



## Counseling Center

#5 Plan cycle - 5

Plan cycle 2023/2024

7/1/23 - 6/30/24

**Performance Objective 1 Attain accreditation for the Counseling Center.****1 Assessment and Benchmark**

Benchmark: The Counseling Center at McNeese has historically never applied for, or achieved accreditation. Therefore, the benchmark would include applying for accreditation, completing a site visit, making any necessary changes/improvements, and receiving accreditation.

**1.1 Data**

2019-2020:

The IACS accreditation is valid for 3 years but each year, it must be renewed by completing a short form describing any changes to the Counseling Center, like changes in staff, location, or services. The most significant changes were Career Services being moved under Enrollment Management and staff changes.

2020-2021:

The IACS accreditation was renewed again. The most significant changes were Health Services being separated from Counseling Services, where each department has their own Director, and there were more staff changes.

2021-2022:

The IACS accreditation was renewed again. The only significant change was us hiring a new counselor in August 2021.

2022-2023:

The IACS accreditation was renewed again. The only significant change was that a counselor left in September 2022 and we hired a counselor to replace the vacant position in December 2022.

2023-2024:

The IACS accreditation was renewed again. The only significant changes were that the Director hired a counselor in August 2023 as a contracted employee while we awaited another counselor to graduate in the Fall 2023 (who started working full-time at the Counseling Center in January 2024). As of 6-24-2024, we have three full-time counselors and a full-time contracted counselor who will be with us until at least the end of the Fall semester, but we are working on funding to hire her on as a full-time employee.

**1.1.1 Analysis of Data**

2019-2020:

The site visitors and board noted areas for improvement including staffing levels, compensation, and office space. The Previous Director was able to hire another counselor in Fall 2019.

2020-2021:

The site visitors and board noted areas for improvement including staffing levels, compensation, and office space. The previous Director left to pursue a job at another university, another counselor retired Summer 2020, and another counselor resigned Spring 2021 due to personal reasons.

2021-2022:

At the beginning of the year (Jan. 2022), we began offering in-person sessions again while also offering virtual appointments. Over the past year we have noticed significant increases in our numbers.

2022-2023:

Most of the students are being seen in our center for in-person sessions (1289 from 7-01-2022 to 6-30-2023) vs. virtual/video appointments (268 from 7-01-2022 to 6-30-2023). We are currently in the process of filling a vacant 10-month counselor position. I am confident that having another full-time counselor on staff will increase our availability and usage by the students.

2023-2024:

Most of the students are being seen in our center for in-person sessions (1,337 from 7-01-2023 to 6-30-2024) vs. virtual/video appointments (153 from 7-01-2023 to 6-30-2024). The in-person sessions are up

from last year (2022-2023: 1,289 to 2023-2024: 1,337) and the virtual appointments are down from last year (2022-2023: 268 to 2023-2024: 153). If can get the contracted counselor to become a full-time employee, we are hopeful that this will show an increase in students seen in the Counseling Center.

### 1.1.2 Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

Director is working on rebuilding the staff for Counseling Services and is mindful of the remaining recommendations from IACS regarding Salary and office space. There are plans underway for Counseling Services, Health Services, and an Ochsner Urgent Care to share office space while each one would maintain their individual/separate areas.

2021-2022:

The plan for our office to move and be housed with the Student Health Services and an Ochsner Urgent Care are moving forward and the building is being renovated and we will hopefully move by the end of this year or early next year. To meet the needs of the students, we will have a part-time counselor starting for the Fall 2022 semester.

2022-2023:

We moved the Counseling Center to the new Student Health Center/Ochsner Urgent Care on 6-01-2023 but due to delays in getting the internet and our furniture set up we were having to go back to the old office and see clients/students there too. IT was able to get our internet installed and running at the new office 7-12-2023 so now we are 100% moved into the new office and fully functional. We are hopeful that with the move to the new location and being housed in the same building as Student Health Services/Ochsner's will increase our visibility and access to services.

2023-2024:

Last year had a transition to the new location, the Student Health Center/Ochsner Urgent Care, and many students who were at McNeese before July 2023 still think we are in the old location. We have marketed our services on campus, online, and through our social media and will continue to promote the new location. As time goes on, more students will know that we are in our current location.

