

NORTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY

School of Education



Counseling Programs

Annual Report

2024-2025



UNLEASH *your* POTENTIAL
— JOIN THE PACK —

December 2025

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CONTENTS

Mission Statement	3	Site Supervisor Feedback	13
Program Objectives	4	Assessment Report Highlights CMH	14
Faculty Demographics	6	Assessment Report Highlights SC	15
Demographic Breakdown For Enrolled Master's Students	7	CPCE Reporting	16
Program Faculty & Staff	8	Stake holder Survey feedback	17
Program Highlights	9	Contribution to the University & Profession	18
MS Ed Academic Quality Indicators	10	Programmatic Changes and Modifications (Based on Advisory Board Decisions)	20
Key Professional Dispositions: MS Ed CMH & SC	11		

Mission Statement

Northern State University's counseling programs prepare ethical, reflective, and culturally responsive professional counselors who promote the mental health and well-being of individuals, families, schools, and communities. Grounded in a strong foundation of counseling theory, evidence-based practice, and developmental science, the programs foster critical thinking, self-awareness, and professional identity through rigorous coursework, supervised clinical experiences, and ongoing self-reflection.

Committed to the needs of rural and diverse populations, our programs emphasize trauma-informed, socially just, and advocacy-oriented practice that honors the dignity and strengths of all people. Through collaborative partnerships with schools, agencies, and community organizations, we equip graduates to be competent practitioners, leaders, and advocates who advance access, opportunity, and resilience across the lifespan.



Program Objectives

The Counseling Program is committed to preparing future professionals who:

1. **Integrate Critical Thinking and Communication**
2. **Demonstrate Ethical and Competent Practice**
3. **Cultivate Relational and Advocacy Skills**
4. **Engage in socially just and context-aware counseling**
5. **Commit to lifelong growth and community well-being**

Clinical Mental Health Counseling Objectives

- SLO-1: Students will describe the history, foundations, roles, and ethical standards of the clinical mental health counseling profession and demonstrate application of codes of ethics to professional practice.
- SLO-2: Students will demonstrate self-awareness, cultural humility, and sensitivity to diverse others, adapting clinical mental health counseling practice to meet multicultural needs and contexts.
- SLO-3: Students will apply human growth and development theories to formulate and deliver developmentally appropriate, culturally responsive interventions for mental health clients across their lifespan.
- SLO-4: Students will demonstrate competency in career development theories and tools, assisting clients with career decisions, life transitions, and integrating vocational assessment in clinical practice.
- SLO-5: Students will articulate and demonstrate a theoretically based philosophy of counseling, apply evidence-based relationship and intervention skills, and select appropriate approaches for clinical mental health contexts.
- SLO-6: Students will design, facilitate, and evaluate therapeutic groups, applying group dynamics theory, ethical standards, and cultural considerations in clinical mental health settings.
- SLO-7: Students will demonstrate effective use of assessment tools and clinical evaluation strategies, selecting and interpreting measures to inform diagnosis, treatment planning, and evaluation of progress in mental health counseling.
- SLO-8: Students will critically evaluate and apply counseling research to clinical practice, engage in program evaluation, and utilize evidence-based strategies to improve client outcomes in mental health settings.
- SLO-9: Students will integrate principles, evidence, and skills across all core domains to deliver comprehensive clinical mental health services, employ diagnostic tools and procedures, and collaborate in multidisciplinary teams to promote client wellbeing.

School Counseling Objectives

- SLO-1: Students will describe the foundational history, roles, models, and ethical standards of school counseling, and apply codes of ethics and legal frameworks to professional practice, including technology and supervision.
- SLO-2: Students will demonstrate self-awareness, cultural humility, and the ability to adapt counseling, assessment, and advocacy practices to diverse school populations and contexts.
- SLO-3: Students will apply human development and learning theories to design and implement differentiated counseling interventions and school-based prevention programs for diverse age groups.
- SLO-4: Students will apply career theories, assessments, and workforce data to deliver programming and guidance for students' college/career readiness and transitions across grade bands.
- SLO-5: Students will articulate and demonstrate a theoretically-based philosophy and counseling skills, goal setting, solution-focused, MI, and CBT approaches—tailored for school-based youth and families.
- SLO-6: Students will design, facilitate, and evaluate small-group and classroom psychoeducational interventions using ethical procedures and culturally responsive practices in K–12 settings.
- SLO-7: Students will select, interpret, and apply developmental, academic, career, and social/emotional assessment tools to support student achievement, equity, and program improvement.
- SLO-8: Students will critically evaluate research, conduct school counseling program evaluation, and use evidence/data to advocate and improve student, school, and community outcomes.
- SLO-9: Students will integrate ASCA model, systems approaches, and evidence-based practice to plan, deliver, and evaluate a comprehensive school counseling program advancing academic, career, and social/emotional development for all students.

