contacts. Some MHC graduates are self-employed and did not need to send employer contact information.

Twenty-three Employer/Supervisor Surveys were emailed; thirty-five percent (8/23) were returned. Two of six MHC employers returned surveys; six of seventeen PSC supervisors returned surveys. Combined survey results are presented below:
Eighty-eight percent (7/8) respondents report satisfied with the overall knowledge and skills of C-N counseling graduates.

Eighty-eight percent (7/8) employers/supervisors report satisfaction with understanding the GSC graduate has of the developmental needs of client/student.

Eighty-eight percent (7/8) indicate satisfaction with the counseling skills of GSC graduates.

Seven out of eight (87%) of employers report satisfaction with the collaboration skills of GSC graduates.

Eighty-six percent (6/7) of employers convey their satisfaction with the level of professional development and advanced training pursued by GSC graduates.

In comments, MHC employers suggested that more clinical experience would better prepare counselors.

**IMPLICATIONS:** GSC faculty should examine ways to increase the clinical experience for mental health counselors-in-training.

### Clinical Field Experience

**Site Supervisor Evaluation**

During fall 2013 and spring 2014 semesters, the Professional School Counseling program placed eight interns in twelve sites. School districts where PSC interns had their clinical field experiences include: Anderson County, Blount County, Bradley County, Granger County, Hawkins County, Jefferson County, Knox County, and Maryville City. Site Supervisor’s Evaluations present the following points:

- Averages ranged from 4.5 to 5.0 (1=Unsatisfactory to 5=Excellent)
- The highest ranked items included the ability to develop counseling relationships with students, to counsel in groups, and to use technology.
- The lowest ranked items included the ability to plan effectively and to attend professional meetings.

During fall 2013 and spring 2014 semesters, the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program placed 15 interns in 13 sites. Mental health counseling sites include Helen Ross McNabb Center, Bethany Adoption Agency, Health Connect America, Carson-Newman Student Counseling Center, Youth Villages, Tennessee Department of Probation, Faith Promise Church, Cokesbury Counseling Center, and various private practice settings.

Site Supervisor’s Evaluations present the following points: “Good knowledge of A&D field”; “strong communication skills and professionalism”; “professional and highly motivated”; and, “good ability to build rapport with clients.”

**IMPLICATIONS:** Professional school counseling clinical field experiences provide opportunities for candidates to practice their skills in a real setting and to gain confidence to build comprehensive developmental school counseling programs. Clinical mental health students demonstrate the ability to connect with clients and colleagues in a professional manner, which builds upon the knowledge and skills of the counseling profession acquired at Carson-Newman.
2013-14 Course Evaluations Summary Results

Graduate Studies in Counseling (GSC) faculty conduct a systematic evaluation of course instruction as part of its ongoing accountability and assessment system for SACS and NCATE accreditation. Each semester students complete course evaluations online; the evaluation survey uses a five point Likert scale 1 (low) to 5 (high) to rate various elements of course instruction and content. Results are compiled anonymously and provided to faculty for feedback. A summary of GSC courses for 2013-14 are presented below:

- Content of GSC courses were rated as appropriate for graduate work (4.9).
- Instructional strategies were creative (4.7).
- Feedback from instructors was considered prompt and specific (4.9).
- Students rated GSC courses as engaging and interesting (4.7).
- Student involvement was rated high in class instruction and learning (5.0).
- Objectives of GSC courses were clear (5.0).
- Instruction in GSC courses offered adequate explanations, resources and incentives for students to master course content (4.9).
- GSC instructors show respect for students (4.9).

IMPLICATIONS: Despite the high ratings from students, the GSC faculty reviewed best instructional practice in counselor education. They found evidence that more experiential learning could be occurring in classes. Recent research in neuroscience of learning indicates that counselor educators should be more “facilitators of learning”, which according to Hall & Hall (2014) means introducing difficult topics with stories from their practical experiences and engaging students with more experimental learning activities.

Exit Survey Results

GSC students complete an Exit Survey during their last semester before they graduate from the program. The purpose of the survey is to collect student perception and feedback data on the academic program (admission, program, faculty advising, etc.), various student services (e.g., library, technology, etc.), and overall counselor preparation. The following points reflect Exit Survey Results for the past year:

- Students make use of the computer accounts and resources, but not the Computer Lab in the Education Department.
- Students make more use of the electronic resources and references of the Carson-Newman Library than its books and other print media.
- Students highly rate the admissions process for its speed in processing of applications, timely communication, and financial aid knowledge and assistance.
- Students found that graduate classes are offered at convenient times and in environments conducive to learning.
- Students give strong marks to GSC faculty for their subject knowledge, availability to answer questions, modeling effective teaching strategies and providing appropriate information on syllabi.
• Students rate GSC faculty very highly for their advising skills, comfort level in meetings, and knowledge of courses and registration process.
• Students report high levels of confidence in their competencies
  o to design, plan, implement, and evaluate comprehensive school counseling programs;
  o to use educational research to improve counseling services and programs;
  o to plan interventions for clients;
  o to manage classroom of students for guidance lessons;
  o to work effectively with diverse populations; and,
  o to integrate technology into counseling programs and services.

IMPLICATIONS: As GSC students complete their counselor training and prepare to transition into the profession, they report high levels of satisfaction with the quality of preparation they received at Carson-Newman. They also reflect high levels of confidence in their abilities to perform the expectations of the profession.

Comprehensive Exams Results

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master’s Degree in Counseling students are required to earn a passing score on the GSC Program Comprehensive Examination. The Comp Exam is administered during the last semester of training. Student performance is evaluated with a rubric, which consists of five criteria: theoretical understanding, evidence-based application, resourcefulness of methods, awareness of diversity issues and clear writing style. Each year GSC faculty analyze results of Comprehensive Exams to identify program strengths and areas for improvement. The 2013-14 results indicate the following:

• Students display more than adequate theoretical understanding.
• Students indicate appropriate level of evidence-based interventions.
• Students reveal sufficient resourcefulness in counseling methods.
• Students exhibit good professional writing style.
• Students show a need for more awareness of diversity issues.

IMPLICATIONS: Faculty should explore ways to increase diversity understanding in the training program. A new course will be introduced to address this finding.

Analysis of PRAXIS Test Results

Most states require school counselors to earn a passing score on the national standardized exam, PRAXIS for Professional School Counselors. The PRAXIS measures knowledge, skills and abilities that are deemed necessary for competent professional practice. C-N students are expected to sit for the PRAXIS Professional School Counselor test during the last semester of their program of study and to earn a passing score of 156, which is score required for Tennessee licensure. The national median score for the PRAXIS Professional School Counselors test is 172.

GSC faculty analyzed three years of PRAXIS test scores of Carson-Newman GSC students. The results are described in the following:
• 100% of C-N students in school counseling earned a passing score on the PRAXIS in their first attempt.

• An analysis of PRAXIS scores found the following average scores by year:
  o 176 in 2012
  o 175 in 2013
  o 173 in 2014

• The average score of C-N GSC students in school counseling is above the national median PRAXIS score of 172.

IMPLICATIONS: GSC School Counseling program prepares students with the competencies necessary for the practice of school counseling as measured by a national examination.