

Application for the Mildred Dahne Award Department of Counselor Education, Spring 2016

The Department of Counselor Education at The College of New Jersey offers students rigorous, high-quality graduate programs of study in school counseling, clinical mental health counseling (generalist practice or addiction specialization) and marriage, couples and family counseling and therapy. As a unit within the School of Education, the department embraces the mission of Creating Agents of Change, the overarching goal of the Conceptual Framework of the Professional Education Unit at the College. The mission of every program in the department is to create exemplary counseling professionals prepared to enrich the lives of the people of New Jersey and the nation through counseling and service and to provide a national model of the preparation of counselors.

Program highlights include:

- The Department of Counselor Education at TCNJ was the first higher education institution in New Jersey and the Delaware Valley region to hold national accreditation by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), and has maintained CACREP accreditation longer than any school in New Jersey. In 2010, Department of Counselor Education faculty created *the first CACREP-Accredited Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling and Therapy (MCFCT) Masters-Degree Program in the state of New Jersey*. After the 2013 reaccreditation cycle, CACREP requested permission from our Department to use our Self-Study as a demonstration for other colleges/universities to follow in seeking initial and re-accreditation.
- In 2016, the Department of Counselor Education at TCNJ established *the first and only International School Counseling Program accredited by CACREP*. This program is offered primarily in Lisbon, Portugal.
- As a CACREP-approved program, the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) permits our students to take the national certification and state licensure examination at TCNJ during their last semester of enrollment. Students who successfully pass this exam are waived of the requirement of needing two years of post-master's experience to obtain the NBCC certification. The NBCC exam is required for counselor licensure in most states, including New Jersey. Typically, 97% of our students pass the NBCC exam on their first attempt.
- An active campus chapter of Chi Sigma Iota, the international honor society in counseling, sponsors an annual honor society awards dinner and scholarships for graduate students in the program. Our department is in the top 10 of Counselor Education programs in the country in terms of the number of students that have been inducted into Chi Sigma Iota International Honor Society.
- In terms of the job placement rates for May 2014 graduates, 98% of those responding to surveys (72% response rate) who actively sought jobs are currently employed in the field.

Excellence in Teaching and/or Support of Teaching:

The changing complexion of our society, the diversification of America, and expanding globalization forces within and beyond national borders make it imperative that the counseling profession, counselor educators, practicing counselors and counselors-in-training take a proactive stance on and appreciation of cultural diversity and human rights. Toward this end, the Department of Counselor Education faculty is committed to facilitating honest and respectful discussions regarding different points of view pertaining to values and cultural issues.

Therefore, when students accept admission into the counselor education programs at The College of New Jersey, they agree to uphold this departmental position on cultural diversity and human rights. In support of our student's commitment to this position, faculty in the department create and nurture an inclusive learning community, and commit to: 1) fostering the holistic development of all students, not just their academic adjustment; 2) developing lines of scholarship and fostering student research on multiculturalism (e.g., confronting and coping with racism; racial identity development); 3) infusing multicultural issues into all courses, not just our course on multicultural counseling; 4) genuinely sharing with all students our own experiences of crossing cultural boundaries, while supporting the multicultural journeys of our students; 5) creating classroom environments in which it is safe for all opinions to be expressed; 6) confronting insensitive comments and behaviors; and 7) being available outside of the classroom to offer support and encouragement to explore the student's biases, preconceived notions, and personal strengths and/or limitations, while attempting to understand the worldview of his or her culturally different clients.

Understanding that we are embedded within an increasingly multicultural society, the faculty believes that this commitment by students and faculty alike helps us to create and support an inclusive learning community within our department, the School of Education, and the College.

In order to continue creating a learning environment that is responsive to the needs of diverse student populations, our department solicits feedback by collecting data from our current students related to creating a culture of inclusion in our classrooms and in our department as a whole. In 2012, we surveyed the students asking them to answer the following questions: 1) Please describe how you perceive cultural inclusiveness and sensitivity to be incorporated into your current learning environment in the Counselor Education program; and 2) What recommendations do you have for the Counselor Education Department to enhance the integration of cultural inclusiveness and sensitivity into our various program components (i.e. inside and outside of the classrooms). The results from our student survey include the following comments that affirm that we are having success at creating and supporting an inclusive learning community:

- “The fulltime faculty are fantastic in making sure cultural inclusiveness and sensitivity are incorporated into the culture of the program, in every course, and highly emphasized in the Multicultural Counseling course.”
- “Cultural sensitivity is at the forefront of almost every lesson. There is not a unit that goes by where the effects or precautions to be taken with different cultures is paramount.”
- “I believe that the professors are very respectful. They take into account all different backgrounds, both of students and in exploration of clients and treatment approaches.”
- “Cultural inclusiveness has been thoroughly interwoven into each and every counselor ed course I have taken in the program. I am grateful for this, because I am now educated on this topic for my future as a counselor.”
- “Both with the supervision of counselor interns, and within the Ethics and Legal Issues class conversation about culture is a critical component. There is regular discussion throughout the semesters looking at personal biases and understanding of human cultural differences.”
- “I feel that the Counselor Education program has been sensitive to cultures and very open to including many aspects of culture to the school.”