Faculty Demographic Data

The Counseling Department had 3 full-time faculty members and a Department Chair during the 2024-25 academic year. Demographic information as reported to the institution is provided here.



Tanya Brown
Assistant Professor of Counselor Education



Junwei Jia
Assistant Professor of Counselor Education



Shalini Mathew
Associate Professor of Counselor Education



Heather Scott
Assistant Professor of Psychology and Counselor Education, Department Chair

	Male	Female	Non-Binary/Gender Fluid
American Indian or Native Alaskan	0	0	0
Asian	1	1	0
Black	0	1	0
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0	0	0
Hispanic	0	0	0
Multiracial	0	0	0
Other/Not Listed	0	0	0
White	0	0	0
Veteran	0	0	0
With a Disability	0	0	0

Demographic Breakdown of Enrolled Students

	Male	Female	Non-Binary/Gender Fluid
American Indian or Native Alaskan	0	2	0
Asian	0	0	0
Black	0	1	0
Hawaiian Native or Pacific Islander	1	3	0
Hispanic	0	0	0
Multiracial	1	0	0
Other/Not Listed	0	0	0
White	7	20	0
International Student	0	1	0
Active Duty Military	0	0	0
Veteran	0	0	0
With a Disability	0	0	0

Faculty and Staff

Full-time Faculty

Dr. Shalini Mathew, PHD, NCC, LPC, CSC(SD)	Associate Professor Program Coordinator & CACREP Liaison	CMH & SC
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Dr. Junwei Jia, PHD, NCC, LPC (under Supervision)	Assistant Professor Field Coordinator	CMH
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Dr. Tanya Brown, PHD	Assistant Professor	CMH
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Administrative Staff

Dr. Heather Scott, PHD	Department Chair	Psychology & Counseling
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Dawn Zimmerman	Senior Secretary	School of Education
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April Hinze	Assessment Coordinator	School of Education
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Alandra Harrelson	Graduate Research Assistant	School Counseling Student
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Adjunct Faculty

Karyl Meister, PHD	Adjunct Professor (Summer)	Forensic Counseling
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Program Highlights

Program	Admissions	Total Program Enrollment	Graduates	Completion Rate	Licensure or Certification Pass Rate	In Field Employment Rate
Clinical Mental Health Counseling	12	26	10	100%	100%	100%
School Counseling	6	6	4	100%	100%	100%



MS Ed Academic Quality Indicators

Students Meeting KPI Thresholds:

All students (100 %) met the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) threshold in all of the eight core areas and program objectives. This underscores their strong foundational competencies and mastery of content knowledge and skills.

Students demonstrating high standards in Professional Dispositions:

During both Fall 2024 and Spring 2025, among 32 students assessed, 31(96.8%) met or exceeded expectations in all areas of professional dispositions.

100 % NCE Pass rate & SC certification:

All students in the CMH track achieved a 100 % pass rate in NCE. All students in the SC track secured a SC certification post-graduation.

100 % in-field Employment rate:

All students in both CMH and SC tracks secured employment in the counseling field post-graduation.

Key Professional Dispositions:

MS Ed CMH & School Counseling

Dispositions Evaluation CMH	Time Frame	Scores	
		Fall 2024	Spring 2025
Professional Ethics	Mid Term	3.55	3.86
	Final	3.79	3.93
	Growth %	10.70	
Professional Behaviors	Mid Term	3.55	3.89
	Final	3.76	4.29
	Growth %	20.84	
Professional & Personal Boundaries	Mid Term	3.62	3.82
	Final	3.79	3.96
	Growth %	9.39	
Knowledge & Adherence to Program and Site Policies	Mid Term	3.59	3.86
	Final	3.79	3.93
	Growth %	9.47	
Record Keeping and Task Completion	Mid Term	3.62	4.32
	Final	3.79	4.50
	Growth %	24.30	
Multicultural Competencies	Mid Term	3.62	3.82
	Final	3.79	3.96
	Growth %	9.39	
Emotional Stability and Self- Control	Mid Term	3.59	4.32
	Final	3.79	4.39
	Growth %	22.28	
Motivated to Learn, Grow, and Take Initiative	Mid Term	3.62	4.25
	Final	3.76	4.36
	Growth %	20.44	
Openness to Feedback	Mid Term	3.62	4.25
	Final	3.79	4.39
	Growth %	21.27	
Flexibility and Adaptability	Mid Term	3.62	4.36
	Final	3.79	4.39
	Growth %	21.27	
Congruence and Genuineness	Mid Term	3.62	3.79
	Final	4.25	4.32
	Growth %	19.33	

