

Richmont Graduate University evaluates success on student achievement consistent with its mission. Richmont continuously strives to excel in the area of student achievement and is consistently dedicated to implementing improvements and enhancements to the curriculum and overall academic experience.

Enrollment Data

Richmont's mission focuses on providing "Christ-centered education that advances God's work of healing, restoration, and transformation in the lives of individuals, churches, and communities" (see [Mission Statement, Richmont Graduate University Catalog, 2017-2019, p. 8](#)). Such a mission assumes that the institution will strive to implement improvements to a student's academic and spiritual experience. The University's policies and requirements for student achievement are in keeping with and directed toward accomplishing the mission.

Enrollment data for the five Richmont degrees are listed below by campus in Table 1. Numbers have remained fairly consistent over the previous three years, with the highest enrollment occurring in 2013-2014 with a total of 276 degree-seeking students. For the Chattanooga campus, the MAMFT degree has seen a drop in enrollment during the 2016-17 year over previous years whereas the MACMHC degree has seen a rise. This drop may be attributed Richmont acquiring a clinical mental health specific accreditation that many students might find appealing. For the Atlanta campus, both the MAMFT and the MACMHC degrees have remained consistent in enrollment rates with a drop in enrollment for the MACMHC degree of 9% in 2014-2015 and a 4% increase in 2016-2017. Enrollment in the MS degree has had at least four students enrolled in the program since 2013 when in previous years there has been a large level of fluctuation of enrollment within this degree. In 2017, the MS degree almost doubled its enrollment to 7. The MAMIN degree has experienced the most fluctuations in the last four years by starting the program with an enrollment of 37, dropping 40% in 2014-15 AY, increasing enrollment 63% for 2015-16, and then decreasing enrollment by 15% in 2016-2017. The MA in Spiritual Formation and Direction data are provided for the five semesters it has been in existence. Some of the variability in the MA in Ministry degree is a result of starting a new program and standardizing processes and content of a degree. Some of the fluctuations in enrollment rates, in general, can be attributed to a changeover of faculty and administration within the university.

The expected threshold for the MAMFT program has been 120 enrolled students. Richmont did not meet this goal in the 2013-2014 AY or 2014-2015 AY although it did see a rise in enrollment over both years. The threshold was achieved in 2015-2016 only to drop again below the threshold in 2016-2017

The expected threshold for the MACMHC program has been 115 enrolled students. Richmont met this goal for the 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2016-2017 Academic Years. This goal was not achieved in the 2015-2016 AY

The expected threshold for the MS program has been five enrolled students.

The expected threshold for the MA in Ministry program has been 35 enrolled students. Richmond met this benchmark during its inaugural year and again in 2015-2016.

MA in Spiritual Formation and Direction data are provided for five semesters it has been in existence. There was growth in the 2016-2017 from the first year of its inception.

Table 1. Enrollment Rates by Degree and Campus: 2013-17

Enrollment Rates by Degree and Campus: 2013-2017										
	MAMFT		MACMHC		MSPS		MAMIN		MASFD	
	ATL	CHA	ATL	CHA	ATL	CHA	ATL	CHA	ATL	CHA
2013-14	82	30	93	27	4	0	34	3	n/a	n/a
2014-15	84	23	86	44	4	3	22	2	n/a	n/a
2015-16	83	38	86	25	4	1	33	2	2	n/a
2016-17	74	19	90	46	7	0	28	0	5	0

State Licensing Examinations

The MACMHC and MAMFT counseling degrees equip students with all academic requirements for licensure as professional counselors and marriage and family therapists. Subsequently, these graduates must complete a minimum of two years post master's internship under the supervision and pass examinations to become eligible for licensure. Although Richmond provides the necessary coursework for licensure, the post master's internship and the required examinations for licensure are not under the purview of the University. This practice is common for regionally accredited universities offering graduate degrees in counseling and marriage and family therapy.

Richmont offers students in the MACMHC and MAMFT programs the option to take one of the licensure examinations before graduation. Each spring, Richmont students have the opportunity to sit for the National Counselor Examination (NCE), an exam required for licensure as a professional counselor in most states. The NCE test items measure a student's knowledge of the eight core curriculum standards defined by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP):

- Human Growth and Development
- Social and Cultural Diversity
- Counseling and Helping Relationships
- Group Counseling and Group Work
- Career Development
- Assessment and Testing
- Research and Program Evaluation
- Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice

Each year, the majority of the graduating class takes the NCE in their final spring semester; this is their first step toward licensure. Over the past nine years, 504 Richmond students have taken the NCE with a passing average of 96% (see Table 2 below).

