

## Summary of Annual Alum Survey Data (administered Fall 2021)

### Number of Respondents

- 71 alums completed this survey and reported graduation dates ranging from 2003 to 2021.

### Degree/Certification Completed

- 90% of alums reported completing an MA in Counseling. Five reported graduating with a MA in School Counseling, one obtained an Advanced Certificate, and one did not report their degree/certificate.

### Licensure Rates

- 63% of alums currently hold a position that requires a professional license or certification.
- 54% of alums reported being licensed to practice professional counseling.
- 92% of licensed alums are licensed in the state of Pennsylvania.
- Several alums also reported being licensed in New York, Michigan, and Colorado.
- 67% of alums who are not licensed plan to seek licensure within the next 3 years.
- Based on these reports, we expect 85% of the alums who responded, including those who graduated in 2021, to become licensed within the next 3 years.

### Certification Rates

- Of the 5 alums who graduated with an MA in School Counseling, 3 are certified in Pennsylvania, and 2 are not certified and do not plan to become certified in the next 3 years.
- 1 alum reported having certification as a BCBA in Pennsylvania, and 3 reported being in the process of obtaining BCBA in the next 3 years.

### Places of Employment

- Alums reported working in a variety of settings, including private practices, career centers, community agencies, schools (K to 12), correctional facilities, and college counseling centers.

### Training in Essential Qualifications

- Alums described their preparation for the field positively for our essential qualifications of counseling.
- *Written communication*: 92% rated the training as excellent or good.
- *Public speaking*: 82% rated the training as excellent or good.
- *Participation*: 87% rated the training as excellent or good.
- *Analytical Skills*: 90% rated the training as excellent or good.
- *Counseling skills*: 92% rated the training as excellent or good.
- *Self-awareness*: 94.3% rated the training as excellent or good.
- *Receiving & Utilizing Feedback*: 90% rated the training as excellent or good.
- *Professional Behavior*: 92% rated the training as excellent or good.
- *Interpersonal Skills*: 90% rated the training as excellent or good.

### Training in Integrated Curricula

- Over 80% of alums rated their training in *evidence-based practice*, *multicultural practice*, and *self-care* as excellent or good, whereas 59% described their training in *career development* as excellent or good.

### Program Mission & Objectives

- Program Mission: The mission of Arcadia University's GPC is to provide students with opportunities to develop the knowledge, self-awareness, dispositions, and skills needed to become competent

professional counselors trained to integrate evidenced-based and multicultural practices in their professional work. Students also receive instruction in career development and self-care to help them achieve their professional goals and sustain themselves in their professional careers over time. Our curriculum provides students with repeated opportunities to practice counseling skills, as well as receive and offer feedback to help them become advocates for social justice. Further, our curriculum provides students with the opportunities to fulfill all graduate educational requirements necessary to become Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC) in Pennsylvania. Overall, the curriculum is designed to embody our motto, Best Practices and Social Justice with Heart, and meet the following objectives:

- Graduates will evidence competency in evidence-based practice in counseling,
  - Graduates will demonstrate competency in multicultural practice in counseling,
  - Graduates will display skills needed to pursue their specific careers in counseling, and
  - Graduates will exhibit skills needed to incorporate self-care into their counseling careers.
- 82% of alums reported that the program's mission statement and objectives fit with the needs of the counseling field.

#### Additional Feedback Provided

- Based on their open-ended responses, alums overwhelmingly expressed appreciation for the multicultural training received in the program.
- Many alums listed the following aspects of the program as invaluable to their development as professional counselors:
  - Faculty support and mentoring,
  - Relationships with their peers,
  - Hands-on practice of counseling skills, and
  - Emphasis on self-awareness and personal growth.

#### Suggestions for Improving the Program

- Based on their open-ended responses, alums reported the need for additional training in several areas:
  - Licensure and job search process,
  - Psychopharmacology, and
  - Modalities other than CBT.

#### Response from Core Faculty

- The core faculty members each reviewed and discussed the results of this survey. The following modifications to the program have been made or are in progress:

#### *Modifications Already Made*

- A new course was developed and launched in 2019 to provide more concentrated instruction in psychopharmacology, as well as relevant topics in neuroscience. This course, PY535 (Neuroscience and Psychopharmacology for Counselors), is a core course for the Master of Arts in Counseling (MAC) and is offered for 1 credit every summer semester.
- The core faculty, particularly the instructors of PY586 (Theories and Techniques of Counseling) and PY621 (Advanced Counseling Techniques), made significant modifications to both courses to achieve broader coverage of counseling modalities, beyond cognitive-behavioral therapy, and to create greater alignment between these core skills-oriented courses. The changes were launched in 2020 and are clearly reflected in modifications to the course syllabi:

- PY586: Course Objective: Understanding a variety of theories (Client-Centered, Psychoanalytic/ Psychodynamic, Existential, Attachment, Cognitive, and Behavioral), including their conceptualization of etiology of disorders, clinical applications, and shortcomings.
  - PY586: Content Areas: Multicultural perspectives and skills; Rogers’s Client-Centered Theory and related skills; Psychodynamics and Psychoanalytic Theories, Attachment Theories, and Existential Theories as well as related skills; and Cognitive and Behavioral Theories, and related techniques.
  - PY620: Course Objective: Develop an understanding of specific theories, intervention, and evaluation of client progress: emotion-focused therapy, time-limited dynamic therapy, and acceptance and commitment therapy.
  - PY620: Content Areas: Decolonizing Therapy: cultural consideration, adaptations, and limitations of traditional western therapy; Emotion Focused Therapy: theory, conceptualization of ‘dysfunction,’ and interventions; Time-Limited Dynamic Therapy: theory, conceptualization of ‘dysfunction,’ and interventions; Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: theory, conceptualization of ‘dysfunction,’ and interventions; Consideration of Alternative Methods of Healing and incorporation into practice/collaboration.
- In 2017, the Distinguished Alum Program was introduced in Internship Seminar (PY631). This program links current interns to recent graduates to provide mentorship regarding life post-graduation.

#### *Modifications in Progress*

- The Alum Panel typically offered during internship is being replaced with a Licensure Q&A Workshop. This workshop is intended to supplement the annual NCE Preparatory Workshop that we offer to all students each spring.
- For internship seminar, a journal assignment is being revised to encourage students to identify the states in which they plan to practice in order to help students identify any additional requirements that they will need to complete beyond the those for Pennsylvania.
- The private practice panel offered during internship is being reworked into an information session on the logistics of private practices to be led by several seasoned private practitioners.