Key Professional Dispositions:

MS Ed CMH & School Counseling

Dispositions Evaluation SC	Time Frame	Scores	
		Fall 2024	Spring 2025
Professional Ethics	Mid Term	3.42	3.67
	Final	3.67	4.22
	Growth %	23.39	
Professional Behaviors	Mid Term	3.58	4.00
	Final	3.67	4.33
	Growth %	20.94	
Professional & Personal Boundaries	Mid Term	3.67	3.67
	Final	3.67	4.22
	Growth %	14.98	
Knowledge & Adherence to Program and Site Policies	Mid Term	3.67	3.67
	Final	3.67	3.78
	Growth %	2.99	
Record Keeping and Task Completion	Mid Term	3.67	4.22
	Final	3.67	4.11
	Growth %	11.98	
Multicultural Competencies	Mid Term	3.58	3.78
	Final	3.67	4.22
	Growth %	17.87	
Emotional Stability and Self- Control	Mid Term	3.50	4.22
	Final	3.67	4.22
	Growth %	20.57	
Motivated to Learn, Grow, and Take Initiative	Mid Term	3.67	4.22
	Final	3.67	4.11
	Growth %	11.98	
Openness to Feedback	Mid Term	3.75	4.33
	Final	3.67	4.33
	Growth %	15.46	
Flexibility and Adaptability	Mid Term	3.75	4.22
	Final	3.67	4.22
	Growth %	12.53	
Congruence and Genuineness	Mid Term	3.75	4.22
	Final	3.67	4.33
	Growth %	15.46	

Site Supervisor Feedback

The Counseling program solicits feedback from site supervisors each semester to learn about their impressions of student preparedness. The data below are a compilation of surveys received.

Supervisor feedback (27 responses) from 2024-25 highlights several consistent themes across practicum and internship students. Supervisors describe students as highly professional, noting appropriate appearance, timely or early arrival to sessions, strong attendance, and reliable follow-through on duties and deadlines. They emphasize students' warm, welcoming, and nonjudgmental presence, creating relaxed, supportive environments for clients, coworkers, and school teams. Collaboration and teamwork emerge as another strength, with students working well with faculty, staff, and peers, contributing thoughtfully in staffing, and being appreciated as valuable additions to teams. Supervisors also note strong initiative and responsibility: students come prepared, are proactive, seek feedback, accept it constructively, and independently take on tasks while asking questions as needed to ensure quality work. Finally, feedback underscores interpersonal qualities such as compassion, empathy, respect, and the ability to make all clients feel important, even in tense situations, which together indicate strong emerging professional identities as counselors. One of supervisors recommended that the CMH Practicum be moved to regular semester, so students have more options for placement.



Assessment Report Highlights-CMH

Progress on Action Plans to Improve Student Learning Taken Since Last Assessment:

Recent efforts to improve student learning show solid progress with some remaining areas for growth. First-attempt CPCE pass rates improved, with most CMH students passing on their initial try and others completing the alternative test, though the specific first-attempt target was not fully achieved. Enrollment in the CMH program has increased steadily from 2020 to 2024, with notable gains following the implementation of Hyflex delivery, and the program is now approaching its maximum capacity under the CACREP-required 12:1 student–faculty ratio. The counseling program also completed its CACREP site visit, received constructive feedback, and is continuing to make adjustments to further align with accreditation standards.