## Performance Objective 2 Improve outreach and awareness of counseling services.

### 1 Assessment and Benchmark

Benchmark: Events typically attended during the year include:

- Parent Orientations (eight)
- Preview Days (two)
- Alcohol Awareness event & speaker (spring)
- Sexual Assault Prevention event & speaker (fall)
- International Student Mixers (spring and fall)
- Finals De-Stress/Therapy Dogs (spring and fall)
- Housing/Res Life Orientation for on-campus students (fall)
- Wellness Wednesday (tabling event; second week of fall semester)

### 1.1 Data

2020-2021:

Event	Participants
Career Assessment Results Review (classrooms or online)	Cancelled by instructors due to Hurricane damages
Counseling Services 101 Presentation	3 presentations 42 students
Presentations: Stress Management; QPR Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper training	27 for QPR; Unknown for Stress Management presentation because it was offered online and recorded for students to watch when they can.

Additionally, tabling event held that year included:

- Sleep hygiene
- Canceled tabling events due to hurricane damage included:
- Wellness Wednesday; and the Sexual Assault Prevention event

2021-2022:

See attached file.

2022-2023:

I have included a print out of Outreach events. We are planning more outreach events for the upcoming year, since we will have more counselors available.

2023-2024:

Please find attached the files (the files with "Counseling Center Stats" and the years tracked) containing the updated breakdown of our statistics. I have enhanced the tracking of these stats and have included formulas in the Excel spreadsheet to streamline data tracking going forward. Additionally, I have gone back to previous years' tracked data and updated the Excel files to ensure consistency.

[CC OutreachDetailByCategory 2022-2023](#) [PDF 6 KB 7/18/23]

[Counseling Center events July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022](#) [XLSX 13 KB 7/20/22]

[Counseling Center events July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024](#) [XLSX 13 KB 7/23/24]

[Counseling Center Stats 2019-2020 and 2020-2021](#) [XLSX 14 KB 7/23/24]

[Counseling Center Stats 2020-2021 and 2021-2022](#) [XLSX 14 KB 7/23/24]

[Counseling Center Stats 2021-2022 and 2022-2023](#) [XLSX 15 KB 7/23/24]

[Counseling Center Stats 2022-2023 and 2023-2024](#) [XLSX 14 KB 7/23/24]

### 1.1.1 Analysis of Data

2020-2021:

Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 and the 2 hurricanes that damaged our campus, we had to alter services provided to an online format or cancel. For the events that were changed to online, there are several reasons they may have been under utilized by students such as: them being displaced themselves, students dealing with damage to their homes, and very poor internet service.

2021-2022:

The main takeaway from the data is that our office and other offices on campus are returning/have returned to "normal" operations for the most part since Covid and the hurricane damage. More students also appear to be back on campus so they are not displaced like they were after the hurricanes.

2022-2023:

We are providing outreach that is "normal" (pre-Covid and hurricanes). We have plans to offer more outreach events for the upcoming year including some group counseling. With the additional counselor we will be able to offer more outreach events which will help let students know about our services and increase utilization of our services.

2023-2024:

With the addition of 4 full-time counselors (4 counselors total) to the Counseling Center's team, we are now in a position to expand our outreach efforts. As a result, we have developed plans to increase the number of outreach opportunities available to students in the Fall semester of 2024.

Furthermore, the increase in our appointment numbers, particularly in crisis/walk-in and Med Psyc Update categories, can be attributed to the greater need/demand for mental health services and additional staff we have at the Center to meet that demand. This trend may indicate a growing demand for mental health services among students, a trend that is being observed nationwide.

### 1.1.2 Plan for Continuous Improvement

**2020-2021:**

With campus repairs moving along, and the hope/intention that more students will return for in person classes for Fall 2021, we look forward to being able to provide our services in person as well.

With regards to technology issues, the internet in our area has become more stable thus allowing our office and students to engage in more online opportunities that we were unable to do in the Fall 2020 semester.

The past year has also opened up more opportunities to think about events in other ways that may appeal to students who are unable to physically come to an on-campus event but would still like to attend virtually.

**2021-2022:**

For the Fall 2021 semester, we were still only offering online, virtual sessions. While many students reported that they liked or even preferred this option, there were students who expressed wanting a return to in person sessions. This also affected the rest of the campus, as many events had less student attendance due to Covid and hurricane displacement.