Additionally, the Department of Counselor Education secures program evaluation input from its graduates through annual dissemination of its Graduate Follow-Up Questionnaire. We had a 55% return rate from our survey of 2014 graduates.

Following are results that speak to excellence in teaching in the Department of Counselor Education:

- When asked about the quality of overall instruction in the department, 100% of Alumni rated it as “Outstanding” (61%) or “Very Satisfactory” (39%).
- When asked about the quality of clinical experience/instruction specifically in the department, 100 % of Alumni rated it as “Very Satisfactory,” “Outstanding,” or “Satisfactory.”
- When asked about the potential for job advancement based on their earned degree, 100 % of Alumni rated it as “Satisfactory,” “Very Satisfactory,” or “Outstanding.”
- When asked about the support provided by the faculty and professionalism that these faculty exhibit, 100% of Alumni rated it as “Outstanding” (89%) or “Very Satisfactory” (11%).
- Quotes from Alumni in this survey included:

“Programs are beyond words. I am constantly involved in advocacy. The written work on myself as a person/counselor, my/other culture, my family, etc.in the program has been most valuable as it has permitted a lot of self-awareness, an aspect that is primordial when I am out there teaching or counselling people.”

“Work toward my degree was a remarkable experience that truly felt catered to me as an individual, and the direction I wanted for my career.”

“The classes were great and I left feeling prepared and educated!”

“I absolutely loved my experience. I feel that the program prepared me so well to work as a professional in the field.”

Additionally, TCNJ’s Strategic Priority B: Objective B/C-3 emphasizes integrating both curricular and co-curricular learning experiences. It calls for defining, identifying and prioritizing signature-learning experiences that define TCNJ’s unique value.

Signature learning experiences integrate scholarly and deep learning, building leadership skills and developing social/global awareness. This objective also calls for ensuring a broad range of student participation in these experiences.

Our Community Engaged Learning efforts include:

- Students in COUN 551 (Substance Abuse and Addiction; Individual, Family and Society) volunteer a full day of service at Prevention Point, a needle exchange program for opioid dependent individuals and sex workers.
- Students in EPSY 643 (Measurement and Evaluation) create Logic Models for programs that are engaged in the Trenton Prevention Policy Board to help them better understand the role of evaluation in support their organizational mission.
- Students in COUN 552 (Prevention Strategies for Schools and Communities) are partnered with local prevention programs serving youth in the Mercer County community and draft a literature review for their partner on best practice in prevention efforts in the area of service they provide.
- Students in EPSY 661 (Counseling Children and Adolescents) develop and implement School Counseling lessons plan in the summer for a program for Trenton youth entering Trenton Central High School in the fall. This is a 6 week summer camp hosted primarily at TCNJ.
- Students in COUN 675 (Group Counseling) offer group facilitation to the Bonner students themselves to support their work in the community. As one of the core values of TCNJ is “The College promotes wellness and fosters the development of the whole person”, our provision of this service to Bonner students works to sustain this value and maximize the benefit of service for these students.
- Lastly, we achieved 10 Americorp Scholarships through our partnership with the Bonner Center to encourage students to serve their Clinical experiences in Trenton sites.

A. Department Impact:

Student and Alumni Impact

The Department of Counselor Education is proud of the impact that our students and alumni are making in the state, region, and the nation. Following are a few highlights of these achievements:

- Eight students are currently completing a Department Project in the spring 2016 to educate the TCNJ campus faculty and staff on how to respond to students who may be struggling with psychological issues.
- Students hosted a National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) National Science Fact Week event in January 2015 in the form of an art/poetry slam for high school students in Mercer County. They have developed a website for this event, and the event is listed in the national NIDA registry.
- The NBCC Foundation, an affiliate of the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) selected two of our graduates for the National Board for Certified Counselors Minority Fellowship Program in 2015. Two additional students were selected for this prestigious national fellowship in 2016.
- An Alumna, Ms. Dana Tsivikis Kurilew, received the 2014 New Jersey School Counselor of the Year Award and was honored by Michelle Obama at the White House in January of 2015.
- Numerous TCNJ students have been recipients of several awards and scholarships during the past four years which include: New Jersey Counseling Association Graduate Student of the Year Award; New Jersey Association of Counselor Education and Supervision MaryLou Ramsey Award; American School Counselor Association Foundation Scholarship; Student of the Year Award by the North Atlantic Regional Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors;
- Two students were selected as the Graduate Student Representative for the Southern Chapter of New Jersey Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (SNJAMFT) in 2015 and the New Jersey Association for Marriage and Family Therapy in 2016.
- Graduates of our program have served in leadership roles (e.g., as President of the New Jersey Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development) and authored dozens of peer-reviewed publications and conference presentations.