KPI	Outcome Description	Assessment Used	Met/Not Met
KPI-1	Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice Students will describe the history, foundations, roles, and ethical standards of the clinical mental health counseling profession and demonstrate application of codes of ethics to professional practice.	<i>Ethical Decision-Making Project in CGPS 769</i> <i>Dispositional Score in Professional Ethics</i>	MET
KPI-2	Social and Cultural Diversity Students will demonstrate self-awareness, cultural humility, and sensitivity to diverse others, adapting clinical mental health counseling practice to meet multicultural needs and contexts.	<i>Cultural Immersion Experience in CGPS 762</i> <i>Dispositional Score in Multicultural Competence</i>	MET
KPI-3	Human Growth & Development Students will apply human growth and development theories to formulate and deliver developmentally appropriate, culturally responsive interventions for mental health clients across the lifespan.	<i>Developmental Reflection Papers in CGPS 755</i> <i>Family Interview in CGPS 765</i>	MET
KPI-4	Career Development Students will demonstrate competency in career development theories and tools, assisting clients with career decisions, life transitions, and integrating vocational assessment in clinical practice.	<i>Career Conceptualization Paper and Presentation in CGPS 742</i> <i>CPCE career development domain scores</i>	MET
KPI-5	Counseling and Helping Relationships Students will articulate and demonstrate a theoretically-based philosophy of counseling, apply evidence-based relationship and intervention skills, and select appropriate approaches for clinical mental health contexts.	<i>Theory Grid in CGPS 761</i> <i>Theory Session Recordings in CGPS 775</i>	MET
KPI-6	Group Counseling and Group Work Students will design, facilitate, and evaluate therapeutic groups, applying group dynamics theory, ethical standards, and cultural considerations in clinical mental health settings.	<i>Group Curriculum development in CGPS 765</i> <i>Facilitates psychoeducation group in CGPS 794 /795</i>	MET
KPI-7	Assessment and Testing Students will demonstrate effective use of assessment tools and clinical evaluation strategies, selecting and interpreting measures to inform diagnosis, treatment planning, and evaluation of progress in mental health counseling.	<i>Inventory Report in CGPS 736</i> <i>Diagnostic Assessment in CGPS 737</i>	MET
KPI-8	Research and Program Evaluation Students will critically evaluate and apply counseling research to clinical practice, engage in program evaluation, and utilize evidence-based strategies to improve client outcomes in mental health settings.	<i>Article Critique in EDER 761</i> <i>Final Academic Research Paper in CGPS 750</i>	MET
KPI-9	Clinical Mental Health Counseling Specialty Integration Students will integrate CMH with specialty knowledge, including foundations, diagnostic processes, case management, crisis response, and interprofessional collaboration, to deliver comprehensive, ethical, and culturally responsive services.	<i>Journal Article Review in CGPS 739</i> <i>Case Conceptualization in CGPS 794 and 795.</i>	NOT MET

Assessment Report Highlights-SC

Progress on Action Plans to Improve Student Learning Taken Since Last Assessment:

Since the last assessment, the program has made partial progress on its action plans to improve student learning. Curriculum revision to meet CACREP's Fall 2026 residency requirement is underway but not yet complete, though some new electives have already been approved and added. Efforts to increase enrollment in the School Counseling Program fell short of the goal of at least six new admissions; four students were admitted, but only two enrolled, with one leaving classes and another deferring enrollment. In contrast, the program completed the CACREP site visit, received the evaluative report, and is currently preparing its formal response, with a final accreditation decision expected in February or March.

KPI	Outcome Description	Assessment Used	Met/Not Met
KPI-1	Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice Students will describe the foundational history, roles, models, and ethical standards of school counseling, and apply codes of ethics and legal frameworks to professional practice, including technology and supervision	<i>Ethical Decision-Making Project in CGPS 769</i> <i>CPCE professional orientation/ethics domain scores</i>	MET
KPI-2	Social and Cultural Diversity Students will demonstrate self-awareness, cultural humility, and the ability to adapt counseling, assessment, and advocacy practices to diverse school populations and contexts	<i>Cultural Immersion Experience in CGPS 762</i> <i>Dispositional Score in Multicultural Competence</i>	MET
KPI-3	Human Growth & Development Students will apply human development and learning theories to design and implement differentiated counseling interventions and school-based prevention programs for diverse age group	<i>Developmental Reflection Papers in CGPS 755</i> <i>Differentiated lesson plan or small-group intervention in CGPS 794</i>	MET
KPI-4	Career Development Students will apply career theories, assessments, and workforce data to deliver programming and guidance for students' college/career readiness and transitions across grade bands	<i>Career Conceptualization Paper and Presentation in CGPS 742</i> <i>CPCE career development domain scores</i>	MET
KPI-5	Counseling and Helping Relationships Students will articulate and demonstrate a theoretically based philosophy and counseling skills, goal setting, solution-focused, MI, and CBT approaches, tailored for school-based youth and families.	<i>Theory Grid in CGPS 761</i> <i>Theory Session Recordings in CGPS 775</i>	MET
KPI-6	Group Counseling and Group Work Students will design, facilitate, and evaluate small-group and classroom psychoeducational interventions using ethical procedures and culturally responsive practices in P-12 settings.	<i>Group Curriculum development in CGPS 765</i> <i>Facilitates psychoeducation group in CGPS 794 /795</i>	MET
KPI-7	Assessment and Testing Students will select, interpret, and apply developmental, academic, career, and social/emotional assessment tools to support student achievement, equity, and program improvement.	<i>Inventory Report in CGPS 736</i> <i>Diagnostic Assessment in CGPS 737</i>	MET
KPI-8	Research and Program Evaluation Students will critically evaluate research, conduct school counseling program evaluations, and use evidence/data to advocate and improve student, school, and community outcomes.	<i>Article Critique in EDER 761</i> <i>Final Academic Research Paper in CGPS 750</i>	MET
KPI-9	School Counseling Specialty Integration Students will integrate the ASCA model, systems approach, and evidence-based practice to plan, deliver, and evaluate a comprehensive school counseling program advancing academic, career, and social/emotional development for all students.	<i>Informational Interview and Shadowing Reflection in CGPS 754</i> <i>Different sections (Define, Deliver, Assess & Manage) of the ASCA Comprehensive School Counseling Program Plan in CGPS 774.</i>	MET

