

2024–2025 Academic Year SCHOOL OF COUNSELING (SoC) Program Evaluation Outcome Report

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

INTRODUCTION

As part of our continuing efforts to provide the highest caliber of training for counselors and counselor educators, Walden University’s School of Counseling (SoC) is providing this report of data gathered and assessed for the most recent 3 academic years: 2022–2023, 2023–2024, and 2024–2025. This report includes assessments of both the SoC Program Objectives and the SoC Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). Also included are the actions and program improvements made during the 2024–2025 academic year.

Figure 1. SoC Conceptual Model

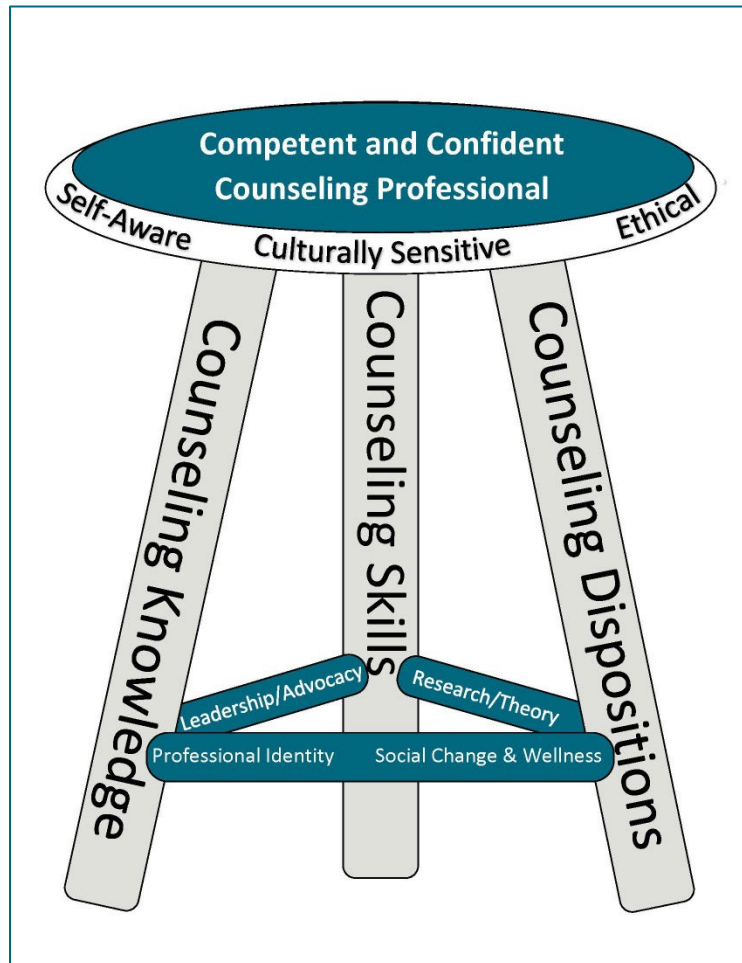


Figure 1 represents the conceptual model used by the SoC to drive our assessment practices and, ultimately, develop competent and confident counseling professionals from each of our programs. Data sources for this report include the evaluations of PLOs using Educational Assessment Corporation (EAC Visual Data Tool) and Meditrek®, which were designed to gather data on key student assignments and faculty assessments linked to learning outcomes for each program; Program Objectives assessed using surveys conducted with current students, alumni, and employers along with graduation rates, national exam scores, graduate employment rates, and practicum and internship placement rates; and faculty and student demographic data. All this information that was collected and compared over a 3-year period is part of the process of improving the delivery of the counseling degree programs in the SoC.

MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

The Mission and Vision statements reflect the overarching goals of the SoC. Goals are broad, generalizable statements of what an institution, college, school, or program seeks to accomplish. They may be incorporated in academic unit mission and vision statements or as separate statements. Their primary role is to provide overall guidance and direction to the academic unit. These statements were updated during the 2021–2022 academic year in response to the Academic Program Review of 2020. The SoC faculty articulate their goals within the SoC Mission and Vision statements:

SoC Mission Statement—We improve lives by providing accessible, inclusive, and quality counselor education that empowers students to promote wellness and social change in a diverse world.

