The following report is a continuation of the Student Learning Outcomes Report. Part I described the students served by Counseling and Psychological Services, identified three learning objectives for students using the services, and presented and discussed a student survey and results measuring these objectives. This report will discuss possible areas for improving student learning, strategies/interventions implemented to address identified areas of improvement, and the effectiveness of these strategies/interventions.

Counseling and Psychological Services is currently serving a wide range of students in direct clinical care and outreach services. The student learning objectives cluster in three areas: healthy behavior, academic success, and retention and persistence. Student surveys have demonstrated that the student objectives are being met by most students accessing services. Because academic success is a key objective in helping students via personal counseling, this is one area that could be further emphasized.

One strategy to make student academic success more salient in the sessions with students, a special section was added to the intake report that is titled “School status and progress/academic issues.” This requires each counselor to ask about the progress each student is making in school and to assess any psychological barriers that may be hindering progress (e.g., not concentrating, poor communication with professor or classmates, poor organization skills, etc.). This required process helps students to connect issues that they are working on in personal counseling with academic performance and it helps keep these concerns in the forefront of counselors’ priorities.

Another strategy used to increase the saliency of academic success and progress with students is to have this be a part of what is presented about a student client in both individual and group supervision when cases are discussed. This has provided the message to all staff about the importance of linking the personal counseling with increased academic success. It then becomes part of the fabric of the counseling service. When appropriate, students are referred to specific resources on campus that can further assist with academic concerns (e.g., academic department/student advisor, Student Center for Academic Achievement, University Advisement Center, EXCEL, Student Disability Resource Center, Career Development Center).

This emphasis on connecting and assessing academic progress with personal counseling has helped to focus on this area as a specific objective of counseling. The heightened awareness of the staff and the student clients helps to make this a priority. Often students do improve their academic progress after coming to personal counseling, but they may not attribute this as a cause. For example, a student client may not be sleeping or eating due to grief issues, but after receiving counseling are better able to function overall and therefore do their school work better. The strategies discussed above have made a difference overall. This has been noted by both staff and students.