

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
School of Health Professions
PhD Psychiatric Rehabilitation Counseling
Counselor Education Track
Traditional Research Track
Annual Report: July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025

PhD Program Overview

The PhD in Psychiatric Rehabilitation Counseling offers two separate tracks: a counselor education & supervision (CES) track and a traditional research track. The CES track is in the process of seeking accreditation and supports the development of counselor educators with an emphasis on psychiatric rehabilitation. The traditional research track is the only doctoral program in the country that prepares students to be leaders in the field of psychiatric rehabilitation, supporting individuals with a serious mental health condition. Graduates from both tracks excel in the field as educators, advocates, researchers, supervisors, and clinicians.

The doctoral program has a total of 22 students (9 students in the CES track and 13 students in the traditional research track). Each semester, the doctoral program offers approximately 4-6 courses, along with dissertation research support. Students in the CES track can work toward licensure as a professional counselor and obtain their approved clinical supervisor certification. In both programs, students are publishing in peer reviewed journals, presenting at state and national conferences, and seeking leadership roles within professional organizations. In January of 2024, the department opened up its own mental health clinic that offers free counseling services to Rutgers students, faculty, and the community. Students in the doctoral program will have the opportunity to providing individual and group counseling, as well as supervise master's level counselors.

Mission Statement (CES): The mission of the program is to prepare individuals to be leaders in the field of counselor education, where students will be able to develop and refine their counselor identity, focusing on clinical, research, teaching, supervision, and/or leadership and advocacy skills. The program specializes in counseling approaches and techniques for individuals with disabilities of all types, including psychiatric, physical, sensory and developmental. Students will also develop a high level of skill in teaching and clinical supervision related to the counseling profession. Additionally, students will actively participate in professional counseling organizations and contribute to and promote scholarly research related to counseling. Throughout the program, we emphasize the importance of increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion within the counseling profession as a way to serve the community, which is consistent with the mission of the School of Health Professions.

Admissions and Completion Rates (CES only)

Year	Number in Beginning of Year	New Admissions	Completion	Number at End of Year	Reason for Number Discrepancy
2020 - 2021	8	5	0	13	
2021 - 2022	13	3	0	14	2 students withdrew from the program
2022 - 2023	14	1	0	14	1 student academically dismissed
2023 - 2024	14	0	2	11	1 student transferred to online studies
2024 – 2025	11	3	2	9	1 student withdrew due to medical reasons 2 students administratively withdrawn
2025 – 2026	9				

Student Disposition (CES only)

Student disposition is evaluated twice a year and is assessed on the following: exhibits a strict code of honesty related to projects, exams, and other assignments; actively contributes to required academic settings; accepts and uses constructive criticism as seen through openness when receiving feedback; interacts in person with faculty, staff, and students with courtesy, respect, and open mindedness; corresponds with faculty, staff, and students with courtesy and respect via e-mail or other written communication; displays contextual and cultural competency by valuing the fundamental rights, dignity, and worth of all people; punctually attends scheduled meetings; demonstrates the ability to meet deadlines; and demonstrates respectfulness to guest speakers as seen through asking appropriate questions, accepting feedback, and actively listening.

For the 2024-2025 academic year, 13 CES students were assessed and all students were evaluated at satisfactory. In the event a student would not be assessed as satisfactory, they would receive notification and be directed to meet with their academic advisor to develop an improvement plan.

Demographics (CES only)

	Applications			Current Students			Graduates
	Gender		Race/Ethnicity	Gender		Race/Ethnicity	
<u>2024-2025</u>	M(3)	F(6)	1 student identifies as racial/ethnic minority	M(4)	F(9)	6 students identify as racial/ethnic minority	1

New Student Orientation (CES only)

The required New Student orientation was held virtually on Thursday, 9/4/24. The program included a welcome from Dr. Zazzarino, Assistant Program Director, and Dr. Eissenstat, Assistant Professor. The two faculty reviewed the student handbook, advising, Rutgers resources (e.g., library and writing resources), APA format and plagiarism, the practicum and internship requirements, the candidacy exam, and the dissertation process.

