EDCO Continuous Systematic Program Evaluation

Master’s Degree Alumni Survey Report

In the Spring of 2014, EDCO surveyed master’s degree alumni from 2001 to 2013 to evaluate their perceptions of the program, employment status, licensure status, and involvement in professional organizations. Thirty-six students (36) responded from the two campuses (i.e., Roanoke (n = 30), and Falls Church (n = 6). One respondent graduated in each of the years 2001, 2002, 2003, 2007, and 2010. Two respondents graduated in 2005, three in 2008, and 5 in 2006. Seven respondents graduated in 2013 and 8 respondents graduated in 2009.

The alumni were asked to describe their perceptions of the quality of the program in 15 core areas. The used the ratings Poor, Fair, Good, and Very Good to evaluate each area. Nearly all of the areas were rated Good or Very Good by respondents (see Figure 1). Assistance with the job search, the Career class, and the Research class were rated the lowest, yet even on these components 75% of respondents rated them Good or Very Good.

Figure 1

Respondents were also asked to list strengths and weaknesses of the program. Their responses highlighted strengths in multiple areas. Two thirds of the respondents listed the faculty as a strength of the program (n = 24 of 36). They described the faculty expertise, compassion, knowledge, and support as essential to their positive experiences. Sixteen respondents mentioned the practicum or internship as a strength of the program, specifically the
quality sites, authentic experiences, and opportunity to apply knowledge. Ten respondents listed the supervision received by faculty and doctoral students as a strength of the program. Other strengths included, the cohort model, small class sizes, CACREP accreditation, focus on self-awareness and growth, focus on counselor wellness, and flexibility. In contrast, participant responses for areas of improvement addressed different aspects of the program. For example, the most common responses were specific classes that need improvement (e.g., Career \( n = 7 \) or School \( n = 7 \)) or a desire for more support in the job search process \( n = 7 \). Three respondents request the opportunity to take additional electives and three suggested more help navigating the licensure process.

In addition to sharing their perceptions of the program, respondents were asked to describe their current professional work, credentials, and involvement. Almost 90% were employed as counselors (see Figure 2). The vast majority (89%) were satisfied or completely satisfied with their jobs and 97% were satisfied with their decision to become a counselor. Among the respondents, almost all were licensed or seeking licensure: 36% were Licensed School Counselors, 53% were Licensed Professional Counselors, and 28% were Nationally Certified Counselors (percentages to not sum to 100% because of overlap). Only 16.7% were not licensed or seeking licensure at this time. Over half were involved in professional counseling associations, including the American Counseling Association \( n = 10 \), the American School Counselor Association \( n = 7 \), and The Association for Counselor Education and Supervision \( n = 1 \). Fifty-six percent of the respondents \( n = 20 \) were involved in at least one state or national counseling association.

Figure 2