SoC Vision Statement—To create a healthier world through fostering wellness and transforming lives.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAMS

The SoC at Walden University delivers four CACREP-accredited degree programs:

1. MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC)
2. MS in School Counseling (SC)
3. PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision (CES)
4. MS Dual Degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and in School Counseling (DD)
The SoC provides this dual degree program to offer students the opportunity to complete both the MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and MS in School Counseling simultaneously by meeting the requirements for both degrees in one program of study.

TERM DATES IN REPORTING PERIOD

This report includes data collected from all degree programs for the four quarters in the 2022–2023, 2023–2024, and 2024–2025 academic years. Each academic year begins in late August with the beginning of the Fall quarter, followed by the Winter quarter beginning in late November, then the Spring quarter beginning in late February, and concluding with the Summer quarter beginning at the end of May. Each quarter of the SoC includes a 10-week period of class activities with a period of 3 weeks between the end of one quarter and the beginning of the next quarter.

Table 1. *Terms and Dates of the 2022–2023, 2023–2024, and 2024–2025 Academic Years*

Term	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025
Fall	Aug 29–Nov 20, 2022	Aug 28–Nov 19, 2023	Aug 26–Nov 10, 2024
Winter	Nov 28, 2022–Feb 19, 2023	Nov 27, 2023–Feb 18, 2024	Nov 28, 2024–Feb 9, 2025
Spring	Feb 27–May 21, 2023	Feb 26–May 19, 2024	Feb 24–May 11, 2025
Summer	May 29–Aug 20, 2023	May 27–Aug 18, 2024	May 26–Aug 10, 2025

Source: Walden University Catalog

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Student Demographic Data provides the SoC information about the makeup of the student body. This information aids the SoC in identifying differences in program experiences realized by different groups of students. It also informs the school’s efforts in student recruiting and admissions as well as student success and support.

In terms of student enrollment, the Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program has grown dramatically with 12.3% and 24.7% more students enrolled year-over-year from 2022–2023 to 2023–2024 and from 2023–2024 to 2024–2025, respectively. Likewise, the Dual Degree (DD) program has also grown 14.9% and 17.2% during the same year-over-year periods. The Counselor Education and Supervision (CES) program has expanded 10.9% and 10.3%, and the School Counseling (SC) program has grown 4.4% and 6.6% across the same year-over-year time periods (see Table 2).

Table 2. Degree Program Enrollments for the 2022–2023, 2023–2024, and 2024–2025 Academic Years

Academic Year (Fall Quarter)	CMHC	SC	DD	CES
2022–2023	3,968	1,196	623*	340
2023–2024	4,458	1,249	716*	377
2024–2025	5,560	1,332	839*	416

*Dual Degree student totals are included in the totals for CMHC and SC, also because they are enrolled in both programs.
Source: Walden University Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Engagement, and Academic Performance

Gender, Military Affiliation, and First-Generation Students

The demographic makeup of the SoC shows that across the three academic terms, most students in the SoC have identified as female (81–83% for the CMHC and CES programs and 85–87% for the SC and DD programs). Our students across all SoC degree programs indicated that a small and decreasing percentage of them are affiliated with the military, dropping from about 8% in 2022–2023 to only 3.5% in 2024–2025. More than half of our master’s-level students in the SoC report being first-generation students. At the same time, while the CES program has grown, a decreasing percentage of students, 56% in 2022–2023 down to 40% in 2024–2025, indicated they were first-generation students (see Table 3).

Ethnicity

In the CMHC and SC programs, approximately one-third of students identified as Black/African American and half of the students identified as White over the 3 academic years. At the same time, the DD program was made up of equal percentage, close to 40%, of both persons identifying as Black/African American and those identifying as White students. Meanwhile, in all three programs, the percentage of the student body made up of persons identifying as Latino/Hispanic increased slightly over the three academic terms, now representing 10–12% of enrollment. In the CES program, enrollment percentages of Black/African American increased about 3.5 percentage points to 49% while the percentage of White students dropped 6 percentage points to 34%, and

Latino/Hispanic students remained fairly consistent at 8% of the CES student enrollment (see Table 4).