Table 2. National Counselor Examination Pass Rates 2008 – 2016

YEAR	Total students taking test	Total students passing test	Pass rate
2008	58	54	93%
2009	53	52	98%
2010	64	63	98%
2011	55	52	95%
2012	63	59	94%
2013	62	61	98%
2014	50	49	98%
2015	54	53	98%
2016	45	43	96%
Total	504	486	96%

To prepare Richmond students for the rigor of the NCE, the University administers the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) three months before administration of the NCE. The CPCE test items measure a student's knowledge of the eight core curriculum standards defined by CACREP; these are the same eight areas tested in the NCE.

The CPCE is used additionally as an exit exam for Richmond Graduate University. MACMHC and MAMFT students are required to pass the CPCE to receive a passing grade in CED 7891 Professional Seminar and, thus, graduate. Students are required to achieve one of the following on the CPCE:

- A) Score at or above the national mean total score;
- B) Score at or above the national mean score in six of the eight core area sections.

CPCE results are used to help students target areas for further study as they prepare to take the NCE three months later. Students who do not achieve at least one of the above requirements must retake the test until these requirements are met. Retests are administered on-campus.

Each year, the Dean of the School of Counseling analyzes the results of the CPCE and NCE exams to develop interventions and modifications to increase scores in the future.

No licensure eligibility is involved for students who enroll in the MS program, MA in Ministry, or MA in Spiritual Formation and Direction programs. Students in these three programs tend to be employed when they enroll at Richmond and wish to integrate their faith more formally into their current practice or ministry role.

Course Completion Rates

Course completion rates for the School of Counseling are listed in Table 3. These rates are combined across the MACMHC, MAMFT, and MS programs due to the significant overlap in the course curriculum options for each of the programs. Both campuses consistently exhibited an average completion rate of at least 98% or higher during the last three years. This high rate of course completion suggests that Richmond students within the School of Counseling are successfully achieving a high level of understanding of course material and learning outcomes. Course completion rates are calculated based on the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Total \# of A, B, C, or P ("passing") grades given to students}}{\text{Total \# of students appearing on final grade roster(s) for the period}} \\ \text{Students receiving A, B, C, F, W ("withdrawn"), WF ("withdrawn fail"), or WP ("withdrawn pass")}$$

*One exception to this calculation: Within the School of Counseling, it is required for certain courses that students earn an A or B in the class to be considered “passing.” In these cases, if students earned a C+ or lower in one of these specified courses, they were figured into the total score (denominator) but were not considered passing (numerator).

Table 3. Course Completion Rates: School of Counseling

Academic Year	Course Completion Rates: Atlanta Campus	Course Completion Rates: Chattanooga Campus	Total
2013-14 AY	98.2%	97.8%	98.1%
2014-15 AY	98.6%	98.0%	98.4%
2015-16 AY	98.2%	98%	98.2%

Course completion rates are listed in Table 4 for the School of Ministry. Data indicates that for the 2013-2016 semesters, the School of Ministry experienced a 91% or higher completion rate across both campuses. The Chattanooga campus did not have School of Ministry students attend its campus for years 2013-2017. This high rate of course completion suggests that Richmond Ministry students are successfully achieving a high level of understanding of course material and learning outcomes.

Table 4. Course Completion Rates: School of Ministry

Academic Year	Course Completion Rates: Atlanta Campus	Total
2013-14 AY	96.5%	96.5%
2014-15 AY	93.5%	93.5%
2015-16 AY	91.6%	91.6%

Successful student learning is directly related to our mission. The expected threshold for the course completion rate is 90% or better. Richmond has met this goal consistently over the past five years. Examples of interventions used to monitor and improve course completion rates include the following: 1) when writing ability is hindering student achievement, students are encouraged to seek guidance from Richmond librarians; 2) when personal circumstances are obstacles to student achievement, students are advised to schedule an appointment with the Dean of Students for additional support and problem-solving assistance; and 3) in various courses, students are encouraged to participate in study groups to enhance learning.

