



California Institute of Integral Studies

Master of Arts (MA) in Counseling Psychology with a concentration in Somatic Psychology

Program Learning Outcomes Assessment Overview

The Somatic Psychology Program faculty and staff have departmental meetings on a weekly basis during the fall and spring semesters – meeting approximately 25-30 times per year. As part of these meetings we have on-going dialogue regarding both the program as a whole and critical assessment of how we are doing in meeting our particular program learning outcomes. Additionally, the program solicits student feedback through community meetings (approximately 20 per year) and Program Committee Meetings (approximately 6 per year) which have representatives from our student cohorts meeting directly with faculty and staff. As a result of these conversations we have made changes to the PLO's themselves, the overall curriculum of the program, and how we engage the student population around some of our learning outcomes. This has all occurred within the last 3-4 years and is a continuing process.

The program is currently undergoing a Program Review. During this process we (SOM faculty and staff) met several times during Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 specifically to revisit our Program Learning Outcomes. It was decided by the faculty and staff that the PLO's were too large in number, repeated themselves unnecessarily, and were generally too cumbersome to be of real value to the program. We were able to narrow our focus and articulate a substantially shorter, more precisely worded program philosophy through the PLO's. Our revised PLO's were finalized in March 2015.

This was not first time in recent years, however, that we had engaged in critical dialogue that resulted in substantive change around PLO's and our curriculum. For example, in 2012 we decided that in order to keep up with the changing nature of the field (SOM PLO 2 - Understanding the Field) it was in our students best interests for us to create and require the course "Somatic Approaches to Trauma & PTSD."

In 2013-2014 based on discussions in the departmental meetings we determined that we needed to emphasize the conversation around diversity awareness issues in the program (SOM PLO 4 Diversity Awareness) by creating our own somatic psychology oriented course, "Multicultural Counseling and the Family" and placing it as a required course in the first semester of the program. Also in 2013-2014, based in part on feedback from our students through the community meetings and the Program Committee Meetings, the program changed our curriculum to include the course "Human Sexuality" starting in Fall 2015.

As mentioned previously, this critical reflection and dialogue is on-going. Currently (Fall 2015) we are undertaking a wide-ranging curriculum review to re-examine precisely what we are offering, when we are doing it, and how we are evaluating it. As this conversation develops we are looking at the PLO's and making sure that they best reflect the actual goals and values of the program.