CPCE Results 2024-25

Knowledge Domain	Means and Standard Deviations by Year									
	2020-2021		2021 – 2022		2022 – 2023		2023 – 2024		2024 – 2025	
	NSU	Nat'l	NSU	Nat'l	NSU	Nat'l	NSU	Nat'l	NSU	Nat'l
Prof. Orient. /Ethics	13.0 1.1	13.7 2.3	11.5, 2.2	12.3, 2.1	11.6 1.1	11.4, 2.1	10.5, 2.3	10.9, 2.4	11.2, 2.2	12.1, 2.0
Social/Cult. Found.	9.7 2.3	9.8 2.4	9.2, 2.0	10.4, 2.6	8.2 3.6	10.0, 2.5	9.2 3.6	10.1 2.4	9.6, 2.0	10.6, 2.4
Human Growth & Dev.	9.7 2.1	9.5 2.3	9.3, 1.9	10.3, 2.4	7.8 2.6	10.6, 2.4	10.2, 1.6	11.1, 2.6	10 1.9	11.8, 2.5
Career Development	10.8 2.6	11.4 2.6	9.2, 3.4	11.4, 2.7	10.8 2.8	10.2, 2.4	10.8, 3.0	11.1, 2.7	10.2, 3.4	11.3 2.3
Helping Relationships	9.5 1.8	10.7 2.6	10.8, 3.1	12.1, 2.9	9.4 3.3	10.0, 2.7	10.8, 2.7	10.8, 2.7	9.7 3.1	11.1, 2.4
Group Work	10.8 1.2	12.5 2.5	9.0, 2.4	12.0, 2.7	12.0 1.0	11.9, 2.5	10.6, 1.3	10.2, 2.8	12.0, 2.4	12.8, 2.2
Assessment	8.5 2.0	10.0 2.5	8.2, 1.8	9.2, 2.5	9.2 3.3	10.1, 2.5	10.9, 2.0	10.8, 2.7	8.6, 1.8	10.5, 2.5
Research & Prog. Eval.	10.0 2.0	11.5 2.6	10.0, 1.7	11.6, 2.9	12.0 2.9	11.8, 2.8	12.6, 1.6	21.1, 2.2	9.3, 1.7	10.3, 2.9



Stakeholder Survey Feedback

Alumni- The alumni survey had 14 responses. Results indicate that graduates generally feel well or very well prepared by the NSU Counseling Program, especially in professional and ethical foundations, self-awareness, sensitivity to others, and using supervision appropriately. Alumni report strong preparation in clinical and assessment skills overall, though some note uneven experiences in diagnosis depending on faculty transitions and request more structured training in diagnosis, substance use and co-occurring disorders, progress notes, treatment planning, mental status exams, and managing high caseloads in fast-paced community settings. They highlight robust preparation in culturally responsive counseling and advocacy with diverse populations, and solid grounding in research, theory, and the development of a theoretically based counseling identity, while also asking for more hands-on, applied work with theories and research projects. Suggestions have already informed program adjustments, including increased use of labs, expanded advanced theories (e.g., DBT, ACT, EFT), stronger emphasis on trauma and crisis, more structured practice with treatment planners, SOAP/DAP notes, and mental health status exams, attention to client variety in clinical logs, and shifting the supervision course from required to elective. Overall, alumni describe feeling well or very well prepared for professional roles in both school and clinical mental health counseling, while identifying targeted areas where additional practical training could further enhance readiness.

