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Masters in Counseling Psychology Program at Felician College Becomes First in State to Receive Accreditation



Dr. Peter Economou, Assistant Professor of Counseling Psychology at Felician College, poses for a photo with students enrolled in the College's Masters in Counseling Psychology program. Pictured are: (Standing L to R): Economou, Daniel Fitzgerald and Vanessa Chafos. (Seated L to R): Marcela Farfan, Hana Zebi, Ana Maria Idarraga, Estrevina Rivera-Detres and Mary Rivera.

RUTHERFORD, N.J. - It has been quite an exciting past few months for the Masters in Counseling Psychology (MACP) program at Felician College. Originating in 2009, the MACP program is based on the clinical experience of Associate Professor and Director of the program, Dr. Daniel Mahoney, and his vision of beginning a counseling psychology program at the College. The MACP trains students to become Licensed Professional Counselors or LPC's for short. The New Jersey LPC is licensed to counsel a diverse population, including the mentally ill, people with addictions, victims of domestic violence and abuse as well as other mental health issues. They also provide family and divorce therapy.

In June, Felician College learned that the Masters in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council (MPCAC) has accredited the MACP program. The MPCAC ensures that the MACP has met the rigorous standards for counselor preparation. The Felician College MACP is the first program in New Jersey to receive accreditation. Dr. Mahoney stated, "I am very proud of our program. We have graduated 31 students in a few

short years. That is very commendable.” Regarding accreditation, he went on to say, “I would like to thank President Anne M. Prisco, along with the rest of the Felician College faculty, staff and community for all their support during this process.”

The Felician MACP students are trained in various counseling theory techniques and must complete a minimum of 1000 clinical hours prior to earning their 60 credit hour Master’s Degree. One way the students can earn their required clinical hours is by working in one of three community mental health programs created by Dr. Mahoney and Dr. Peter Economou, Assistant Professor of Counseling Psychology, who joined the MACP program in 2010. Currently, six graduate students in the MACP program are offering clinical mental health services to clients at these locations.

Thanks to a grant from the Felician Sisters and a partnership with the Franciscan Community Development Center (FCDC), the three community mental health programs were made possible. Utilizing FCDC’s established infrastructure, centers were opened in Fairview, West New York and Guttenberg, New Jersey. Embodying the Franciscan values of solidarity with the poor, compassion and service, the Felician MACP students counsel mostly underprivileged clients that require significant counseling they would not receive otherwise.

Dr. Economou will be appearing on the television show, “One on One with Steve Adubato” in August. On the program, he will be discussing the community mental health centers along with various other topics related to counseling psychology and the MACP program at Felician College. The show can be seen on August 19 at 7:00 p.m. on NJTV and again at 12:30 a.m. on WNET.

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Felician College, the Franciscan College of New Jersey, is a liberal arts, coeducational Catholic college founded in 1942 and sponsored by the Felician Sisters. True to its mission, Felician College welcomes a diverse student population and embraces their educational needs. With campuses in Lodi and Rutherford, New Jersey, Felician College currently enrolls more than 2,000 students and offers more than 55 undergraduate and graduate programs in the classroom and online in the arts and sciences, business and management sciences, health sciences and teacher education. In 2012, the School of Nursing added a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) to the College’s roster of degrees. Felician College offers 13 varsity interscholastic sports that compete at the NCAA Division II level.