



**Program Evaluation  
of the  
Master of Arts Program in School Counseling**

At least once every three years, as a condition for accreditation, the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (i.e., CACREP), expects the faculty of the Neag School of Education's School Counseling Program to prepare a report documenting the outcomes of a comprehensive program evaluation. This is the first such report and it covers the three-year period for academic years 2004, 2005 and 2006.

This report is presented in four sections. The first section documents how, where and the extent to which program objectives are addressed in course syllabi. The second section contains a review of programs, curricular offerings and characteristics of program applicants that were admitted to the program. The third section documents the findings of a formal follow-up study of program graduates and assesses their perceptions and evaluations of major aspects of the program, and the final section documents formal follow-up studies of clinical site supervisors and program graduate employers to assess their perceptions and evaluations of major aspects of the program.

***Section One-How, where and the extent to which program objectives are addressed in course syllabi.***

Each year, the program's core faculty ascertains the extent to which the program's objectives are being addressed by closely inspecting the current course syllabi used in the academic year being reviewed. As part of this process, all faculty members who provide instruction in the program are asked to engage in a self-study of their course(s) by reviewing their course syllabi in relation to the program objectives and by indicating which of the program objectives are being addressed within their course(s). Their data along with similar data from each of the other faculty is then transferred to a master matrix, which provides an overall summary of the extent to which program objectives are addressed in the various course syllabi.

In 2006 the program completed a self-study as the first step in a process to apply for accreditation through CACREP. The CACREP reviewers identified some courses they felt needed to incorporate more substantive information pertinent to the counseling field. Program faculty met individually with faculty of those courses and together such changes

were made and those courses now reflect and include more content that is pertinent to school counselors and better addresses the program objectives.

Table One is a chart that shows the alignment of the Program Objectives with these various course syllabi. The substance of this chart was found to have a very high degree of content validity. It was determined that the program goals/objectives are aligned with the goals/objectives of CACREP.

**Table One: Alignment of the Program Objectives to CACREP Objectives**

EPSY:	302	305	312	315	316	395	415	416	429	430	447	448
<b>Foundations</b>												
History				X	X							
Counseling, Other Programs		X		X	X							
Role, Function and Identity		X		X	X							
Leadership Strategies		X		X							X	
School Setting				X								
Issues				X	X	X					X	
Diversity Issues				X	X				X		X	
Opportunities and Barriers		X		X	X						X	X
Technology			X	X								
Ethical and Legal		X		X	X	X						
<b>Contextual Dimensions</b>												
Advocacy		X		X							X	
Coordination		X		X							X	X
School Counseling Program		X	X	X							X	
Integration												
Community Promotion		X		X							X	X
Planning and Presenting		X		X							X	X
Comprehensive School	X	X		X							X	X
Counseling Programs												
Crisis Prevention and Intervention				X	X							
<b>Knowledge and Skills</b>												
<b>1. Development, Implementation and Evaluation</b>												
School-based Data	X	X					X				X	X
Comprehensive Programs	X	X		X			X				X	
Strategies	X	X		X			X				X	
Student Competencies	X	X	X	X			X					
Action Plan/Calendar				X							X	
Program Funding				X								
Technology				X							X	
<b>2. Counseling and Guidance</b>												
Individual and Small Group	X	X		X	X							
Approaches												
Individual, Group and Classroom	X	X		X	X							
Peer Facilitation				X	X						X	
Development Issues					X		X	X				
Educational Transition Points				X	X							

Partnerships	X		X			X
Systems Theories	X		X	X		
Alcohol and Drug Use			X		X	X
<b>3. Consultation</b>						
Teamwork	X		X	X		
Consultation/Change Processes	X		X	X		X
Empowering			X			X
Conducting Programs	X	X	X			X

***Section Two: A review of programs, curricular offerings and characteristics of program applicants admitted to the program***

***Program and Curricular Offerings***

Each year, the program faculty reviews the syllabus from each course offered within the program as an overall form of quality control and to insure that the content of these courses is consistent with CACREP standards as well as with state and national standards for school counselor training and certification. As previously noted, adjustments were made to courses that needed modifications to better respond to the needs of school counselors. In the opinion of the program faculty, all the courses in the curriculum are now consistent with CACREP standards as well as with state and national standards for school counselor training and certification. Copies of the syllabi for each course from the 2006-07 academic year are available upon request by contacting the program coordinator, Dr. Orv C. Karan at [Orv.Karan@uconn.edu](mailto:Orv.Karan@uconn.edu).

***Characteristics of Applicants Admitted to the Program***

The deadline for application for admission for the subsequent fall semester is February 15. Students are notified concerning their application status by April 15. Because the focus of the program is to prepare school counselors to work with poor and minority youth, the program is attempting to attract a student body of graduate students that matches the diversity of the student bodies found within urban public schools. Once a student is admitted to the program the attrition rate is lower than 5% and is generally due to a student’s change of aspirations, career goals, or personal reasons.

