

Master of Arts in Counseling at Saint Martin's University
Annual Report
January 2025

The following report addresses methods of informal and formal evaluation, including both quantitative and qualitative approaches, a summary of findings, changes made to- date and anticipated changes as a result of the assessment and evaluation process for calendar year 2024.

Evaluation Measures

The MAC Program at Saint Martin's University employs a number of measures to assess our Program Objectives, Student Learning Outcomes, and professional dispositions, including course-level assignments, clinical practice, and "Student Success in the MAC Program", annually. Every third year the evaluation process will also include stakeholder surveys. The next stakeholder survey cycle will occur in Spring 2026. Our program evaluation and assessment of student learning and professional dispositions is designed to align the 8 CACREP Core areas, and the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Specialty area as well as the University's Benedictine Values.

Student Learning Outcomes Summary

Course-level Outcomes

Based on primary (i.e. course-level) measures of student learning outcomes, MAC Students were consistently demonstrating meeting or exceeding expectations (80% benchmark) for knowledge across the 8 CACREP Core and Clinical Mental Health Counseling specialty areas.

Internship Evaluations

MAC students' skill across the 8 + 1 CACREP areas (as well as a number of additional areas of focus) is formally measured during the Internship via the Evaluation of Internship student. A review of that data indicated that MAC students are demonstrating *skill* at above the 80% benchmark for all areas.

NCE Pass Rates

The National Counselor Examination (NCE) is a 200-item multiple-choice examination designed to assess knowledge, skills and abilities determined to be important for providing effective counseling services. The NCE is a requirement for counselor licensure in many states. It is also one of two examination options for the National Certified Counselor (NCC) certification. It may also be accepted by military health systems to become a recognized provider. Data reported by the National Board for Certified Counselors indicates that MAC students/graduates who took the National Counseling Exam in 2024 have 100% pass rate.

University Learning Outcomes

	SAINT MARTIN'S UNIVERSITY STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES					
	Critical Thinking (CT)	Lifelong Learning (LL)	Communication (WC, OC)	Leadership Skills (LS)	Social Responsibility and Civic Engagement (SR, CE)	Global and Intercultural Competencies (GL, ICC)
Course and Assignment Assessment	MAC 529 Ethics: Ethical Dilemma Assignments	INTERNSHIP: Books of Choice Discussion	508: Midterm Skills Demonstration Practicum and Internship: Case Presentation and Feedback Assignments	MAC 579/Internship: Group Counseling Facilitation	MAC 589: Advocacy Project	MAC 518: Skills/MC Assessment Post semester

MAC has mapped key assignments from the MAC Program to the Saint Martin's University Learning Outcomes (listed in above Table). During Calendar Year 2024, the benchmark of 80% or above of students meeting or exceeding expectations for those assignments was met. As assessment and evaluation changes are made to the program, we will work to ensure we continue to identify opportunities to assess the University level outcomes.

Professional Dispositions

Professional dispositions are measured via the “Five Areas of Assessment in the MAC Program” process, which is completed by students during each Spring semester of their training program. In addition, each student is evaluated by the MAC Faculty each spring to determine any deficiencies that may need to be addressed. If deficiencies/concerns are identified, a letter is sent to the student that outlines those areas. Also included in the letter are required action steps and instruction to meet with their advisor by a specific deadline to discuss questions and concerns as well as identify additional action steps. Where there are no areas of concern identified, students are sent a letter indicating no areas of concern exist/that the MAC faculty assessment align with the student's self-assessment.

Aggregate data for 2024 across the Five Areas of Assessment in the MAC Program indicate students are achieving a “meets or exceeds standards” rating for four (Academic Rigor, Person of the Counselor, Clinical Skill, and Ethical Standards) of the five areas assessed below the 80% benchmark. For “Counselor Skills and Dispositions”, the number of students assessed at meeting or exceeding standards exceeded the 80% benchmark. Further analysis of this data, including trends from qualitative responses will be presented to the MAC Advisory Board in Spring 2025 to identify potential program and curricular strategies to enhance learning, skill, and disposition development. In addition, operationalization of the terminology utilized in the Success in the MAC Program assessment, as well as a refined rubric, may impact future assessment responses. The Program will continue to gather and analyze data, and determine any course or program-level changes that will be made as a result.

Applicant, Student and Graduate Characteristics

Having a diverse student body can foster diverse thinking. The MAC Program attracts individuals from a diversity of backgrounds, which is reflective of the University's high diversity

profile (the University meets the requirements of a Minority Serving Institution/MSI as well as Asian American and Pacific Island Serving Institution/AANAPISI). At the same, time, the Program recognizes the importance of intentionally seeking out diverse candidates from outside of the University community, and faculty are making concerted efforts to recruit from Programs and Institutions with diverse student bodies.

The following information gathered is from Institution Level data:

In calendar year 2024, MAC had a total of 48 applicants across two admissions cycles. Of those applicants, 16 (33.3%) report belonging to a racial or ethnic minority group.

