Over the past semester we have either heard or been asked one or more of the following questions. We thought that this version of a Question/Answer sheet might help any of you who may have similar questions. We’ll be happy to update this at any time, and more importantly please know that your faculty members are here to answer questions you may have. If they can’t answer your question, they will direct you to someone who can.

Question 1: Is Alverno’s Program approved by the state? I want to be sure that I will not have trouble getting my training license upon graduation from Alverno’s program.

The Professional Counselor Track of the Alverno Master of Community Psychology program has been approved by the state since it began in 2011. The Department of Safety and Social Services describes what it takes to be an approved program:

“According to the equivalency requirement criteria for a degree in Professional Counseling (pursuant to s. MPSW 14.01 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code), a program must have 42 semester hours or 63 quarter hours of academic credit in counseling related courses. These must include a minimum of one course of at least three (3) semester hours or four (4) quarter hours academic credit in: Counseling Theory, Supervised Counseling Practicum, and in six (6) of the other eight (8) content areas.

The following is a list of educational programs reviewed by the Professional Counselor Section of the Joint Board of Marriage and Family Therapy, Professional Counseling, and Social Work. The Professional Counselor Section has determined that these programs meet the educational requirements needed for licensure. The Professional Counselor Section has approved these programs for applicants as long as the specific courses from each program that meet the core content areas are taken.

Applicants submitting degrees from the pre-approved program list must have completed all the content areas and have completed 42 credits of counseling related programs. (para. 1-3)”

You can click on the following link to see this passage. Additionally, there is a link on this page to show approved programs. Note that ours is the first on this list: http://dsps.wi.gov/Default.aspx?Page=5cc47bb6-a783-47e8-add4-ed3a09dc8ced.

Please note that once a program has been approved, it does not need to be “re-approved” unless there is a change to the program. The other thing to note is that our Counseling Track has 48 credits, which exceeds that 42 credit minimum. We see this as a program strength and signifies that you will graduate from a program that has both breadth and depth.

Question 2: I have heard that the state might be moving to a 60-credit requirement for counseling programs and I realize our program is a 48 hour program. What does this mean for me if I started my program when the state approved us under the 42-hour agreement?

We are well aware that the state may be moving in this direction. We are currently in discussions with them about when they believe this change will take place. Alverno’s Master of Science in
Community Psychology faculty have been crafting this 60-hour curriculum so that it will meet approval once the change takes place and so that it can be instituted when the regulations change.

If the change should occur in the near future: For anyone who came to Alverno under the 42-credit hour rule (as described in Question 1), you should be assured that your educational program will still be approved by the state as your education was approved under the 42-credit hour rule when the rule was in effect.

Question 3: I am interested in pursuing a PhD and would like to have more information about what I need to do to prepare for this. Do you have any suggestions?

For those of you interested in pursuing a PhD we will be holding a brown bag lunch session next semester. Please look for that announcement. This session will cover the pros and cons of a PhD as compared to working in the field with a Master’s. Additionally, we will answer your questions about obtaining a PhD.

Kristen, Kim, and Sandy have all agreed to speak with those who want more individual attention regarding this possibility. You should feel free to contact one of us to set up an appointment so you can get more individual attention on this matter.

Additionally, here are some good resources for you as you consider your options:
http://www.apa.org/education/grad/faqs.aspx#
http://www.science.fau.edu/student_services/handouts/counseling%20psychology.pdf

Question 4: Am I able to administer the SCID-I or SCID-II as a Master’s-level clinician?

Absolutely! The SCID-I and SCID-II are assessment instruments for clinical interviewing. All mental health professionals are able to engage in clinical interviewing, whether this is structured (like the SCIDs), semi-structured, or unstructured. Please see the SCID website, paying particular attention to questions 3 & 4, which are:

**Can anyone use the SCID?**

**A**
The instrument is designed to be administered by a clinician or trained mental health professional. Ideally, this will be someone who has had experience performing unstructured diagnostic evaluations. However, non-clinician research assistants who have extensive experience with the particular study population have been trained to use the SCID. Generally, the less clinical experience a potential interviewer has had, the more training required.

**Do you need to have an MD or PhD to be qualified to administer the SCID?**

**A**
No. The most important factors are clinical experience and a willingness to adhere to the SCID instructions detailed in the User’s Guide. The best qualification for being able to administer a SCID is the ability to conduct a diagnostic evaluation without using the SCID.

**Question 5:** I am not sure if I will use all of the assessment techniques and assessments I learned in MCC 660. Aren’t many of these assessments only administered by PhD-level clinicians?

This is a good question. There are specific guidelines for each assessment instrument in terms of the amount and kind of education needed for administration and interpretation. However, as a general rule of thumb Master’s-level clinicians can administer many assessment instruments with the right training and supervision. In fact, the Department of Safety and Professional Services has an application for Licensed Counselors who want to be approved to conduct such assessments: [http://dsps.wi.gov/Default.aspx?Page=742bf5eb-3d51-4f0a-a446-eb1a41480422](http://dsps.wi.gov/Default.aspx?Page=742bf5eb-3d51-4f0a-a446-eb1a41480422).

The Department of Safety and Professional Services states that,

“Under the rules promulgated jointly by the Marriage and Family Therapy, Professional Counseling and Social Work Examining Board and the Psychology Examining board, an LMFT, LPC, or LCSW may engage in psychometric testing, including the use of a test for diagnostic purposes, only if the appropriate section of the board has received and approved the following information demonstrating generic and specific qualifications to perform psychometric testing, as stated in both (a) and (b). A person credentialed by the board may use a test for screening or referral purposes only, if the board receives and approves the information as stated in (b).

(a) Academic training at the graduate or post-graduate level that covered:
- descriptive statistics
- reliability and measurement error
- validity and meaning of test scores
- normative interpretation of test scores
- selection of appropriate test(s)
- test administration procedures
- ethnic, racial, cultural, gender, age and linguistic variables
- testing individuals with disabilities

(b) An affidavit from a professional qualified to supervise psychometric testing, stating that the individual licensee has acquired supervised experience and acquired specific qualifications for the responsible selection, administration, scoring and interpretation of one or more particular psychometric tests including, if appropriate, use of the test(s) in particular settings or for specific purposes. Particular settings include an employment context, an educational context, a career and vocational counseling context, a health care context, or a forensic context. Specific purposes include classification, description, prediction, intervention planning, tracking, training and supervision.”


Please note that your assessment class was designed to cover the material listed in (a) so that if you wish to apply for this license you have the proper educational background to do so. The other reason for providing you this education (which is also required by the state for our program to be approved) is so that you understand assessments that have been conducted on clients you will see in your practice, even if you are not the one who has conducted them. You will be a better clinician if you are
December 2012

able to discern basic findings from these assessments and allow the results of the assessments to inform your impressions of the client and treatment recommendations.

If you have further questions about the MCC 660 class (or any class), please be certain to talk to the instructor for that class, as this person will be in the best position to answer your questions.

We wanted to take the time to thank those of you who have come to us with these questions. Knowing you have these questions has provided us this opportunity to answer these questions for you and the other students who may have had similar questions. We take pride in being able to provide you quality education and preparation for the field and we are honored to witness the development of the next generation of clinicians in our field.

Thank you,

MSCP Faculty