Accreditation (CES only)

The program is currently seeking accreditation from the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) for the CES track. The self study was formally submitted in January of 2024. Due to a delay from CACREP, the virtual site visit will be scheduled for some time in 2025. Once accredited, we will be the third CES program in the state and the only program that focuses on individuals with a serious mental health condition.

In 2024-2025, the program had three core faculty members. Core faculty are listed below:

Anthony Zazzarino, Ph.D. Assistant Director
SunHee Eissenstat, Ph.D.
Weili Lu, Ph.D.

Research and Scholarly Activities (CES only)

Faculty are actively involved in research and scholarly activities, often engaging the students in the doctoral program. In the 2024-2025 year, between the three core faculty there were 6 textbook chapters, 13 peer-reviewed manuscripts, 5 presentation, and 1 new grant.

Textbook Chapters

- **Zazzarino, A.** (2024). Counseling at-risk children and adolescents. In A. Vernon & C. J. Schimmel. *Counseling Children & Adolescents* (6th ed., pp. 397-422). Cognella.
- **Zazzarino, A., Socha, C., Gillig, S. E., & Cingel, P. A.** (2024). Treatment of co-occurring disorders. In D. Capuzzi & M.D. Stauffer. *Foundations of Addictions Counseling* (5th ed., pp. 235-253). Pearson.
- **Zazzarino, A., & Shelton, D.** (2026). Depressive and Bipolar Disorders. In V. Kress, M. Paylo, & N. Stargell (Eds.), *Counseling children and adolescents* (2nd ed., pp xx-xx). Pearson
- **Shelton, D., & Zazzarino, A.** (2025). Depressive, Bipolar, and Related Disorders. In M. Paylo & V. Kress. *Diagnosing and treating those who have mental disorders* (3rd ed., pp xx-xx). Pearson.
- **Zazzarino, A., & Shelton, D.** (2025). Substance use and addition. In, D. Capuzzi & M.D. Stauffer. *Engaging youth and preventing risk: A resource for mental health professionals, teachers, and parents.* (8th ed., pp xx-xx). Cognella.
- **Eissenstat, S. J., Mitchell, K., & Socha, C.** (In press). Experimental Design; In Research and Program Evaluation – A Multicultural Perspective, 1st edition; Vasti Holstun, Lynn Bohecker, and Bridger Falkenstien: Cognella.