Graduation and Retention Rates

Overall graduation rates (segregated by both program [MACMHC, MAMFT, MA Ministry, MS] and campus) for the cohorts who entered between 2011 and 2015 are shown in Tables 5-. Each table shows the cumulative rates of graduates per degree. Students enrolled in the Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy program with 77 minimum hours show an average of 76% graduation rate after four years across both campuses. Students enrolled in the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health program with 67 minimum hours show an average of 74% graduation rate after four years across both campuses. Students enrolled in the Master of Science in Christian Psychological Studies with a minimum of 31 hours evidenced a 100% graduation rate after three years across both campuses for 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 AY. The 2011-12 cohort for the Chattanooga and Atlanta campuses show a completion rate of 80% or higher within four years of matriculation (i.e., began in the 2011-2012 Academic Year with degree conferred by May or August 2015 or earlier). Students enrolled in the Master of Arts in Ministry with 40 minimum hours show an average of 54% graduation rate after three years. The lower graduation rate may be the result of administering a new degree program. The Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation and Direction was started in 2016, and no data exists yet for graduates. Students in the School of Ministry only attend the Atlanta campus.

The expected threshold for the graduation rate for the MACMHC and the MAMFT programs is 60% or better within four years of initial enrollment and for the MS program is 60% or better within three years of initial enrollment. These goals are in keeping with our mission aimed at preparing individuals to advance God’s work of healing, restoration, and transformation in the lives of individuals, churches, and communities [upon graduation]. Richmond has met this goal over the past four years.

Table 5. MAMFT Degree Graduation Rates

Starting cohort #	n/a	37	16	12
within 2 yrs	n/a	49%	19%	17%
within 3 yrs	n/a	57%	50%	n/a
<i>within 4 yrs</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>57%</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>

School of Counseling retention rates are shown in Table 9. This data was combined across the MS, MACMHC and MAMFT programs due to the significant overlap in course curriculum within these two programs and because students regularly switch between programs before graduating. Retention rates for the School of Ministry are shown in Table 10. “N/A” indicates that not enough time has passed for data to be available for that specific period regarding retention OR data are unavailable due to lack of enrollment in the program for that specific period.

Table 9 for the School of Counseling indicates that the largest difference in retention usually occurs in the first year of enrollment and slows significantly during the following years. For example, for the 2012-13 cohort, 15% students in the School of Counseling for the Atlanta campus did not persist to their second year. The following year, a 2% increase occurred for students who did not persist to their third year. This pattern is evident on the Chattanooga campus, as well. Consistently, 74% of students have persisted to their third year (if applicable) in their program. Retention rates are lower for the School of Ministry although because the cohorts are smaller (averaged 14 students in 2013-14 and 2014-15 AY) *This would account for the larger impact on retention rate percentage made by one student’s withdrawing than is seen in the School of Counseling.*

Table 9. School of Counseling Retention Rates by Campus: 2012-2016

School of Counseling Retention Rates By Campus: 2012-2016										
Academic Year	Starting enrollment #		1st Yr		2nd Yr		3rd Yr		4th Yr	
	ATL	CHA	ATL	CHA	ATL	CHA	ATL	CHA	ATL	CHA
2012-13	46	23	85%	83%	83%	83%	74%	74%	74%	74%
2013-14	72	22	83%	77%	75%	77%	75%	77%	n/a	n/a
2014-15	45	29	91%	73%	91%	69%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2015-16	63	21	87%	78%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Table 10. School of Ministry Retention Rates by Campus: 2012-2016

School of Ministry Retention Rates By Campus: 2012-2016
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Academic Year	Starting enrollment #		1st Yr		2nd Yr		3rd Yr		4th Yr	
	ATL	CHA	ATL	CHA	ATL	CHA	ATL	CHA	ATL	CHA
2012-13	38	n/a	65%	n/a	62%	n/a	62%	n/a	n/a	n/a
2013-14	15	n/a	66%	n/a	66%	n/a	66%	n/a	n/a	n/a
2014-15	13	n/a	73%	n/a	71%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2015-16	22	n/a	68%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

The expected threshold for the fall-to-fall retention rate for all degree programs is 90% or better. These goals are in keeping with our mission aimed at preparing individuals to advance God’s work of healing, restoration, and transformation in the lives of individuals, churches, and communities. On average for the MACMHC and MAMFT programs, the retention rate was 86.5%, which represents 3.5% percentage points below the expected outcome. On average for the MA Ministry program, the retention rate was 68%, although the retention rate had risen 5% from 2012 to 2014 showing improvement for retention. Based on an evaluation of the data, it is recognized that interventions are needed to improve retention rates institution-wide. Several interventions have recently been implemented to improve the retention rates among Richmond students across all academic degree programs, including the following:

1. Peer mentoring program: Over the past two years, the Chattanooga Student Government Association has developed a program to provide peer mentoring to incoming students. Volunteer student mentors are paired with interested mentees within the first few weeks of the semester. Topics discussed include classes, professors, the program, professional development, and personal/social issues.
2. Academic Advising: Each student is assigned an advisor who, in collaboration with Records Office/Registrar, is available for curriculum planning and consultation regarding academics and other matters. For the School of Counseling, students are required to meet with their advisor at least twice during the program. The first visit occurs the first semester of classes and serves as a “check-in” to make sure students are adjusting to graduate school. The second visit occurs the semester before students will start to see clients (usually their first or second spring semester). The School of Ministry advisors contact each student twice each semester; these contacts serve as checkups for students. Topics discussed during student advisement for both schools also include professional development, consideration of the decision to seek further education (e.g., pursuing a doctoral degree), and the encouragement of appropriate self-care and time management for the student. Members of the faculty and administration welcome students who have special questions or concerns.
3. Oversight from Deans: Deans are made aware of students at risk of withdrawing or failing by the Records Office and faculty through both formal methods (i.e., Student Qualifying Exam—conducted each semester) and informal methods (verbal or written communication regarding a student’s status). Deans make efforts to engage students in addressing identified challenges to retention and graduation.

4. Encouragement and support of students engaging in personal therapy: At orientation and throughout the curriculum, students are encouraged by faculty, supervisors, and advisors to consider participating in therapy themselves. Students anecdotally report that participation in therapy throughout graduate school provides guidance in numerous domains, including general support, time management skills, self-care skills, and stress management skills.

Additionally, several initiatives are slated to be implemented by Fall of 2017. These include the following:

1. Students will be required to meet with their advisor every fall and spring semester for them to register. Advisors will also have a decreased advisement load so that they have adequate time and resources to advise and counsel a student who may be wishing to withdrawal from the program. There will be a week set aside in September and February of every year for students to meet with their advisor along with not requiring tests or assignments to be due during these advisement weeks.
2. The peer-mentoring program has been a success on the Chattanooga campus. As a result, the Dean of Students and Student Government Association on the Atlanta campus plan to roll out a similar peer-mentoring program for the 2016-17 academic year.

Job Placement

The IE Office has annually conducted the 3 Year Post Graduation Survey for Alumni in the School of Counseling to measure employment status. Starting in Fall of 2017, the Director of Alumni and Career Services will annually conduct 3 Year Post Graduation Surveys for Alumni in the School of Counseling and School of Ministry.

The expected threshold for the in-field professional employment rate for all degree programs is 80% or better for program graduates. These goals are in keeping with our mission aimed at preparing individuals to advance God's work of healing, restoration, and transformation in the lives of individuals, churches, and communities. On average, the in-field professional employment rate for all degree programs was 83.3% for those graduates who responded to survey requests. Based on these data, as well as a review of annual data, Richmond achieved its expected outcome.

Table 11. Employment Data- 3 Years Post-Graduation Survey- School of Counseling

Graduation Class	Response Rate	% Employed in Mental Health Field	% Employed, not in Mental Health Field	% Unemployed
2010	19/81 = 23%	89	11	0
2011	22/62 = 35%	95.45	4.55	0
2012- MAPC		87.5	0	12.5
2012- MAMFT	16/36 = 44%	87.5	12.5	0
2013	18/82= 21.95%	83.33	11.11	5.56

In 2012, the IE Office began conducting the 6 Months Post Graduation Survey for Alumni in the School of Counseling and the School of Ministry to measure employment status and employment satisfaction with current job and other post-graduation outcomes. Table 12 provides survey data regarding employment status among recent graduates.

Table 12. Six Month Post Graduate Survey Results Regarding Employment Status

Survey Question	% Employed	% Unemployed
2012 (N=26)	92.3	7.7
2013 (N=29)	79.2	20.6
2014 (N=25) – School of Counseling	92	8
2014 (N=5)- School of Ministry	80	20
2015 (N=20) – School of Counseling	90	10
2015 (N=2) - School of Ministry	100	0
2016 (N=42)– School of Counseling	92.9	7.1
2016 (N=4) – School of Ministry	100	0

Table 13 provides survey data regarding employment satisfaction among recent graduates.