Employer- The January 2025 employer survey (5 respondents) reflects high overall satisfaction with NSU counseling graduates, who are consistently rated “well prepared” or “very well prepared” in ethical conduct, professionalism, self-awareness, and sensitivity to others. Employers describe graduates as knowledgeable, effective in applying assessment and evaluation skills, and able to use research therapeutically, with strong cultural responsiveness and the ability to work with diverse populations in both school and clinical settings. School counseling employers particularly highlight graduates’ strengths in collaboration, leadership, and use of needs assessments to support school counseling program development, while clinical employers affirm their assessment knowledge even when agency structures limit direct diagnostic responsibilities. Suggested growth areas focus on more practice in documentation and treatment planning (especially for Medicaid requirements), and additional support in receiving constructive feedback and managing personal triggers in challenging client situations, pointing to opportunities for targeted curricular and supervisory enhancements.

Graduates Exit Survey- The Counseling Program Exit Survey (15 respondents, 100% response rate) reflects strong overall satisfaction with NSU’s counseling programs and confidence in their ability to prepare ethical, competent counselors for diverse settings. Graduates emphasized the accessibility of the program, especially the ability to complete it locally, and its clear alignment with their career goals and target populations. They consistently described faculty as accessible, supportive, and collaborative, noting rich learning experiences through research discussions, skills practice, role-plays, field visits, and supervised work. Respondents reported timely and meaningful feedback that supported professional growth, high academic standards, and rigorous preparation for entering the profession, along with strong satisfaction with technology, library resources, classroom and lab spaces, advising, coursework, practicum, and internship. Some variability in faculty engagement and timeliness of feedback was noted, and a few graduates requested more clinically focused, hands-on coursework and enhanced feedback and collaboration structures; these suggestions have informed responses such as clearer syllabus timelines, increased in-class feedback, faculty co-teaching, and the addition of simulations supported by CETL grants. Overall, the majority of graduates indicated they would recommend the NSU Counseling Program to others.

Contributions to the University & Profession

Faculty Recruitment - The department searched for a new tenure-track faculty member in spring 2024 to begin during the 2024-25 academic year. Dr. Tanya Brown was accepted and was welcomed to campus as a core faculty in Fall 2024.

Active Minds – Dr. Jia continued as the Faculty Advisor for the chapter of Active Minds at NSU in the AY 2024-25. Active Mind members collaborated with undergraduate students to engage in the Out of Darkness Community Walk with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. According to Alandra Harrelson, The Active Minds President, during the 2024–2025 academic year, Active Minds remained committed to engaging the student body through a wide range of mental health focused outreach and awareness initiatives. We actively participated in multiple tabling events centered on mental health education and prevention, particularly during nationally recognized awareness months. These efforts included Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, Northern State University’s Wellness Week, World Mental Health Day, Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month, and National Stress Awareness Week. In addition to our outreach, Active Minds hosted several community building events to strengthen personal connections and normalize conversations around mental health. These events included two Cider, Sip, and Cheer, participation in the Gypsy Day Parade, where Active Minds earned second place overall for its float, and collaborative community events at Colorful Creations to encourage awareness of mental health dialogue. Active Minds also expanded its campus involvement through interdisciplinary partnerships. We collaborated with the NSU Music Department and Concert Band on I Am Enough, a compositional piece on lived experiences of people with ADHD and anxiety. Additionally, Active Minds partnered with the NSU Softball team during their Mental Health Awareness Game, further extending mental health advocacy into the athletic community. Through these initiatives, Active Minds enhanced its presence across campus and the community, reinforcing its mission to promote mental health awareness, reduce stigma, and support student well-being.

Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning Grant Recipient - Dr. Jia received a grant to support the skill training in Practicum and Internship. Crisis in Motion: An Unfolding Case Study Framework for Crisis Counseling

Conference Presentations: Drs. Brown, Jia and Mathew presented at International, National and Regional Counseling conferences.

Brown, T., Ghoston, M., & Parkinson, P. (January 2025). *Thriving, not just Surviving: A Narrative Inquiry*. International Conference on Education (IICE), Honolulu, Hawaii.