Table 3. Student Demographics for the 2022–2023, 2023–2024, and 2024–2025 Academic Years

Academic Year (Fall)	CMHC			SC			DD			CES		
Academic Year	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025
Gender												
Female (%)	82.6	82.7	80.9	86.3	85.0	85.2	87.3	85.8	84.7	81.1	80.9	82.9
Male (%)	13.9	13.9	14.8	12.0	11.9	12.0	10.6	10.6	10.9	16.8	16.5	13.5
Unknown (%)	3.5	3.3	4.3	1.7	3.2	2.9	2.1	3.6	4.4	2.1	2.7	3.6
Military (%)	8.6	5.6	3.6	5.1	4.2	2.5	7.2	4.6	2.7	7.4	5.3	4.5
First-Gen. (%)	50.2	36.1	57.7	49.9	39.8	50.1	50.5	35.0	62.2	56.4	47.7	39.5

Source: Walden University Academic Dashboard

Table 4. Student Ethnicity for the 2022–2023, 2023–2024, and 2024–2025 Academic Years

Academic Year (Fall)	CMHC			SC			DD			CES		
Academic Year	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025
Indigenous People (%)	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.2
Asian (%)	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.0	1.3	1.0	0.7	0.8	1.0	1.5	1.5	1.6
Black/African American (%)	33.0	32.2	31.3	34.8	32.3	35.0	42.0	41.8	41.0	45.3	48.5	48.7
Hispanic/Latino (%)	9.7	10.8	11.7	8.5	9.0	9.8	10.5	9.8	11.7	8.5	7.2	8.1
Native Hawaiian (%)	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2
Two or More Ethnicities (%)	2.6	2.9	3.0	2.2	2.5	3.3	2.4	3.4	3.9	1.7	1.5	2.5
Unknown (%)	3.9	3.5	3.7	2.0	3.2	2.6	3.8	4.2	3.2	3.4	3.2	4.5
White (%)	48.9	48.8	48.5	51.2	51.6	48.1	40.6	39.8	39.0	39.6	37.7	34.1

Source: Walden University Academic Dashboard

Age

The majority of our master’s-level students indicated their ages between 24 and 39 years (60–66%) with another 22% between 40 and 49 years of age. Our CES students report that approximately 70% fall between 30 and 49 years of age. Through the 3 academic years, the average age of students in

all the degree programs has remained relatively unchanged, with master’s-level students averaging approximately 35–37 years of age and doctoral students averaging 42 years of age (see Table 5).

Table 5. Student Age for the 2022–2023, 2023–2024, and 2024–2025 Academic Years

Academic Year (Fall)	CMHC			SC			DD			CES		
	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025
Age in Years												
17–23 (%)	3.6	3.8	4.0	4.4	5.4	4.8	5.4	3.5	3.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
24–29 (%)	27.0	26.2	25.5	30.9	30.8	28.8	29.6	28.5	29.1	8.4	8.2	8.6
30–39 (%)	34.4	34.6	34.5	35.2	32.9	35.5	35.8	37.8	35.9	38.0	38.4	35.9
40–49 (%)	21.5	21.9	22.7	21.6	22.0	22.1	21.3	21.9	21.9	32.3	32.3	33.3
50–59 (%)	10.9	10.8	10.9	6.6	7.5	7.8	6.9	7.4	8.2	15.9	15.9	16.7
60–69 (%)	2.5	2.5	2.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.0	5.2	5.0	4.8
>69 (%)	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.7
Average (%)	36.7	36.7	36.9	35.1	35.5	35.4	34.9	35.5	35.5	42.0	42.0	42.2

