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Counseling and Family Therapy Graduate Programs at La Salle University, 1979-2014: A 35 Year History

John J. Rooney, Ph.D.

La Salle's Counseling and Family Therapy Master's Program has a long and distinguished history, with modifications over the years that reflect both growth in the program and adaptation to developments in the professions.

Initially, it began as a program in pastoral counseling (PAC) in the summer of 1979, a joint effort of Rev. Leo van Everbroek, C.I.C.M., of the Graduate Division of Religious Education and five faculty from the psychology department (Brother Joseph Burke, Brother John Dondero, Thomas McCarthy, John Rooney and John Smith) with Rev. van Everbroek as the director. The program was designed for students seeking "education and training in counseling that is informed by a sensitive understanding of the faith orientation in people's lives." Shortly thereafter, in 1980, the program developed two concentrations, psychological counseling and marriage and family therapy. Subsequently, a concentration was added in family treatment of addictions. In 1985 the Family Studies Clinic was opened under the direction of Dr. Smith. Additional faculty in the PAC program included: Suzanne Boyll, Joanne Conway, Chris Dematatis, Joseph Devlin, Ann Marie Donohue, Barbara Krasner, Gregory Leville, John Raines, Maurice Schepers and Nathan Turner. In 1988, Barbara Santone succeeded Gregory Leville as clinic supervisor.

Following several years of this cooperative effort, the psychology department, in the fall of 1987, added a graduate program of its own, Human Services Psychology (HSP), with Dr. Rooney as its director. Its aim was to focus on the knowledge and skills required for competence in counseling, clinical practice and related areas of applied psychology. Additional psychology faculty joined the program, including: Armond Aserinski, Jerome Carroll, David Falcone, Arthur Freeman, Peter Filicetti and Robert Gilligan.

In 1995 Dr. Smith was appointed director of the pastoral counseling program.

In 1996, the title of the HSP program was changed to Clinical Counseling Psychology (CCP), and graduates were awarded that degree the following year. A major consideration in the change of title was the advent of licensure for professional counselors and marriage and family therapists which was approved in Pennsylvania in 1998. By this time (1997), the marriage and family therapy program, psychological counseling, addictions counseling and pastoral counseling had been incorporated into the Clinical Counseling Psychology Program as concentrations, along with a concentration in industrial/organizational psychology. An advisory board had been formed for the program and its activity was implemented by an executive committee (William Conway, Peter Finley, James Richard and John Rooney). This

group met regularly and was instrumental in obtaining some grants to support the Family Studies Clinic which had become part of the CCP program. For a time, the clinic was used for training both masters and doctoral students (a Psy.D. program in clinical psychology, based on a proposal by Rooney and Smith, began in 1998 with Smith as director), but as the doctoral program expanded the clinic transitioned into one used almost entirely for doctoral students. In 1999, the pastoral counseling concentration moved from CCP to graduate religion, where a pastoral focus was made available for graduates of the CCP program who were interested in that specialty.

In order to accommodate the increasing number of students who were commuting long distances from La Salle's main campus, programs were gradually made available in Bucks and Montgomery Counties.

In 1997, La Salle built a new facility in Newtown, Bucks County and began offering the full CCP program there. Prior to that time, courses in the HSP program had been available in Bucks County, first at Archbishop Ryan High School, then at a shopping mall in Newtown and later, the first two years of the program were offered in facilities at Bucks County Community College.

In Montgomery County, the CCP program initially utilized Gwynedd Mercy College starting in 2004, with Dr. Donna Tonrey as director, prior to moving to the Metroplex at Plymouth Meeting in January, 2008.

In 2007, Dr. Donna Tonrey became director of the marriage and family therapy concentration, international programs, and the Montgomery County campus. A degree program in professional counseling was launched in Athens, Greece that year in conjunction with New York College. This venture ended in 2012, and a program was inaugurated at Prague in the Czech Republic in 2009.

In June, 2011, Dr. Donna Tonrey was appointed director of the CCP program with Dr. Rooney assisting her as director of the Professional Clinical Counseling Program (PCC).

In 2006, the administration and faculty decided to apply for accreditation of the Marriage and Family Therapy Program (MFT) by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COMFTE), which was granted in 2007.

In 2013, the title Clinical Counseling Psychology, with, concentrations in PCC, MFT and I/O, was changed to Counseling and Family Therapy Master's Programs(CFT), granting separate degrees in PCC and MFT, with plans for a revised I/O degree-granting program. The PCC program has decided to apply for accreditation by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and is currently participating in that process.

At present the programs have over 350 students, approximately 40 faculty members and over 100 agencies contracted to provide quality supervision for internships. In addition to the masters' programs, the psychology department, under the direction of Brother Joseph Burke, offers a Psy.D. program in clinical psychology with Randy Fingerhut as director, and an

undergraduate major. Several thousand alumni of these programs provide an extensive network of professional mental health workers.

Core Faculty in the programs (full-time faculty and associate clinical faculty):

Donna A. Tonrey, Psy.D., Director/ Faculty

Full Time Faculty: John Rooney, Ph.D. Emeritus, Donna Tonrey, Psy.D., LMFT, LPC, LeeAnn Cardaciotto, Ph.D., Lynn Collins, Ph.D., David Falcone, Ph.D., Laura Gambrel, Ph.D., LMFT, LPC, Charles Jacob, Ph.D., LPC, LMFT, Mary Ellen McMonigle, Ph.D., Diana Montague, Ph.D., Gregory Roth, Ph.D., LPC, NCC, Michael Sude, Ph.D., LMFT, Patricia Wilson, Ph.D.

Associate Clinical Faculty: Joanne Conway, Ed.D., Melanie Cosby, Ph.D., Darlene Hannigan, Psy.D., LPC, Joseph Selm, Psy.D., LPC.

Additional Faculty: Christiana Awosan, Ph.D., Suzanne Boyll, Ph.D., Travis Cos, Ph.D., Dena DiNardo, M.A., Timothy Erb, M.A., Erika Evans-Weaver, Ph.D., Andrea Fina, Ph.D., Catherine Hillman, Ph.D., Brynn Iacobacci, M.A., Timothy Lomauro, Ph.D., Denise Maida, Psy.D., Edward Marks, Ph.D., Brad May, Ph.D., Simon_Moon, Ph.D., Ashley Morgan-Soukup, M.A., Christine Moriconi, Psy.D., Daniel Rodriguez, Ph.D., Barbara Santone, M.A., Dalesa Scott, Ph.D., Michael Silverman, Ed.D., Genevieve Sude, M.A., John A. Smith, Ed.D., Rhoda Shralow, M.A., Paul Toth, Ph.D., Lynn Unikel, Ph.D.

Past faculty: Over the years, a number of psychologists, family therapists, counselors and other professionals have contributed to the development of the masters' programs in addition to those mentioned above, including: Sharon Armstrong, Cathy Bolton, Monica Campbell, Robert Chapman, Chris Combs, Joseph DiOrio, Robert DiTomaso, Pat Dwyer, Randy Fingerhut, Brian Hess, Gilbert Hoffer, Joseph Lambert, Brenda Lucas, Cori McFadden, Donald Marks, Joseph Nines, Diana Piperata, Kevin Riley, Jordan Santina, Julian Slowinski, Brother Francis Tri V. Nguyen, Christine Trainer Hass, Ellen Walker, Margaret Watson, Mary Winn and Andrew Wolanin.