Ghoston, M., **Brown, T.,** & Parkinson, P. (January 2025). *The basics of Neuro-Informed education with children and adolescence*. International Conference on Education (IICE), Honolulu, Hawaii. **(INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE)**

Parkinson, P., **Brown, T.,** & Ghoston, M. (January 2025). *Existing barriers for students with invisible/nonapparent disabilities in higher education*. International Conference on Education (IICE), Honolulu, Hawaii. **(INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE)**

Brown, T., Jia, J., & Ramirez, F. (May 2025). *Unseen Wounds: Exploring Perceptions and Impacts of Emotional Abuse in Intimate Relationships*. South Dakota Counseling Association, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Mathew, S., & Cornemann, K. (2025, May). *From crisis to clarity: Embracing the crisis counseling journey with the Seven-Stage Intervention Model*. SD Counseling Association Conference, Sioux Falls, SD.

Mathew, S., & Cornemann, K. (2025, May). *SHORES of hope: A trauma-informed approach to suicide prevention in high school counseling*. SD Counseling Association Conference, Sioux Falls, SD.

Mathew, S. (2025, May). *Counseling in the age of AI: Strategies for effective integration*. Invited webinar, ND Counseling Association.

Mathew, S., & Jia, J. (2024, October). *AI integration in counselor education: Best practices and ethical considerations* [50-minute education session]. NCACES, Chicago, IL.

Mathew, S., & Jia, J. (2024, November). *AI integration in counselor education: Best practices and ethical considerations*. SACES Conference, Dallas, TX.

Mathew, S., & Jia, J. (2024, November). *A journey of racial healing in counselor education: Antiracist pedagogy using an AI companion*. Roundtable session, SACES Conference, Dallas, TX. •

Mathew, S., & Jia, J. (2024, September). *Counseling research using enhanced critical incident technique for data collection: An example from a phenomenological study*. Roundtable session, AARC Annual Conference, Pittsburgh, PA.

Mathew, S., & Christiansen, R. (2024, September). *Nurturing growth: The transformative power of relational mentorship in counseling leadership*. Session, MWR LDA of ACA, Fargo, ND.

Mathew, S., & Jia, J. (2024, October). *A journey of racial healing in counselor education: Antiracist pedagogy using an AI companion* (Proposal #11) [50-minute education session]. NCACES, Chicago, IL.

ACA Presidential Grant: Drs Jia and Mathew secured the ACA Presidential Research Grants for Evidence-Informed Counseling Practice. Title of the Proposal: *Implementing Mental Health Hygiene Stations to Address Non-Suicidal Self-Injurious Behavior in School-Aged Children*.

NBCC & SDCA Sponsored Counselor Supervision Training – Members of the Advisory Council requested additional training in supervision. To achieve this, NSU Faculty (Dr. Brown, Jia and Mathew) led a summer supervision workshop with 5 contact hours of training in supervision models, as needed for licensure renewal for Clinical Mental Health & School Counselors. This event was held on June 19, 2025 via zoom. This was well attended by both school counselors and mental health counselors in the South Dakota. Participants earned CEUs for this training through NBCC. This professional development event provided an overview of supervision models and framework and best practices in the supervision role.

Junior Achievement of South Dakota - Dr. Jia volunteered with the Junior Achievement of South Dakota at Aberdeen Central High School, presenting and engaging with students on ethical decision-making.

Sanford Faculty Development Award-2024- Dr. Mathew received two awards for scholarly work- (**Publications, Research, and/or Scholarly-Creative Activity Stipend:1000\$**).*AI integration in Counselor Education: Best Practices and Ethical Considerations*. **Sanford Faculty Development Award-2024 (Interdisciplinary Publications, Research, and/or Scholarly-Creative Activity Stipend:3000\$)** *Higher Education Faculty Experiences Utilizing Artificial Intelligence in Teaching and Research: A Phenomenological Inquiry*.

Programmatic Changes and Modifications

Based on analysis of assessments, evaluations, and feedback from the advisory board, the Counseling Department will make the following modifications:

Enrollment: Continue to increase enrollment to have successful numbers in the program.

Faculty : Hiring Adjuncts to meet the faculty needs and if enrollment increases, may be looking to hire a new faculty member.