Source: Walden University Academic Dashboard

Region

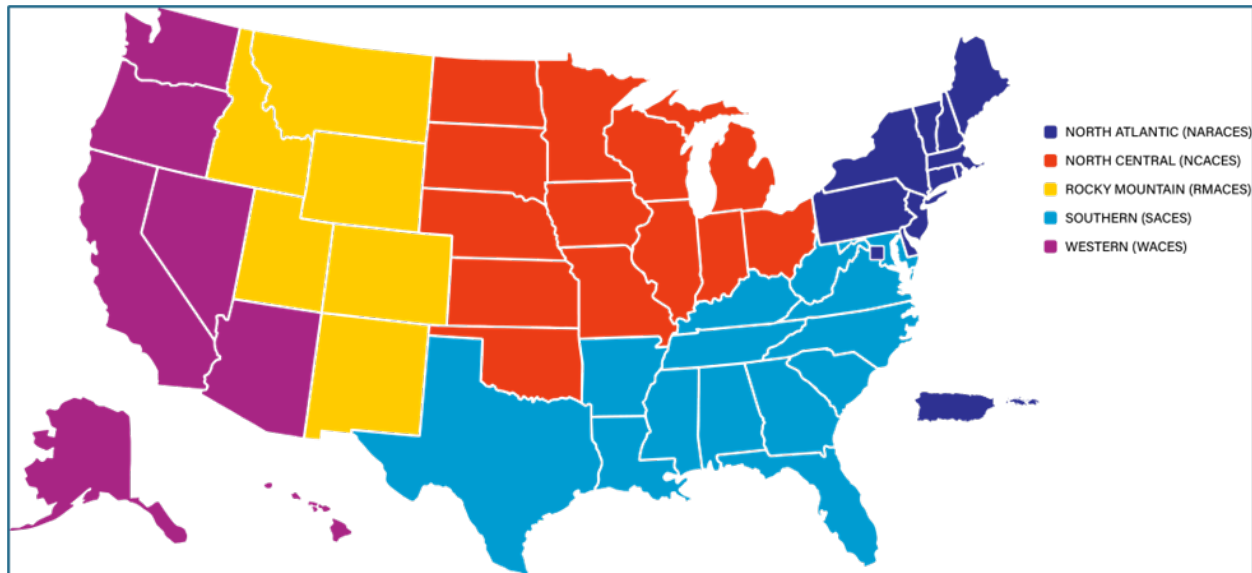
Greater than half of the students in the SoC reside in the Southern Region of the Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors (see Table 6 and Figure 2). During the 2022–2023 academic year, approximately 57% of MS-level students in the SoC resided in the Southern Region. That same percentage has held across the next 2 academic years for the CMHC and DD programs, but the SC program experienced a 7-percentage-point decrease in the Southern Region during that time. In the 2022–2023 academic year, 60% of CES students resided in the Southern Region, and by 2024–2025, that percentage rose to 66%. Across all SoC programs, another 19% of students reside in the North Central Region. The largest concentrations of SoC students reside in Florida, Texas, and Georgia.

Table 6. Student Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors Region for the 2022–2023, 2023–2024, and 2024–2025 Academic Years

Academic Year (Fall)	CMHC			SC			DD			CES		
	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025
ACES Region												
Southern (%)	56.7	57.2	57.3	56.8	50.2	49.7	56.9	57.8	56.4	60.4	61.9	65.9
North Atlantic (%)	5.1	4.6	4.1	3.0	4.5	5.0	4.9	4.1	4.8	6.0	5.4	4.2
North Central (%)	18.4	18.4	18.6	17.2	19.0	18.3	18.2	19.1	18.1	22.5	20.8	18.9
Rocky Mountain (%)	8.4	8.1	7.5	8.6	9.6	8.5	7.0	6.7	8.8	4.4	4.5	3.7
Western (%)	11.4	11.7	12.4	14.4	16.7	18.5	13.0	12.4	11.9	6.7	7.4	7.3

Source: Walden University Academic Dashboard

Figure 2. *The Regions of the Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors*



ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

Building upon a strong foundation of assessment expertise and rigorous evaluation at Walden University, the SoC has a systematic process for measuring the program learning outcomes (PLOs) for each degree program. These learning outcomes find their roots in the SoC’s Vision and Mission statements, which are connected to the larger umbrella of Walden University’s Vision and Mission statements, focused on social change and the social determinants of health. In addition, each PLO aligns with the university’s goals and the 2024 CACREP Standards. Assessment runs on a 3-year cycle, with each year of assessment beginning in September and concluding approximately in March.

