

## 2016 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Comprehensive Exam Results Executive Summary

### *Introduction*

The 2nd Year Comprehensive Exam is a program capstone that serves as a key midpoint assessment of two of the three program learning outcomes, PLO #1, Theoretical Knowledge and PLO #3, Clinical Practice. Students work independently on the take-home exam, producing an eight to ten page paper (3000 -4000 words). Seven faculty members participated as examiners.

### *Exam*

For this first administration of the exam, all students completed the exam within the required month long timeframe (between 2nd and 3rd sessions of fall quarter). Two faculty examiners separately graded each paper using the Comprehensive Exam Rubric. They were not given any information that identified the exam taker.

The written exam is comprised of a case study with three questions. Students are asked to compare and contrast how two psychodynamic theorists conceptualize and approach the case and specific material related in it, as well as to discuss the interpersonal dynamics that might arise in their own treatment of the case. Each exam was graded on the basis of knowledge, understanding, and application of material. Students needed to achieve a passing score by scoring at competent or exemplary levels for all five criteria in order to pass the exam.

### *Results*

Ten students sat for the exam. Seven students passed on the first attempt, and the remaining 3 students passed on their first retake.

The Academic Dean and the Dean of Evaluation and Planning reviewed the rubrics of students who were scored as "Needs Improvement, Does Not Pass" in any of the defined criteria and then consulted with faculty where there was any question or inconsistency noted. Out of the ten students taking the exam, seven passed and three were marked as "Retake." The Academic Dean shared the detailed feedback from the rubrics with students. Those retaking the exam modified or rewrote their paper with improvement to one or more criteria. The Academic Dean graded their revisions; all three then passed the exam required for full matriculation into the third year of the program.

The determination for whether or not a student passed was made by criteria rather than by the total score. The three students each had one or more criteria that did not meet competent or exemplary levels.

There was no significant difference in student scores between PLO 1 and PLO 3. There are sub questions within each PLO. The two questions in PLO 1, addressing evaluation of theories and integration of models showed no significant difference in student scores. Within PLO 3, the sub question regarding cross cultural awareness was scored significantly lower than any other sub question in the exam. The other two sub-questions, addressing therapy informed by diverse perspectives and unconscious psyche, were not scored significantly differently.

There were significant differences in the scores by examiners for PLO 1. The average difference between examiners for PLO sub question 1 was 23 percentage points, for sub question a 13 percentage points, and for sub question 3 the difference was 10 percentage points.