Peer-Reviewed Manuscripts

- **Zazzarino, A., Corson, J., & Socha, C.** (2025). Counseling competencies to support affectionally diverse individuals with a serious mental illness. Manuscript submitted to the Journal of LGBTQ Issues in Counseling.
- **Eissenstat, S. J.,** Gao, N., Wacha-Montes, A., Wang, Y., Lee, Y., Oh, S., & Castanos, V. (In press). Explaining Traumatic Stress Experienced by International Students During the COVID-19 Lockdown Period. *Journal of American College Health*.
- Dolce, J., Gill, K., Waynor, G., & **Eissenstat, S.J.** (In press). Exploring the Impact of Self-Disclosure on Job Applicants with Mental Health Conditions Compared to Those with Physical Health Conditions. *Journal of Rehabilitation*
- **Eissenstat, S. J.,** Gao, N., Brody, R., & Modak, R. (In press). Need for Interprofessional Collaboration for Depression Interventions: From Research to Future Directions. *American Journal of Psychiatric Rehabilitation*.
- Jia, Y., **Eissenstat, S. J.,** & Gao, N. (In press). Educational expectations matter in college application and STEM major choices for students with and without disabilities. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*.
- Swarbrick, M., Di Bello, A., **Eissenstat, S. J.,** Nemec, P. B., Hien, D. A., Gill, K. J. (2024). Factor structure, reliability, and construct validity of the wellness inventory. *Psychiatric Services*.
- **Eissenstat, S.,** Gao, N., Kim, B., Brody, R., & Hauck, E. (2023). Behavioral interventions of dietary changes to reduce depressive symptoms: a meta-analysis. *Journal of Public Health*, 1-10.
- Lu, W., Oursler, J., Herrick, S., Gao, N., Beninato, J., Minor, T., **Eissenstat, S. J.,** Jarosh, A., Wang, Minor, T., Backs, A., **Lu, W.,** Gao, N., Oursler, J., Beninato, J., ... Robinson, M. (2025). Interprofessional training for opioid use disorder treatment: A pilot project of student outcome analysis of interprofessional training. *Journal of Psychosocial Nursing and Mental Health Services*, 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.3928/02793695-20250313-02>
- **Lu, W.,** Mueser, K. T., Yanos, P. T., Jia, Y., Siriram, A., Bullock, D.,...Rosenberg, S. D. (2024). Factor structure of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in persons with serious mental illness. *Journal of Mental Health*, 33, 366-375. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638237.2024.2332809>
- **Lu, W.,** Yanos, P. T., Oursler, J., Beninato, J., Topitzes, D., Banko, A., Chung, W. E., & Stone, B. (2024). Trauma-informed career counseling for young adults with mental health conditions. *Journal of Employment Counseling*, 62(1), 2–21. <https://doi.org/10.1002/joec.12236>
- **Lu, W.,** Bates, G., & Yanos, P. T. (2024). Work is the best medicine: A qualitative analysis of posttraumatic stress disorder and supported employment. *Journal of Employment Counseling*, 61(1), 2–17. <https://doi.org/10.1002/joec.12230>
- **Lu, W.,** Oursler, J., Herrick, S. J., Gao, N., Silberman Harosh, A., Wang, K., Beninato, J., Morales, M., Diviney, J., & Mevawala, J. (2024). Telehealth noninferior to in person for vocational counseling: A comparison study of “Asking for Help” group intervention to improve soft skills. *Journal of Employment Counseling*, 61(4), 237-256. <https://doi.org/10.1002/joec.12234>

- **Lu, W., Srijeyanthan, J., Siriram, A., Silverstein, S.M., Yanos, P.T., Mueser, K.T., Gottlieb, J.D., Marcello, S., Kim, M.J., & Zeiss, M. (2024).** Diagnostic profiles and trauma history among treatment-seeking young adults with positive PTSD screens: Findings and implications for public mental health care. *Early Intervention in Psychiatry*, 18, 381-88. <https://doi.org/10.1111/eip.13481>

Presentations

- **Zazzarino, A. (2024, September).** The Intersection of Substance Use and Suicidality: Strategies to Support those Tough Conversations. Presented at Redefining Recovery Conference, Endicott, NY.
- **Zazzarino, A. (2024, June).** Supporting Affectional Diverse Individuals with a Serious Mental Health Condition. Presented at the 2024 International Counseling Association Conference, Naples, IT.
- **Eissenstat, S. J. (2025 March Proposal Accepted)** Revolutionizing Counselor Training: The Role of AI in Skill Development, will be presented at 2025 American Counseling Association Conference, Orlando, 2025
- **Eissenstat, S. J. (2025 March Proposal Accepted)** Are You Running Your Practicum and Internship Class Online? Here's the Evidence, will be presented at 2025 American Counseling Association Conference, Orlando, 2025
- **Eissenstat, S. J. & Herrick, S., Ourlser, J. (2024, September)** Effectiveness of a Self-Care Intervention for Counselors-in-Training during Practicum and Internship, presented at 2024 North Atlantic Region Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Conference, Atlantic City, NJ, 2024.