35 (72.9%) of applicants identified as female.

In calendar year 2024, MAC graduated a total of 22 students, 8 (36.4%) of whom reported belonging to a racial or ethnic minority group; and 16 (72.7%) of whom reported identifying as female, and 6 (27.3%) who identified as male.

In 2024, there was a total of 94 MAC students. 32 (34%) MAC students identified as a marginalized race/ethnicity, 11 (11.7%) reported being a first-generation college student, and 25 (26.6%) reported military affiliation, 73 (77.6%) identified as female, and 21 (22.3%) identified as being male.

The Program also notes limitations in terms of the institutional data reported, as it does not include data regarding sexual orientation or non-binary gender identity. The introduction of an additional demographic survey, to be administered anonymously during students' first course could provide a richer picture of the demographics of our student body. This would be in better alignment with our department's position statement which includes the statement "We work to deconstruct the walls of sexism and transphobia by integrating feminist and trans-valuing theories into our practice. We actively counter ageism, ableism, classism, racism, and heterosexism in our communities by admitting their pervasiveness and implementing corrective actions." Finally, the Program believes our commitment to diversity is best evidenced in our position statement and community presence:

Position Statement

We strive to embody social justice through a continuing cultivation of ethical and culturally relevant methodologies. In resonance with the values of the American Counseling Association, the National Board for Certified Counselors, accrediting organizations for counseling programs, and the Benedictine framework, we recognize the dominance of white/euro-centric norms and teach cultural humility by rejecting anti-immigrant rhetoric and action.

We affirm the self-determination of Indigenous and Native communities by hearing their stories and supporting decolonization. We work to deconstruct the walls of sexism and transphobia by integrating feminist and trans-valuing theories into our practice. We actively counter ageism, ableism, classism, racism, and heterosexism in our communities by admitting their pervasiveness and implementing corrective actions. In the spirit of Benedictine sincere hospitality, we extend

welcome to members of all faiths and to those who do not identify as having a religious membership.

Community Presence and Action

MAC's commitment to diversity is most transparently evidenced in the program's community presence. Specifically, MAC serves community schools, agencies, and groups that lack the resources to address the mental health needs of our area without the support of counseling interns. In order to fulfill these needs, MAC Clinical Coordinator, Dr. K. Alexandra Onno, maintains relationships with these sites and maintains close contact to ensure that the clients' needs are supported through support of our interns and continued relationship with the sites. While these affiliations are indirect recruitment efforts, the program nonetheless realizes they are effective means of making MAC's presence and commitment known in the community, and that by increasing MAC's visibility we are increasing our attractiveness to potential students from diverse backgrounds. This assertion is reinforced by studies (see Hipolito-Delgado, Estrada, & Garcia, 2017; Umbach & Kuh, 2003) that indicate that an environment supportive of issues of cultural diversity and inclusion is most impactful in attracting and retaining culturally diverse students.

In an effort to further retain diverse students, beginning in Fall 2024 the MAC Program has implemented strategies to better engage students' diverse needs by initiating conversation during the admissions process and throughout their matriculation through the program. Specifically, upon offer of admission, all students will be asked to share unique/diverse identities they wish to be a focus of advising and instruction. That information will be provided to their assigned MAC Faculty advisor, who will systematically address needs during each fall and semester advising session, as well as on an as-needed basis. These efforts are tracked at the program level through a database available to MAC Core Faculty.

MAC prides itself on the attention to issues of inclusion and diversity that are woven throughout our program, from our program objectives to our professional skills and dispositions, as well as through our dedication to community involvement that is centered around providing services to marginalized populations. Encouraging critical intergroup dialogues and creating an atmosphere of risk-taking, wherein students from diverse backgrounds can engage in meaningful experiences, is an intentional goal of the MAC curriculum. To facilitate these interactions, faculty are committed to continuing to examine their own cultural identity and cultural humility, to actively engaging in issues of social justice, and to advocating for marginalized populations. These values are in alignment with research findings that indicate that an environment supporting issues of cultural diversity are most impactful in attracting and retaining culturally diverse students.

Revisions

MAC is currently in the process of transitioning from a 4-point to a 5-point rubric scale for assessment and evaluation measures. This transition will allow the program to differentiate between meeting and exceeding standards and results in a more robust data set. In addition, during calendar year 2024, revisions to the Success in the MAC Program assessment instrument

were implemented. Specifically, areas of assessment were explicitly mapped to the CCS-R (citation) which provides operationalized definitions of skills and dispositions that are assessed through the Success in the MAC Program process. The revised assessment will be disseminated and responses analyzed during Spring 2025, with feedback sent to students at the culmination of the faculty assessment of students process.

Summary

In summary, this report summarizes the MAC Program Outcomes, including data from Student Learning Outcomes and Professional Dispositions evaluations; and Program Characteristics. We observe that we continue to assess Program Objectives through classroom, curricular, and community-based activities, and are committed to continuing to evaluate and make data-driven revisions, where necessary.