Three primary areas are assessed across the SoC curriculum for all programs—student knowledge, skills, and dispositions. For each Program Learning Outcome (PLO, See Table 7), two or three graded activities and/or skills assessments, using the Meditrek platform that houses the assessments and stores student data, are measured across four quarters (Fall to Summer). For the knowledge PLOs, activities were chosen to reflect different levels of knowledge attained throughout the program’s curriculum—an “introductory” activity, one that “reinforced” the knowledge needed, and one to show students had “mastered” the content. To establish excellence, the SoC set a benchmark that 90% of students who complete each graded activity achieve 80% or higher on the Content Knowledge element of the rubric, 90% of students receive a rating of “Demonstrated skill proficiently” for skills assessments, and 99% of students receive a rating of “Adequate” for disposition ratings. Where benchmarks are not met, special attention is given to improve upon the results through program or course modifications. A review of the activity to determine the cause of the shortfall occurs, and then an action plan is created to address the shortfall in the following year. These actions are then reviewed to determine results of the plan. In July of 2025, this data was shared with the SoC Board of Advisors. Although the meeting of the Board of Advisors is informational, it is also intended to gather feedback to help inform decisions regarding the maintenance and updates of the curriculum and program policies. Assessment results, analysis of the

results, and the feedback from the Board of Advisors are shared with three college-level leadership groups: (1) the college-/school-level assessment committee made up of college faculty and administrators, (2) the SoC leadership, and (3) the college-/school-level Curriculum and Policy Committee (CAP) made up of faculty, staff, and administrators from the college. This takes place during college summit planning in the Spring of each year.

Table 7. PLOs for Degree Programs Within SoC

PLO	School Counseling	Clinical Mental Health Counseling	Dual Degree for CMHC and SC
PLO 1	Synthesize counseling knowledge into evidence-based action plans for promoting wellness. <i>(Knowledge)</i>	Synthesize counseling knowledge into evidence-based treatment plans for promoting wellness. <i>(Knowledge)</i>	Synthesize counseling knowledge into evidence-based plans for promoting wellness. <i>(Knowledge)</i>
PLO 2	Construct collaborative relationships with diverse populations to promote social change. <i>(Skills)</i>	Construct therapeutic relationships with diverse populations to promote social change. <i>(Skills)</i>	Construct professional relationships with diverse populations to promote social change. <i>(Skills)</i>
PLO 3	Develop professional counselor behaviors in academic settings to foster growth and wellness. <i>(Dispositions)</i>	Develop professional counselor behaviors in clinical settings to foster growth and wellness. <i>(Dispositions)</i>	Develop professional counselor behaviors in various settings to foster growth and wellness. <i>(Dispositions)</i>
PLO 4	Develop a professional counselor identity relevant to school counseling. <i>(Knowledge)</i>	Develop a professional counselor identity relevant to clinical mental health counseling. <i>(Knowledge)</i>	Develop a professional counselor identity relevant to specific practice areas. <i>(Knowledge)</i>
PLO 5	Evaluate unique client needs within school settings. <i>(Skills)</i>	Evaluate unique client needs within clinical mental health settings. <i>(Skills)</i>	Evaluate unique client needs within practice areas. <i>(Skills)</i>
PLO 6	Evaluate community needs in relation to school settings and populations. <i>(Skills)</i>	Evaluate community needs in relation to clinical mental health settings and populations. <i>(Skills)</i>	Evaluate community needs in relation to professional settings and populations. <i>(Skills)</i>

Overall, the PLOs were met across all three programs (see Table 8). The exceptions to this included a deficiency in the Research Foundational Curriculum Area across all three programs. The scores for graded activities in Research fell below the threshold of 90% of students achieving 80% of the points on the Knowledge Content element of the rubric for multiple graded activities across the latter two academic years. Scores for the 2024–2025 academic year ranged from 70.7% to 89.7%.

For the DD program, there were additional deficiencies identified (scores below the 90% threshold) for other Foundational Curriculum Areas, and these deficiencies were unique to this program. Both the Assessment and Lifespan Development areas had percentages ranging between 74.1% and 87.5%, and

these scores were characteristic of graded activities across all three academic years for Assessment and across 2023–2024 and 2024–2025 for Lifespan Development.

