

## **Master of Counselling Program Review Summary Report, September 2025**

### **Programs Reviewed:**

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Master of Counselling

### **External Review Team Appointed by the Provost & Vice President Academic:**

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- Dr. David Smith, Professor of Counselling Psychology, University of Ottawa
- Dr. Linda O'Neill, Professor of Counselling, University of Northern British Columbia
- Dr. Alexa DeGagne, Chair, Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Athabasca University (Internal Observer)

### **Key Milestones:**

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- Program Review Kick-off: May 1, 2024
- Self-Study Shared with Program Council: December 9, 2024
- Self-Study Approved by Faculty of Health Disciplines Faculty Council: January 23, 2025
- Virtual Site Visit: April 7 – 9, 2025
- Receipt of External Reviewer Report: May 7, 2025
- Program Response Report to Faculty of Health Disciplines Faculty Council: September 18, 2025
- Program Response Report to Faculty of Graduate Studies Faculty Council: October 2, 2025
- Program Response Report to Academic Planning, Priorities and Standards Committee (APPSC) of General Faculties Council: November 3, 2025
- Public Posting of MC Program Review Summary Report: following APPSC meeting
- Annual Program Update to APPSC: June 2026

### **Summary of Key Findings from the Self-study and External Reviewer Reports:**

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The self-study report and the external review panel both affirmed the overall strength of the MC program, particularly in its curriculum quality, student support, and faculty dedication. Graduates continue to demonstrate strong outcomes in employment and credentialing. Feedback highlighted the innovative thesis route and rigorous academic preparation. However, both reports emphasized the need to invest in faculty renewal, enhance practicum support, and

strengthen the sense of community in an asynchronous learning environment. Concerns were raised about course maintenance, instructor consistency, and the strain placed on limited faculty and administrative resources due to increasing program demands.

### Program Council Action Plan Including Dean's Response:

	Recommendations (in order of priority for the program)	Proposed Action(s)	Timeline (include specifics)	Measure of Success and Proposed Completion Date of Measure	Individual(s) Responsible for Leading the Action(s) (by role)	Responsibility for Resourcing Action(s) (if applicable; by role)	Dean's Response
1	Hire additional faculty	Recruit and onboard two full-time faculty with targeted expertise in underserved clinical areas and diverse backgrounds. Implement mentorship.	Fall 2025 – Winter 2026	All positions filled; new faculty fully onboarded and oriented; reduced workload on existing faculty.	Program Director, Dean	HR to support recruitment process; Dean's Office to ensure positions are funded/supported	In support. The opportunity to hire into these positions has been difficult with few candidates available for hire.
2	Course currency and consistency	Implement 5-year course revision plan; establish checklist for rubrics and references.  Hire additional faculty and administrative support for	2025-2030	3 core courses revised annually; student feedback on updated content; decrease in grading inconsistencies.	Curriculum Lead, Course Coordinators	LET resources; budget for program Curriculum Lead to oversee; budget for additional practicum-related support	In support.

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		practicum. Ensure practicum continues to align with regulatory requirements and practice preparation.					
3	Credentialing alignment	Hold review meetings with regulatory bodies; assess strategic value of maintaining multi-jurisdictional approvals.	Fall 2025– Summer 2026	Clarity on alignment priorities; streamlined course and practicum requirements	Regulatory Affairs Coordinator, Program Advisory Council	Faculty workload allocation; liaison support from university legal and policy teams.	In support.
4	Succession planning	Document role-specific procedures; assign co-leads or alternates; archive guides in internal repository.	Start Summer 2025	100% of roles documented; all new hires receive access and orientation to these guides.	Program Director, Regulatory Affairs Coordinator, Director of Training, Student Mentorship Coordinator, Instructor Coordinator	No external funding required; time investment from incumbents.	In support.

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5	EDI and decolonization	Audit course materials; implement inclusive design updates; invite guest instructors from Indigenous and racialized communities.	Fall 2025–Fall 2026	All revised courses include appropriate EDI and Indigenous content; improved survey responses on inclusivity.	Program Director, Course Leads	Supported by access to AU decolonization resources, including what is available via Nuskakahtowin, the Anti-Indigenous Racism and Discrimination MOOC, and AU Subject Matter Experts	In support.
6	Library and tech issues	Prepare report of user complaints; meet with AU Library and IT; propose fixes and implementation schedule.	Fall 2025–Fall 2027	Resolved access issues; improved library feedback; integration with Brightspace completed	LET team and AU Library Services	Dependent on central units' responsiveness; ongoing tracking and advocacy.	In support. Issues can be communicated to Senior Leadership through various forums (Admin Council, OPVPA meeting, Dean's Council)