For the Spring 2022 semester (starting at the beginning of the semester), I made the decision to offer in person sessions again while also keeping the options for the online, virtual sessions. As the rest of the campus started offering more in person events, we offered more in person events in line with the events we offered pre-Covid and pre-hurricane damage. We will continue offering in person events in line with what the University suggests or requires. We will adjust our event planning to follow any health guidelines like those for Covid or any weather related closures like hurricanes, floods, etc.

We will not be participating in the International Student Mixers due to the Office of International Programs no longer offering them but they stated that Enrollment Management has plans to have events for the International students so once they do, we would like to participate.

**2022-2023:**

We will continue offering outreach and are planning a new "Wellness Fair" incorporating the 8 dimensions of wellness. For this Wellness Fair, we have partnered with on-campus and off-campus stakeholders and plan on each partner offering more interactive activities that will be more engaging for students.

**2023-2024:**

We have strategies in place to enhance our Outreach events, expand our social media outreach, and our experienced staff is fully prepared for the upcoming year. Additionally, we intend to cultivate partnerships with on-campus and off-campus stakeholders to further engage students and potentially see growth. While we anticipate reaching a plateau at some point, we are confident in our current staff's ability to adequately meet the needs of the student body at McNeese State University.

**2 Assessment and Benchmark**

Benchmark: Monitor attendance as an indicator of the overall mental health of the campus.

**2.1 Data**

Overall Attendance:

Academic Year	Appointments		Clients	
	#	% change	#	% change
2020-2021	496	-71.83%	155	-59.32%
2021-2022*	1201	142.14%	260	67.74%
2022-2023	941	-21.65%	236	-9.23%
2023-2024	1495	58.87%	282	19.49%

\*See attached file for more detailed statistics for Counseling Center Stats 2021-2022 to 2022-2023.

[Counseling Center Stats 2020-2021 and 2021-2022](#) [XLSX 13 KB 7/12/22]

[Counseling Center Stats 2021-2022 and 2022-2023](#) [XLSX 13 KB 7/19/23]

### **2.1.1 Analysis of Data**

2021-2022:

Yes, we met our benchmark. The increases in our services are very apparent. This is most likely due to the University in general getting more "back to normal operations". There have been more students on campus and the number of classes offered in person have increased. Additionally, students are reporting that their living situation has returned to a more "normal" status and them being living on campus or near campus is improving our numbers.

As things level out (barring any unforeseen events like Covid or weather disasters), I expect these increases to lessen (as it plateaus) as we get back to our typical numbers. This is especially true since we are down to two counselors. We are expecting to pick up a part-time counselor who may help increase our numbers due to the extra availability.

2022-2023:

The main reason for decreases are most likely due to the second counselor leaving McNeese at the beginning of the Fall semester (early September 2022) and then it took a while to get that position approved and filled (which did not happen until December 2022). So for the Fall semester, the Director of the Counseling Center was the only counselor on staff to see clients.

Again, my hope is that with there being 2 full-time counselors and us currently trying to fill the vacant 10-month counselor position, it will allow us to increase our services again.

2023-2024:

Most measures increased. I believe that these increases are due to the addition of a full-time Counselor in the Fall 2023, a part-time Counselor in the Fall 2023, and another full-time counselor in the Spring 2024. In total, we now have four full-time counselors (the part-time counselor is leaving the University and moving but this happened June 2024). I am confident that as we move forward this Fall 2024, our numbers will increase slightly with us having four full-time counselors but the numbers will plateau and level off.

### **2.1.2 Plan for Continuous Improvement**

2021-2022:

For the Fall 2021 semester, we were still only offering online, virtual sessions. While many students reported that they liked or even preferred this option, there were students who expressed wanting a return to in person sessions.

For the Spring 2022 semester (starting at the beginning of the semester), I made the decision to offer in person sessions again while also keeping the options for the online, virtual sessions. Many students are still using the virtual sessions for convenience.

2022-2023:

Most students prefer in-person sessions but we still have a decent amount of students who opt for virtual appointments. Some students will just have virtual appointments occasionally due to their circumstances, like having go to work, not having transportation, etc. We will continue offering both options to meet the needs of all clients/students.

We are also hoping that with our move to the new Student Health Center/Ochsner Urgent Care, it may increase visibility and ease of getting services to students.

2023-2024:

I am hopeful that as we move forward with more Outreach opportunities planned for the upcoming year, the addition of another counselor, and us being here in our current location for almost one year it will help establish our presence on campus. We also plan to market and advertise our services more with flyers and with social media.