Counseling & Psychological Services—Executive Summary
Program Review
Fall 2008

During the 2007-08 academic year CAPS conducted an Internal Program Review. Components of the internal review included the following:

Self-Assessment based upon the CAS Standards
Benchmarking/Comparative Analysis
External review by the International Association of Counseling Services
Ongoing Quantitative Review

Areas of strength and improvement were identified through analysis of the above components of the self study.

CAPS STRENGTH AREAS

Integration into the Campus Community: CAPS has strong connections within the UL Division and the University. We are involved in extensive networking, collaboration, and campus activity with established monthly consultation with St. Mary's Health Services, Student Disability Services, and Career Services and extensive involvement in the programming efforts of the Arts and Sciences' PASS program and Multicultural Student Services' SJEP/STEM programs. Additionally, the center staff are members of several division-wide committees and chair the subcommittee dedicated to increasing the cultural competency of incoming freshmen.

Outcome Research: CAPS employed the Outcome Questionnaire-45 (OQ45) for five years and has adopted the OQ-30 for the past two years. Nationally recognized as an empirically validated measure of counseling outcome related to symptom change, the results of this assessment have directed center practice. Additionally, the Student Experience Survey (SES) has provided outcome data to the center in areas not assessed by the OQ-30.

Counseling & Psychotherapy: CAPS staff provides competent, professional, confidential, and timely counseling to over 600 clients each year. They do so in an environment of dwindling resources and increasing utilization. The staff has creatively met the challenge of "more with less" balancing the numerous demands on the center.

Multiculturally-Focused Training: CAPS provides excellent professional development and in-service training for licensed staff, future professionals, UL colleagues, and the broader campus community. In particular, the staff is pleased to

provide weekly training seminars on multicultural topics relevant to their clinical work. Additionally, they have taken the lead in introducing incoming first year students to the concept of identity development and cultural competency and has provided outreach to the campus faculty and staff regarding mental health issues as a disability.

CAPS TOP PRIORITY IMPROVEMENT AREAS

Many of the recommendations for improvement of center services that were made by field visitors from the accrediting agency, the International Association of Counseling Services (IACS), and by internal review processes have been implemented. The following areas demand additional resources of time and/or money.

Staffing: It was recommended that CAPS develop a strategic plan to hire an additional staff member who would complement the skills and diversity of the current staff configuration, help to reduce the wait list for services, and provide the FTE stipulated as necessary for IACS accreditation. Currently, the FTE requirement is met by the fortuitous "volunteer" services of two individuals who needed to accumulate additional training hours. The center may not be this fortunate in the future and would have 20 hours/week fewer clinical hours during which students could be seen.

Technology: The center collects vast amounts of confidential data and publishes several quantitative reports for campus distribution. The burgeoning reports, data collection for outcome analysis, and increased scrutiny of records as it relates to reducing institutional liability strongly recommends a more efficient, less resource consuming and securely confidential database. The Titanium system is used by many counseling centers including SCU, LMU, and UOP.

Additionally, the Outcome Questionnaire-30 is now administered via computer. This has necessitated administration in trainee offices compromising use of their offices and the ability to meet with clients in a timely manner. Mini-laptop computers to assure privacy could be used in the reception area.

Finally, It was recommended that CAPS investigate the use of digital video to enhance the training program.

Chart Review Process: It was recommended that CAPS institute a chart review process to increase the quality of the records and insure greater consistency in the staff recordkeeping, particularly as it relates to progress notes. While the center has responded by discussing this idea and distributing standard guidelines a formal review process has not been implemented. The Titanium program noted above would enhance this capability as a "sign off" function is built in for supervisors.

Front Office Student Staff: The IACS evaluation underscored the need to reduce student worker involvement in the front office. It was recommended that the use of student workers to enter data, schedule clients, and type correspondence be discontinued. These adjustments would effectively eliminate the utility of having student employees and leave an already over-burdened front office in a perilous position. IACS

reviewers stated "There is not adequate office support for CAPS and it is recommended that a funding proposal be developed to hire additional administrative staff."

Wages for Trainees: It was evident from both the internal and external evaluation that trainee wages were woefully inadequate. They have not been adjusted in 15 years. The $7,500 award necessitates that the trainees, doctoral level students who have advanced to candidacy, be moved to volunteer status by February of each year. By comparison, Santa Clara University and the University of the Pacific compensate their trainees at a rate of $23,000/ year. Additionally, others within the UL Division who have less education and less work experience, who receive higher compensation.

Soundproofing: Due to the "bleed" of sound into hallways despite the use of four sound machines and a radio in the waiting area, IACS has recommended that steps be taken to augment the soundproofing characteristics of the facility.

Psychiatry: Benchmarking activities indicated that, while the coverage at the center was "average", our coverage varying from 4-6 hours/week, the compensation was below that of the comparison institutions. Increase salary and coverage was recommended based upon the internal review as the waiting list for services often exceeds four weeks.