Grants

“Nourish Your Mind with AI-Powered Simulation”

Sunhee Eissenstat - Principal Investigator

FY 2024-2025, Funding Amount: \$34,266

Funding Body: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Dean's Intramural Collaborative Educational Innovation Pilot Grant

Review of PhD Program Objectives (CES only)

Consistent with the program mission, eight objectives have been established which guide program development. These objectives along with a summary of progress during the past year are listed below:

1. Fulfill leadership roles in the counseling field, advocating for the discipline and the individuals served by the discipline.
 - Students in the CES track complete a 600-hour internship where students can focus on three of the following five domains: clinical, research, clinical supervision, teaching, and leadership & advocacy.

- Students have been active in leadership roles for NARACES and the New Jersey Counseling Association (NJCA)
 - 1 student was the NARACES graduate student representative; 1 student is the chair of the NJCA education and training committee and social media chair; 1 student is the NJCA president; and 1 student was the reviewer of the NARACES Gazette.
 - The *graduate student survey* allows students to inform the program of different leadership roles they are participating in.
 - The *student assessment and feedback* form assess the student's ability in professional attitudes and commitment and interpersonal functioning and disposition, all aspects the department believes are necessary for leadership roles. Students are assessed twice a year and all students received a satisfactory score.
 - **KPIs** related to leadership and advocacy standards were updated between 2024 and 2025 to match specific CACREP standards: (1) describe models and competencies for advocating on behalf of the profession and professional identity, and advocating for clients at the individual, system, and policy levels and (2) articulate strategies of leadership in relation to current multicultural and social justice issues. Additionally, during the update, these KPI will now be assessed at various points in the program to assess growth. In assessing these KPI, all students met or exceeded the minimum threshold.
 - The *clinical supervisor survey* addresses the student's ability to be a leader and advocate for clients. The clinical supervisor survey will be completed in the fall.
- 2. Plan, conduct, and defend original research that creates or tests new concepts, hypotheses, models, and/or theories that contribute to the advancement of the counseling field.
 - Throughout the program, students take 21 credits in statistical and research methods. In the 2022-2023 year, a new course was developed with a focus on Dissemination and Implementation Research.
 - The program provides extensive support for students to plan, conduct, and defend original research throughout the dissertation process. Students must complete an initial colloquium to help refine their ideas, a proposal presentation to present their final plan, and the dissertation defense to highlight their findings.
 - 2 students successfully defended their dissertations, with an emphasis on counseling and counselor education; 1 student successfully completed their proposal hearing and 1 student successfully completed their colloquium.
 - The doctoral CAASP committee meets to review the status of students in the dissertation process to support the original research.
 - Two **KPI** that are assessed is: (1) identify and select research designs appropriate to quantitative and qualitative research methods, and (2) develop research questions and practice professional proposal writing for journal and conference presentations. This KPI were evaluated and updated to assess at various points in the program. In assessing these KPI, all students met or exceeded the minimum threshold.

3. Utilize effective teaching techniques to convey knowledge in counseling and counselor education.
 - Students are required to take PSRT 5101 (Seminar in Psychiatric Rehabilitation) and PSRT 6121 (Specialized Evidence Based Counseling Approaches). There is an emphasis on counseling and psychiatric rehabilitation for individuals with serious mental health conditions.
 - Discussion started about creating an Advanced Group Counseling course.
 - The ***student learning outcomes*** evaluate key performance indicators (KPI) related to effective teaching techniques. Two KPI that are assessed is: (1) develop and demonstrate a lesson with an evaluation plan relevant to counselor education, and (2) describe and apply ethical and culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching methods relevant to counselor education. This KPI were evaluated and updated to assess at various points in the program. In assessing these KPI, all students met or exceeded the minimum threshold.
4. Apply the core goals, values, and principles of psychiatric rehabilitation and counseling to all research, scholarship, education, and clinical endeavors.
 - 6 students are currently in the dissertation process working on research related to the counseling profession.
 - In the admissions process, faculty ask potential candidates about their understanding of psychiatric rehabilitation.
5. Collaborate with others to advance the scientific bases of knowledge in counseling and counselor education via ongoing research and scholarship.
 - The program offered funding for doctoral students to attend state and national conferences this past year.
 - All students are required to take a 4 module training course related to Interprofessional care.
 - Multiple doctoral students and currently doing research with faculty outside of Rutgers.
 - The ***student learning outcomes*** evaluate key performance indicators (KPI) related to effective teaching techniques. Two KPI that are assessed is: (1) identify and select research designs appropriate to quantitative and qualitative research methods, and (2) develop research questions and practice professional proposal writing for journal and conference presentations. This KPI were evaluated and updated to assess at various points in the program. In assessing these KPI, all students met or exceeded the minimum threshold.
6. Critically review, appraise, and synthesize relevant published literature related to counseling and counselor education.
 - Throughout the program, infused in many courses, students are asked to review, appraise, and synthesize relevant published literature.
 - This past year, as part of the candidacy exam, students needed to critique an article. Three students successfully completed the candidacy exam.