Table 13. Six Month Post-Graduate Survey Results Regarding Employment Satisfaction, Years 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, & 2016

Survey Question	My current job is connected to what I studied	I derive great personal meaning from my career	I feel that I am contributing to the greater community	I feel that I am appropriately compensated for the work that I do	Richmont prepared me well for work in my field
% Agree or Strongly Agree 2012 (N=26)	88	92	92	28	100
% Agree or Strongly Agree 2013 (N=29)	78	78	89	52	96
% Agree or Strongly Agree 2014 – SOC (N=25)	92	91.7	87.5	58.3	96
% Agree or	80	100	80	60	83.3

Strongly Agree 2014 – SOM (N=5)					
% Agree or Strongly Agree 2015 – SOC (N=20)	85	90	90	45	95
% Agree or Strongly Agree – SOM (N=2)	100	100	100	50	100
% Agree or Strongly Agree – SOC (N=42)	88.1	85.7	88.1	42.9	95.2
% Agree or Strongly Agree SOM (N=4)	25	50	50	50	50

Finally, in 2012, the IE Office conducted a survey of all alumni from Richmond to assess achievement outcomes. The following tables provide survey data for graduates of Richmond in the past ten years (2003-2012).

Table 14. Domain of Current Job

	Response percent (N=101)
Mental health - Private practice	37.6%
Other, please specify	19.8%
Mental health - Counseling Agency	16.8%
Mental health - Non-profit	16.8%
Mental health - Church/Religious institution	10.9%
Mental health - Hospital/Clinic	9.9%
Church	8.9%
Mental health - College	7.9%
Education	5.9%
Not applicable - not currently employed	5.9%
Missions work	3.0%
Physical health/medicine	3.0%
Mental health - School	2.0%
Administrative/ clerical	2.0%
Business	1.0%

Table 14. Client/Patient Populations with Whom Graduates Work

Response percent (N=97)

Victims of abuse or trauma	71.1%
Individuals with mental health disorders	70.1%
Urban	59.8%
Rural	47.4%
Individuals with substance-related disorders	42.3%
Older adults	33.0%
Other, Please specify	33.0%
Children	29.9%
Chronically ill individuals and their families	20.6%
Veterans	18.6%
Homeless individuals	12.4%
Military personnel and their families	8.2%

Response percent **Table 15. Employment Status**

(N=100)

Employed (40+ hours)	49.0%
Employed (0-20 hours)	28.0%
Employed (21-39 hours)	16.0%
Unemployed (by choice)	5.0%
Unemployed (not by choice)	2.0%

Table 16. Income Level

Response percent (N = 100)

\$0 - 24,999	34.0%
\$25,000-34,999	31.0%
\$35,000-49,999	20.0%
\$50,000-64,999	8.0%
\$65,000+	7.0%

Table 17. Career Satisfaction

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	No opinion/ Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Rating average
I feel that I am contributing to the greater community.	0.0% (0)	2.0% (2)	7.0% (7)	24.0% (24)	67.0% (67)	4.56

My current job is connected to what I studied.	1.0% (1)	3.0% (3)	7.0% (7)	22.0% (22)	67.0% (67)	4.51
I derive great personal	0.0%	3.0%	9.0%	25.0%	63.0%	4.4
8 meaning from	(0)	(3)	(9)	(25)	(63)	
I feel that I am being appropriately compensated for the work that I do.	4.0% (4)	28.3% (28)	17.2% (17)	30.3% (30)	20.2% (20)	3.34

Overall, job placement data for the School of Counseling suggests that the majority of Richmond alumni are employed and satisfied with their career. Additionally, alumni report high levels of career satisfaction, and they agree that Richmond prepared them well for their career. The Director of Career Services that was hired in 2012 implemented several services to provide career planning assistance aimed at equipping students with professional development strategies to facilitate graduate placement and professional advancement. From the first day of class through commencement, students work to develop a personalized career map designed to provide a strong practical foundation from which to launch their careers in the settings in which they believe God has called them to be. The Director of Career Services provides individual and group training related to resume writing, career searches, interviewing skills, and networking skills.

Note: The Master of Arts in Ministry program began in Fall of 2012 with the first graduating class in the Spring of 2014; thus alumni survey data is limited for this population.

Source

[Mission Statement, Richmond Graduate University Catalog, 2017-2019, p. 8](#)