For all three programs, there were mixed results for some of the Foundational Curriculum Areas in PLO 1. First, for both the CMHC program and the DD program, the CMHC Group area fell below the threshold on one or more items. The Week 2 assignment in COUN 6250 – Group Techniques showed 74.2% and 74.1% of students, respectively, achieved 90% or higher on the Content Knowledge element of the rubric for academic year 2024–2025. Second, for the SC program and the DD program, one of the two graded activities fell below the threshold for the Cultural area with a score of 83.8% and 87.5%, respectively, for the Week 9 discussion of COUN 6312S/6723D – Multicultural Counseling in academic year 2024–2025. The scores in the CMHC program for this same graded activity were higher than the threshold.

Table 8. *MS Program Learning Outcomes Across All Programs*

PLO	MS in School Counseling	MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling	Dual Degree in MS CMHC and MS SC
PLO 1	Met (except Research)	Met (except Research)	Not Met (Research, Assessment, and Lifespan)
PLO 2	Met	Met	Met
PLO 3	Met	Met	Met
PLO 4	Met	Met	Partially Met
PLO 5	Met	Met	Met
PLO 6	Met	Met	Met

The five domains for the CES program (See Table 9) were assessed using a graded activity for each of the Introductory, Reinforcing, and Mastery levels. The Counseling, Teaching, and Leadership domains included assessments for courses that changed between the two academic years due to course updates. This change seems to have impacted the assessments for the Counseling and Leadership domains.

Table 9. *PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision Program Learning Outcomes*

PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision PLOs
1. Synthesize theories and evidence-based practices across counselor education domains. <i>(Knowledge)</i>
2. Create counselor education approaches to address diverse counselors-in-training. <i>(Knowledge)</i>
3. Develop counselor education and supervision interventions to promote social change. <i>(Skills)</i>
4. Employ professional counselor educator and supervisor behaviors in professional settings. <i>(Dispositions)</i>

The PLO analysis shows that two of the PhD in CES program PLOs were met, and the other two PLOs were partially met (See Table 10). PLO 1 included measures of graded activities across the five domains of the PhD program, and two of the five domains reflected mixed results. The Counseling domain had

two of the three graded activities fall below the 90% threshold at 88.9% and 75.0% for the 2024-2025 academic year. Also, the Research domain included three graded activities, and one of those three fell below the 90% threshold at 80.7% for the 2024-2025 academic year.

For PLO 4, the threshold is set at 99% of students receiving ratings of “Adequate” on all 10 items of the Student Development Assessment. For the past two academic years, the second measure of Dispositions occurring during the second Intensive experience reflected 98.3% (in 2023–2024) and 96.6% (in 2024–2025) of students receiving all “Adequate” ratings. The other two occasions used for measuring this PLO scored 99–100% for both academic years.

Table 10. *Threshold of PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision PLOs*

PLO	PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision
PLO 1	Partially Met
PLO 2	Met
PLO 3	Met
PLO 4	Partially Met

ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

In 2024, the SoC approved the development of seven program objectives (POs). It is important to note that the Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) described in Tables 7 and 9 for the four degree programs are specific data points for the first of these Program Objectives. These objectives address aspirations of the faculty and leadership for students completing the MS- and PhD-level degree programs in the SoC. These POs are listed:

1. Create a learning environment where counseling graduates will gain and apply the essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to impact positive social change.
2. Foster the development of, and adherence to, a strong professional counselor identity for School of Counseling graduates within their scope of practice.
3. Prepare counseling graduates who advance cultural humility, advocacy, awareness, and engagement to best serve an ever-changing, diverse society.
4. Inspire counseling graduates to actively engage with the professional counselor identity by participating in professional counseling organizations, continuing education, and other learning opportunities that contribute to personal and professional growth over time.
5. Develop counseling graduates who exemplify the highest ethical standards outlined in the profession’s codes of ethics and key competency documents.
6. Equip counseling graduates to recognize social determinants of health and to tailor their practice to client needs by considering the impact of these factors.
7. Establish a programmatic learning experience that instills in our graduates a focus on assessment, evaluation, and continuous quality improvement.