The applicant pool based on applications received for admission during the 2007-2008 academic year consisted of 42 individuals. From this pool a total of 21 (i.e., 50%) were offered admission. Table Two contains demographic information pertinent to the characteristics of the students admitted for 2007-2008. Of the 21 students admitted, 7 (33%) were male, and 7 (33%) represented themselves as non-white. They ranged in age from 21 to 46 years.

**Table Two: Demographic Information Pertinent to the Characteristics of the Program Applicants**

Gender	Ethnic/Culture
F	White
F	White
F	Hispanic
F	White
F	White
F	Asian
F	African American
F	White
F	White
F	White
F	White
F	White
F	African American
F	White
M	Deaf
M	White
M	White
M	White
M	Hispanic
M	African American
M	White

***Section Three: Graduate Follow-up***

The faculty of The School Counseling Program selected and modified a survey that had been developed by the previous Assistant Dean of Assessment for the Neag School of Education (NSoE) and used two years ago with all alumni of NSoE. A total of 46 individuals were identified to receive mail requesting them to complete a series of Graduate Program Survey Questions. Out of this pool, a total of 20 respondents, 43.5%, completed the survey. The survey was designed to ascertain the degree to which alumni felt prepared for their current job, and asked how the program could be further improved for future students. Six major sections were included in the survey.

The survey started with demographic variables including gender and race/ethnicity. Respondents were then given 17 questions related to current employment status. Next,

they were asked how their education actually helped them meet demands of their current job. A total of six questions were posed to assess this area using a scale from “1 to 5” with “5” indicating “very satisfied” and “1” indicating “very dissatisfied.” The fourth area of the survey had 25 questions tied to degree of satisfaction of skills and abilities acquired during their educational preparation. Similar to the above, a “1 to 5” scale was used. Next, six questions had alumni indicate their degree of agreement with statements about their educational experiences within the program. For example, they were asked; *Overall, faculty members were interested in the professional development of graduate students.* These statements were posed with a scale from “1 to 4” with “4” indicating “strongly agree” and “1” indicating “strongly disagree.” The survey concluded with questions about respondents’ satisfaction with overall education and career experiences, and qualitative questions regarding feedback to improve programs and experiences.

The participants’ data were entered into SPSS version 14.0 for Windows. Frequencies along with measures of central tendency and dispersion were produced on all quantitative data. The qualitative data collected from the survey’s open-ended questions were examined by entering them into Microsoft Word, and observing and cataloging common themes within participants’ answers.

Fourteen females and five males responded to the survey as well as one respondent who did not complete the survey’s demographic information section. Of those who did respond to this section, 18 (94.7%) respondents selected white in the race/ethnicity category.

Overall, results indicate that respondents are satisfied with both the program itself as well as with their levels of preparation for careers. All responding alumni are currently employed, the majority by public schools within Connecticut. Student responses on this survey indicate that they were generally satisfied with all aspects of their graduate programs. More specifically, responses indicate that alumni are generally satisfied with the preparation they received from their graduate programs as well as their educational experiences at UConn and their current careers. Most respondents echoed this theme in their short answer responses indicating that their graduate programs had prepared them for a successful career. Additionally, the majority of respondents stated that improvements could be made to the program by adding more services, building in more requirements, and including more topics in classes. Survey results generally indicate alumnae are pleased with the program. A more detailed report of the School Counseling Program Alumni Results is available upon request by contacting the program coordinator, Dr. Orv C. Karan at [Orv.Karan@uconn.edu](mailto:Orv.Karan@uconn.edu).

#### ***Section Four: Follow-up studies of clinical site supervisors and program graduate employers***

### *Clinical Site Supervisors*

The faculty wanted feedback regarding the perspectives of students' internship site supervisors on the internship experience. The entire population of current site supervisors was identified and participated in a survey designed to ascertain opinions about the School Counseling internship experience including its areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. Five major sections were included in the survey.

The survey started with four statements about what the internship experiences provided for the student and asked respondents to rate their levels of agreement on a scale from "1 to 5" with "5" indicating "strongly agree". Respondents were then given 11 statements related to students' responsibilities within the internship experience. For this section, respondents were asked to indicate if their internship students met these responsibilities by choosing "yes" or "no." Two additional sections followed utilizing the same "yes/no" response system. The first of these two sections contained eight statements about respondents' roles as internship site supervisors. Next, seven statements were included about the roles of the university supervisor during the internship experience. The survey also included qualitative questions regarding feedback to improve the internship experience.

The data resulting from the surveys were entered into SPSS version 14.0 for Windows. Frequencies along with measures of central tendency and dispersion were produced on all quantitative data. The qualitative data collected from the survey's open-ended questions were examined by entering them into Microsoft Word, and observing and cataloging common themes within participants' answers.