- The ***student learning outcomes*** evaluate key performance indicators (KPI) related to effective teaching techniques. This KPI were evaluated and updated to assess at various points in the program. One KPI that is assessed is present a scholarly examination of theories relevant to counseling and evaluate evidence-based practice based on counseling theories. In assessing this KPI, all students met or exceeded the minimum threshold.
7. Communicate competently through oral, written, and electronic methods.
- The program faculty meets twice a year to evaluate student's progress and offer suggestions for improvement. All CES students were assessed as meeting the standard.
 - The PhD candidacy exam is a way to evaluate students through written methods. In July of 2024 and January 2025, three students signed up to take the exam.
 - Students are assigned oral presentations throughout the doctoral coursework. Additionally, the program assesses students through oral methods during the dissertation colloquium, proposal hearing, and dissertation defense. In 2024-2025, 2 students completed their colloquium, and 1 students completed their proposal.
 - The ***student assessment and feedback*** form assess the student's ability in writing and other communication skills. Students are assessed twice a year and all students received a satisfactory score.
8. Integrate the principles of ethics and cultural sensitivity and competence, related to counseling and counselor education, within all interpersonal and professional activities.
- The program faculty meets twice a year to evaluate student's progress and offer suggestions for improvement. All CES students were assessed as meeting the standard.
 - The ***student assessment and feedback*** form assess the student's ethics and values. Students are assessed twice a year and all students received a satisfactory score.

Program Evaluation Summary (CES Track)

Student Learning Outcomes: This report examines aggregate student performance on key performance indicators related to CACREP accreditation standards and to School of Health Professions learning outcomes. The most recent Student Learning Outcomes Report was completed for the 2023-2024 year in 2025, indicating all key performance indicators were met or exceeded.

Key Performance Indicators: The key performance indicators were updated in 2024-2025 academic year to ensure that students are assessed at multiple points in the program. Students were evaluated for the Spring semester in May, 2025 and all met requirements for specific KPI. Students will be assessed for the Summer semester in September, 2025.

Student Dispositions: The student disposition assessment was updated in the 2024-2025 academic year. Students were assessed for the Spring semester in May, 2025 and all met the disposition criteria. Students will be assessed for the Summer semester in September, 2025.

Clinical Supervisor Survey: Clinical supervisors are requested to complete a survey for students during the internship. Clinical supervisors who responded to the most recent survey indicated satisfaction with the preparation of our students and with other areas such as program communication with the clinical supervisor. Several noted that they had made job offers to the students completing the internship at their agency.

Graduate Student Survey: This bi-annual survey looks at student experiences and satisfaction with their experience overall in the program and at Rutgers. Current students complete this survey anonymously online. This survey was conducted in the Summer of 2024. Overall, students expressed satisfaction with Rutgers services and the program.

Alumni Survey: This bi-annual survey looks at students have graduated from the CES track. The survey went out in June of 2025 to four alumni. Alumni rated the program positively and reported feeling “very well-educated and trained in counseling, counselor education, and supervision”.