The SoC identified several data points as measures of each of the POs. For comparison purposes, each PO was assessed and compared across each of the degree programs for the past 3 academic years. Data points come from specific student, employer, and alumni survey items; national test scores; graduation rates; student development assessments; practicum and internship placement rates; and PLOs. After a review of the past 3 years for each of the data points, the majority of the POs appear to be met across all the degree programs. Only two POs were identified as partially met (see Table 10).

Table 10. *SoC Program Objectives Across All Programs*

PO	MS in School Counseling	MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling	Dual Degree in MS CMHC and MS SC	PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision
1	Met	Met	Met	Met
2	Partially Met	Partially Met	Partially Met	Met
3	Met	Met	Met	Met
4	Met	Met	Met	Met
5	Met	Met	Met	Partially Met
6	Met	Met	Met	Met
7	Met	Met	Met	Met

The key factor that gave reason to identify PO 2 as partially met is the percentage of master’s-level students who reported being employed in the field of mental health or school counseling after graduation. Graduates from both the SC and CMHC degree programs reported an in-the-field employment rate (or enrollment in a doctoral program) of 57–69% across the 3 academic years. This rate is much lower than the 90% threshold set by the SoC. For this particular measurement point, graduates in the Dual Degree Program were counted within both the SC and CMHC programs since they achieve both degrees. For the PhD in CES program, the only PO identified as partially met was the fifth PO. In this case, two of the three assessment points for measuring student development fell below the 99% threshold for the 2024–2025 academic year. In the previous academic year, one of the assessments fell below the threshold. Yet, the other assessment point for the program outcome indicated that 100% of employers who responded to the survey indicated their Walden graduate employee used ethical standards of the field at a moderate or high ability. Each of these Partially Met POs will be reviewed by the Assessment Committee, Program Leadership, and Faculty to consider possible changes to improve these data points.

Examinations

National exams for the MS programs include the National Counselor Exam (NCE) for CMHC, SC, and MCFC graduates and the Praxis Exam for SC graduates. While the NCE and Praxis Exam results are not included in the evaluation of the PLOs, the results serve as a possible source for considering program and curriculum planning.

National Counselor Exam: Between Fall 2022 and Spring 2025, the national NCE pass rate for students in the SoC has varied between 51% and 76% while the national pass rate has shown a range of 79–93% during the same time. The mean scores for the SoC routinely fall below the national means, but consistently the means for the SoC fall within one standard deviation of the national mean.

Praxis Exam: Using the cutoff of a score of 145, the national pass rates for the Praxis Exam for 2023, 2024, and 2025 were 98%, 93%, and 93%, respectively. During the same 3 years, Walden students who completed the Praxis while still completing their degree programs achieved pass rates of 90%, 86%, and 91%, respectively. As described previously for the NCE, the mean pass rate for Walden students fell within one standard deviation of the national mean pass rate.

Graduation Rates: Overall, graduation rates for students in the MS programs have improved over the past 3 years. Students in the CMHC program have graduated in academic years 2022-2023, 2023-2024, and 2024-2025 at rates of 29.9%, 36.2%, and 39.6%, respectively. Likewise, students in the SC program have graduated at rates of 27.8%, 33.2%, and 38.1%, respectively. Students in the DD program are included in the CMHC and SC rates since they graduated with both degrees. For the PhD in CES program, the rates have remained somewhat consistent with rates of 27.0%, 22.0%, and 24.0% for the same 3 academic years, respectively.