All 11 internship site supervisors for the School Counseling Program responded to a site supervisor perspective survey. Overall, results indicate that respondents felt the internship experience provided an active learning experience for students, a challenge for students to think for themselves, the opportunity for students to help them accomplish goals, and the opportunity for the students to perform independently. Additionally, the majority of site supervisors indicated that they felt that they and their students had fulfilled their roles and functions within the internship experience. However, opinions were mixed about how the university supervisor filled his role in the internship experience. The majority of respondents indicated that the university supervisor had conferred with them and the student at least once during the semester, had provided feedback to the student, and had clarified questions about the internship experience, but had not worked in cooperation with either the site supervisor or the students' core teachers.

In their short answer responses, site supervisors indicated that the greatest strength of the internship experience was that it provided invaluable real-world experience to students. Respondents also indicated that providing more experiences to the interns and increasing communication between site supervisors and UConn would improve the internship experience. Additionally, the majority of site supervisors indicated that they would accept another UConn intern in the future because their current interns were well-informed and worked well within the school. A more detailed report of the Site Supervisor Survey

Results is available upon request by contacting the program coordinator, Dr. Orv C. Karan at [Orv.Karan@uconn.edu](mailto:Orv.Karan@uconn.edu).

**Findings.** Internships add a “real life” component for this program. As evidenced by survey results, it is a positive experience that students and site supervisors like.

### ***Program Graduate Employers***

In the spring of 2007 employers of graduates from The School Counseling Program responded to a survey, which asked them to rate their employees’ job performance criteria. A pool was created out of names of individuals identified as an employer by alumnae of the School Counseling Program and for whom the alumnus gave permission to contact his/her employer. Out of this pool, a total of eight respondents, 72.7%, completed the survey.

The survey ascertained how well employers rated the job performances of School Counseling Program graduates. Four major sections were included in the survey.

The survey started with a section asking employers to rate their employee’s present performance. Twenty-two statements were included to assess this area using a scale from “0 to 5” with “5” indicating “excellent” and “0” indicating “not applicable.” The next section of the survey had nine statements tied to the employee’s level of professional development. Similar to the above, a “0 to 5” scale was used. Next, four questions had employers rate their employee’s leadership skills. Again, a “0 to 5” scale was used. The survey concluded with five statements about the employee’s counseling style. These statement were rated on a “0 to 5” scale with “5” indicating “always” and “0” indicating “not applicable.”

Participants were given two weeks to complete and return the survey. The data were entered into SPSS version 14.0 for Windows. Frequencies along with measures of central tendency and dispersion were produced on all quantitative data.

Overall, results indicate that employers rate their employees well regarding their job performance. The majority of employers rated their employees’ performance as excellent with regard to showing consideration and fairness in relations with pupils as well as with relating students’ physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development to planning and counseling. A majority of respondents also rated their employees’ performance as very good with regard to working effectively with exceptional children; developing and maintaining good relations with parents; promoting thinking and study skills necessary for independent learning; planning and organizing lessons and activities effectively; and stimulating students’ interest.

Additionally, the majority of employers rated the graduates as “excellent” with regard to acting in a professional and ethical manner as well as cooperating with others in planning instruction. Most employers also rated their employees as “very good” with regard to their commitment to the profession. Employers were also asked to rate criteria regarding

their employees' leadership skills. No ratings fell below "good" for these criteria. In fact, the majority of the criterion rating fell in either the "excellent" or the "very good" categories.

Finally, employers were asked to rate criteria regarding the graduates' counseling styles. Most employers indicated that their employees favor a wide range of counseling approaches including a balance of large group, small group, and individual sessions most of the time. All other criteria for this section were rated as occurring between most of the time and seldom. A more detailed report of the Employer Survey Results is available upon request by contacting the program coordinator, Dr. Orv C. Karan at [Orv.Karan@uconn.edu](mailto:Orv.Karan@uconn.edu).

Findings. Survey results generally indicate employers are pleased with the program.

### **Summary:**

The major findings from this program evaluation are as follows:

1. The program's goals/objectives are aligned with the goals/objectives of CACREP.
2. The courses in the curriculum are consistent with CACREP standards as well as with state and national standards for school counselor training and certification.
3. There is an increasing diversity represented by the program applicants as well as among those admitted to the program
4. Program graduates are satisfied with both the program itself as well as with their levels of preparation for their careers. All responding alumni were currently employed, the majority by public schools within Connecticut. Alumni were generally satisfied with all aspects of their graduate programs. More specifically, they were generally satisfied with the preparation they received from their graduate programs as well as their educational experiences at UConn and their current careers.
5. Internships add a "real life" component to this program. As evidenced by survey results, it is a positive experience that students and site supervisors like.
6. Employers are pleased with the program.