Employer Survey: This bi-annual survey assesses readiness for the workforce from the perspective of alumni’s employers. The survey was sent to four graduates and asked to forward to their current employer. Employers rated graduates performance positively, are satisfied with the alumni’s performance, and believe the program prepared the graduate for their current position.

Review of Results and Curriculum Changes: Results of all program evaluations are reviewed by program faculty as part of the Graduate Curriculum Committee and by the program’s Advisory Committee. Curriculum initiatives in the past year included the following:

- More structure at the beginning of PSRT 7001, Dissertation Seminar I, and PSRT 7003, Dissertation Seminar II. Students in PSRT 7001 meet weekly with a faculty to help support the student in developing, refining, and enhancing their research ideas. Students in PSRT 7003 meet bi-weekly with faculty to help develop their first three chapters, formulate their dissertation committee, and prepare for their proposal defense.
- The curriculum for PSRT 6000, Foundations of Clinical Supervision, was revised to include an updated textbook.
- The curriculum for PSRT 6120, Advanced Clinical Theories, PSRT 6211, Seminar in Qualitative Research, and PSRT 7000 Teaching in Counselor Education were updated.
- Faculty spent time identifying, refining, and finalizing specific competencies that should be gained by students. As a result, the program is updating their course sequencing.

The information below will be posted on the PhD. program’s web page under Program Outcomes as required by CACREP accreditation standards.

For the Counselor Education and Supervision Track only

Ph.D. Psychiatric Rehabilitation Counseling - Counselor Education Track & Traditional Research Track

Annual Report: July 1, 2024-June 30, 2024

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The program currently has three core faculty assigned to teach required courses in the program plus additional full-time Department faculty who teach selected courses in the program. Student outcomes are evaluated each year on a variety of different metrics that are part of the overall program evaluation. Core faculty are listed below:

Anthony Zazzarino, Ph.D. Assistant Director
SunHee Eissenstat, Ph.D.
Weili Lu, Ph.D.

Information about tuition and fees is available at <http://shp.rutgers.edu>, select Students, then Current Students and Tuition and Fees. Information about financial aid is available from the Rutgers Health Financial Aid Office at <http://shp.rutgers.edu>, select Students, then Current Students and Financial Aid. SHP offers scholarships available to both incoming and continuing students. Information about SHP scholarships is available at <http://shp.rutgers.edu>, select Students, then Current Students and Scholarships. You must be accepted as a matriculated student to be eligible for a SHP scholarship. Most SHP scholarships are based on financial need, and it is recommended to submit the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) in addition to the SHP scholarship application and your transcripts. When applying for SHP scholarships, be sure to read the application directions carefully and follow all directions. Incomplete applications are not considered. One application can be used to apply for all SHP scholarships. Please check the SHP website for the closing date for applications.

For the 2022-2023 academic year, 6 are currently in the dissertation process, with 3 more students expected to enter the dissertation process. Below is information concerning the program's student retention rate by entering cohort over the period from 2020 through 2023.

Student Retention: Students Beginning in Years 2020 Through 2025

Year	Number in Beginning of Year	New Admissions	Completion	Number at End of Year	Reason for Number Discrepancy
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2022 - 2023	14	1	0	14	1 student academically dismissed
2023 - 2024	14	0	2	11	1 student transferred to online studies
2024 – 2025	11	3	2	9	1 student withdrew due to medical reasons 2 students administratively withdrawn
2025 – 2026	9	4			

The program is currently seeking accreditation from the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) for the CES track. The self student was formally submitted in January of 2024. Due to a delay from CACREP, the virtual site visited will be scheduled for some time in 2025. Once accredited, we will be the third CES program in the state and the only program that focuses on individuals with a serious mental health condition.

Report submitted by:

Anthony Zazzarino, PhD, LPC, ACS

Assistant Program Director

M.S. in Rehabilitation Counseling, Clinical Mental Health Counseling Track

PhD in Psychiatric Rehabilitation Counseling, Traditional Research Track & Counselor Education and Supervision Track

July 15, 2024