PROGRAM CHANGES

In the 2023–2024 Program Evaluation Outcome Report, the following recommendations were shared from a review of the PLOs. These included the following:

1. Monitor other benchmarks (both accomplished and missed) recognizing that 2022–2023 was the first year to assess them. (Assessment Team, Director of Academic Quality)
2. Update resources and graded activities associated with key performance indicators (KPIs) in COUN 6306 – Ethics and Legal Issues in Counseling and COUN 6722 – Counseling and Psychotherapy Theories to address missed benchmarks in KPIs. (Course Managers/Coordinator, Assessment Team, Director of Academic Quality)
3. Initiate proposals to conduct course updates for COUN 6111S – Introduction to School Counseling and COUN 6320S – Counseling Techniques in the Schools to address missed benchmarks in KPIs. (Course Manager/Coordinator, Assessment Team, Director of Academic Quality)
4. Conduct course updates for COUN 8125 – Teaching in Counselor Education and COUN 8135 – Clinical Supervision in the CES Programs to address the missed benchmarks in KPIs from those courses. (Course Managers/Coordinator, Assessment Team, Associate Dean/Director of Academic Quality, Associate Dean of Skills & Curriculum)
5. Review knowledge KPIs for each of the PLOs across all programs to ensure best fit, particularly to balance the types of activities used (i.e., mix of written assignments, discussion submissions, video presentations, and objectives tests). (Course Managers, Assessment Team, Associate Dean/Director of Academic Quality, Associate Dean of Skills & Curriculum)
6. Conduct an audit of written assignments for vulnerability to the use of AI, emphasizing updates to instructions for more self-reflection and critical-thinking activities to dissuade the use of AI written submissions. (Course Managers, Assessment Team, Associate Dean/Director of Academic Quality, Associate Dean of Skills & Curriculum)

The SoC made or initiated several changes in the 2024–2025 academic year as part of the ongoing updates and improvements:

SoC Course Updates

To address problems with meeting benchmarks in several MS in School Counseling degree program assessments in previous years, we initiated updates in several courses. COUN 6111S – Introduction to School Counseling and COUN 6302S – Techniques in School Counseling (cross-listed as COUN 6316 – Techniques in Counseling) updates were initiated with anticipated launches in the first half of the 2025–2026 academic year. COUN 6320S – Group Counseling in the Schools and COUN 6810S – Working with Exceptional Children will follow later in the 2025–2026 academic year. These updates are rebuilds of the courses, introducing new course activities and resources to achieve the course objectives.

Launch New PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision Program of Study

The updated PhD in CES program of study was launched in 2024–2025 with new cohorts experiencing the impact of updates to the 2024 CACREP Standards requirements for doctoral programs. This includes the introduction of a mentoring relationship with faculty, an earlier start to the field experience courses, the introduction of dissertation companion courses that help students begin the dissertation process earlier in their program, and an update to the timing and function of intensive experiences coordinated with the MS program Pre-Practicum experiences.

With the PhD in CES program of study update, several courses needed to be revised. Additionally, older courses where benchmarks were missed in previous years needed to be updated. Several courses were updated, including COUN 8115 – Advanced Counseling Theories, COUN 8125 – Teaching in Counselor Education, COUN 8135 – Clinical Supervision, and the Intensive (formerly Pre-Practicum) courses were updated in connection with the master’s-level Pre-Practicum courses update. The redesigned courses for the new program of study included COUN 8897, 8898, and 8899, which are the three PhD internships and the restructured Dissertation companion courses, including COUN 8501, 8502, 8503, 8504, and 8505. The courses for the MS-level Pre-Practicum were updated to coincide along with the update to the PhD Intensive courses. These updates brought in new resources and activities to refresh the courses.

Rubric Updates

Separate from the SoC Comprehensive Assessment Plan, the leadership of the school received feedback from students and faculty about the need to address issues with rubrics. The rubrics throughout the courses reflected a traditional design including an “exceeds expectations” description for the highest level of rubric elements. Additionally, the rubrics included headings for “A,” “B,” “C,” and “F” levels. After conducting an analysis of inter-rater reliability of a sample of rubrics and determining that there were problems with consistency in the use of the rubrics, the program decided to request funding to update all the rubrics to reflect more of a competency-based philosophy. The resources for making such an update were approved, and the program began making updates during the Summer of 2025 with plans to complete all rubric updates by Summer of 2026.

Update to Assignments for More Personalized Assessments to Support Critical Thinking and Application

Several course updates have occurred throughout the MS-level programs of study to provide more personalized and practice-oriented activities in place of more traditional Assignment and Discussion forum submissions. In most cases, graded activities were adjusted to incorporate video presentations in place of written activities.