Additionally, our graduates are making an impact in numerous positions in counseling throughout New Jersey and nearby states, including, but not limited to the following:

- Directors of School Counseling Services at Hopewell Valley School District, Montgomery School District, Upper Freehold School District, Hunterdon Central School District, Dover Public School District, and Berkeley Heights Public Schools

- School Counselor and Student Assistance Coordinator Positions in the Bernards Township, Bordentown Township, Central Bucks, Council Rock, Ewing, Freehold, Hillsboro, Hopewell, Hunterdon, Neshaminy, Pennsbury, Princeton, Trenton, and West Windsor-Plainsboro school districts
- Director of the Family Guidance Center of Princeton
- Director of Programs, Behavioral Resources Services, Camden County
- Director, The TCNJ Clinic
- Faculty position at Valparaiso University, Jersey City University, and The College of New Jersey
- College Counseling and Student Services positions at Fairleigh Dickinson University, Rider University, Rutgers University, Temple University, TCNJ, Westminster Choir College, Bucks County Community College, Burlington County Community College, Mercer County Community College, and Union County Community College
- Addictions and Family Support Counseling Positions at the Carrier Clinic, Catholic Charities of Trenton, the Drenk Behavioral Health Center, Hamilton Hospital, the Livengren Foundation, New Horizons Treatment Center, and the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey.

Many students entering graduate school have as their ultimate educational goal the completion of a doctorate in counseling, counselor education and supervision, or a related field. The Department of Counselor Education at The College of New Jersey has a distinguished record of helping students gain admission into doctoral programs. Here is a sample of the schools to which our students have been accepted for doctoral studies: Columbia University, The City University of New York, Rutgers University, Seton Hall University, Temple University, Lehigh University, Drexel University, LaSalle University, Chestnut Hill College, Montclair State University, Georgia State University, University of Florida, University of Memphis, The California School of Professional Psychology, The Adler School of Professional Psychology, Ball State University, University of Denver, Immaculate University, Iowa State University, and the University of Georgia. Additionally, several of these doctoral graduates have gone on to become faculty members in counselor education and supervision.

Other Impactful, Departmental Community Outreach Initiatives:

Our department has worked closely with the Bonner Center at TCNJ to increase our impact through community-engaged learning opportunities. For example, through the work of our departmental diversity committee, we developed two (2) Graduate Assistantship (GA) positions within the Bonner Center. The committee hopes that these GA positions will serve as a recruitment tool for diverse students, as the Bonner Center is an organization that promotes a diverse community at TCNJ.

In response to the increasing rates of substance abuse among adolescent and young adult populations in New Jersey, our Department successfully drafted a proposal to the J. Seward Johnson, Sr. 1963 Charitable Trust to host a 2-day presentation by Dr. Robert Meyers to all community and school counselors in New Jersey in Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT). CRAFT is a method of engaging treatment resistant individuals who struggle with substance use problems. Rigorous evaluative studies show individuals whose families use CRAFT techniques in their interactions with loved ones who use are more likely to have their loved one seek, treatment, complete treatment and remain 'clean' after treatment. We had over 70 community and school counselors from Mercer County attend this training, a solid first step in helping families in Mercer County become empowered to address addiction within their own homes. Most importantly, Dr. Woodford, will continue to train with Dr. Meyers to become a certified trainer himself, allowing our Department to offer this training annually to our local community.

Additionally, School of Education (SOE) Mini-Grant recipients in the Department have impacted the larger community: 1) Dr. Stuart Roe provided six, eight-hour Youth Mental Health First Aid certification workshops, certifying over 150 students and community members in Mental Health First Aid; subsequently, four additional workshops are being offered through the SOE Professional Development Network to school district personnel to teach parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, neighbors, health and human services workers, and other caring citizens how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health/addiction crisis. 2) Dr. Jill Schwarz is researching the effectiveness of animal-assisted therapy with clients who have experienced traumatic events. Her research is impacting clients at Womanspace where she is studying equine-assisted therapy. 3) Dr. Atsuko Seto, in conjunction with the National Board for Certified Counselors-International has used her grant funding to research Mental Health Facilitator Programs (developed by NBCC International).