Curriculum: The addition of Graduate Research in Counseling and Program Development provides a clearer, practice-oriented bridge between research literacy and real-world application. This course helps students understand, design, and evaluate counseling programs, use data for decision-making, and connect research findings to practical service improvements. It responds to feedback that students benefit from more structured experience applying theory and research to program design, outcome evaluation, and grant or project work in schools and agencies. In the past this was more of an education-focused research class. Designating a set of electives (Supervision; Integrative; Family; Counseling Children & Adolescents) allows students to tailor their training to emerging interests and career paths while keeping the core curriculum focused and manageable. Making these courses elective rather than required creates room in the program of study for depth in areas such as advanced integration of theories, family systems work, or child and adolescent counseling without overloading all students. It also acknowledges that not every graduate will immediately supervise others, but many will later seek this competency and can pursue it as an elective when developmentally ready. This also helps students from different states to pick an elective that is needed for their state board licensure. Separating CGPS 765 Group Dynamics from family content clarifies the distinct skill sets involved in group counseling versus family systems work. Group Dynamics now allows focused attention on group processes, roles, facilitation skills, and therapeutic factors in groups, all of which are central CACREP expectations and heavily used in practice. This separation also frees family-oriented content to be deepened in a dedicated course or elective, instead of competing for time with group work. Creating Foundations of Clinical Mental Health establishes a clearer entry point into the CMHC specialty. This course orients students to the roles, settings, and professional identity of clinical mental health counselors, introduces core models of service delivery, and contextualizes later coursework in diagnosis, treatment planning, and advanced practice. It responds to feedback that students need earlier, more explicit grounding in CMHC contexts, including expectations around caseloads, interprofessional work, and community mental health realities.

Rotation changes: Moving Human Growth and Development (HGD) to summer creates more space in fall/spring for core skill-building while giving students focused time to engage with lifespan concepts. Because HGD underpins case conceptualization in every future class, placing it in a less crowded term allows deeper learning without competing with multiple heavy clinical courses. Shifting Pre-practicum from spring to first-year fall allows students to begin developing basic counseling skills earlier in the program. This change supports a more gradual, scaffolded build toward practicum and internship by giving first-year students immediate, structured exposure to microskills, helping them feel more prepared and confident for later client work. Moving CMH Counseling Practicum from summer to first-year spring helps students to have continuity after Pre-practicum in Fall term. It also reduces the burden on students who previously had to complete practicum during a compressed summer schedule and allows more time in the first year to solidify foundational skills before entering intensive community mental health placements. Relocating School Counseling Program Development from summer into the regular year (e.g., spring) gives students better access to school data, stakeholders, and real-time projects. This timing supports richer integration of ASCA-aligned program planning with concurrent coursework and practicum or internship experiences.

Moving Psychopharmacology from first-year spring to second-year spring ensures students encounter this content after they have more experience with diagnosis, treatment planning, and direct client work. At that point, they have enough clinical context to meaningfully understand medication classes, indications, and collaboration with prescribers, making the course more relevant and easier to integrate into practice.

Removing Integrative from a required second-year spring slot and shifting it to elective credit reduces curricular crowding at a time when students are heavily engaged in internship and capstone work. As an elective, integrative study of theories remains available for those seeking advanced synthesis, while allowing others to select electives that more directly match their intended settings or populations.

Relocating Trauma from the second-year spring to summer provides dedicated time to focus on trauma and crisis content without competing with internship demands. This timing supports deeper engagement with trauma-informed models, crisis response, and self-care strategies, and better prepares students to apply these principles in their second year or beyond.

Finally, moving Supervision from a required summer slot to an elective recognizes that formal supervision training is most beneficial for students preparing for supervisory roles, such as future site supervisors or doctoral study. As an elective, the course can serve those on a leadership or advanced practice trajectory, while freeing required curriculum space for skills all graduates immediately need in entry-level counseling roles.

Comprehensive Exam: As a department, we have convened to discuss overall concerns regarding the CPCE results and specific section-related issues. This ongoing dialogue highlights the need to provide students with more opportunities to practice taking exams in class, as many are not accustomed to this format. Additionally, we recognize the importance of developing more exam preparation and study sessions and emphasizing the seriousness of the exam.

Constituent Feedback: Response rates for surveys of site supervisors, employers, and graduates remain low. The faculty will continue to explore strategies to better reach constituents to increase responses to be able to use meaningful data.

Fieldwork Management: The School of Education has committed to supporting the program's implementation of Supervision Assist to manage fieldwork experiences. We anticipate a rollout in Fall 2026 and hope to see improvements in student and site supervisor satisfaction with this experience.