B. Innovation and Creativity:

In 2005, the Department of Counselor Education established The TCNJ Clinic, a community based clinic, to provide low cost supervised family therapy, counseling and training serving Mercer County and surrounding communities. The Clinic's

mission is to offer family therapy and individual counseling that: 1) provides opportunities for both graduate and post-graduate students to further develop their counseling and therapy skills while addressing the needs of individual clients and families, and 2) meets the changing social and emotional needs of those in the larger community. Since its inception the TCNJ Clinic has developed a positive reputation for providing quality services among local school districts and existing service providers, serving over a thousand clients to date while providing practicum and internship experience for over one-hundred and fifty graduate and post-graduate students, as well as providing counseling services to students with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the Community and Career Studies program at TCNJ.

Additionally, The TCNJ Clinic holds SMART Recovery meetings three evenings a week for the larger community. SMART Recovery is a recognized resource for addiction recovery by the American Academy of Family Physicians, the Center of Health Care Evaluations, The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), US Department of Health and Human Services, and the American Society of Addiction Medicine that helps people to recover from all types of addictive behavior, including: alcohol and other drug abuse and addiction, gambling addiction, cocaine addiction, and addiction to other substances and activities. Students completing their internship at the TCNJ Clinic facilitate the weekly SMART Recovery groups.

In July of 2014, the TCNJ Clinic initiated the contract to become the Intoxicated Driver Resource Center (IDRC) for Mercer County. The role of the Intoxicated Driver Resource Center (IDRC) is to improve the driving behavior of individuals who have been identified as having some alcohol or drug involvement in connection with the operation of a motor vehicle or vessel. The IDRC provides services to Mercer County residents or other individuals assigned by the Intoxicated Driver Program. The services include didactic first offender psycho-educational counseling, evaluation as well as treatment referral and follow up when appropriate. This grant initiative was facilitated with the help of three (3) graduate students in counseling that did an independent study in grant writing and successfully wrote the proposal to Mercer County. This is an ongoing contract that will support the program, the clinic, and the School of Education in perpetuity as well as offer clinical experiences for our students, while fitting with Strategic Priority D: Objective D-3 which calls for innovative approaches to growing revenue.

The Department of Counselor Education partnered with the TCNJ Clinic in the fall of 2014 to successfully draft a proposal to the State of New Jersey, Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services to provide *Recovery Support and Environmental Strategies to Prevent and Reduce Substance Abuse on College Campuses in New Jersey*. This funded initiative offers recovery support services to students who struggles with substance use problems while students at TCNJ, housing specifically for those in recovery from substance use, and funds a new position for a late night activities director through the Recreation Department to offer alcohol and other drug-free activities from 10:00pm until 2:00am on key drinking nights on campus, offering students safe and exciting alternatives to substance use. In 2015, this initiative with funding of \$245,000 a year, renewable annually for five years, was moved from the TCNJ Clinic to Student Affairs, which bodes well for the institutionalization of this project as a key feature of the campus community in addressing substance use problems at TCNJ.

Although the Department teaches only graduate students, faculty have received three Engagement Mini-Grant Awards in the current academic year (2015-2016) that support undergraduates in collaboration with other department/units on campus: 1) TCNJ Civility Week (FALL 2015) – Awarded \$2,500 to *Elizabeth Gallus (Office of Student Conduct and Dispute Resolutions) and Dr. Sandy Gibson (Counselor Education)*, which provided activities and events in order for students to learn about others' identity and beliefs while gaining characteristics of a member a community that promotes a culture of diversity and inclusion; 2) U MATTER TCNJ Cares Train-the-Trainer (SPRING 2016) – Awarded \$2,000 to *Dr. Sandy Gibson (School of Education) and Dr. Mark J. Forest (Counseling and Psychological Services)*, which is a new program that prepares student gatekeepers for the anxiety-provoking situation of interacting with a suicidal student and allows gatekeepers to overcome the obstacles that often leave a student in crisis feeling misunderstood, judged, invalidated and dismissed; and 3) Men's Leadership Initiative (SPRING 2016) – Awarded \$2,500 to *Angela Chong (Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs) and Mark Woodford (Department of Counselor Education)*, which is designed to promote respectful discussions on campus about compassionate leadership among male students, faculty and staff, regardless of differences in terms of how men may see their roles as leaders in our culture at TCNJ. Lastly, in 2013 two undergraduate students worked with Dr. Stuart Roe through the MUSE program to examine social supports in the public school system for English Language Learners (both students have gone on to seek graduate degrees in social work). This work has continued with undergraduates in 2015 doing a "community voice" project where focus groups with youth around Trenton were conducted. Results were presented to the current mayor of Trenton.