

**Comprehensive Program Review Self-Study
M.Ed. School Counseling**

**Columbus State University
September 2005**

Executive Summary for the M.Ed. School Counseling Program

Major Findings of the Program's Quality and Productivity

Program Quality: Very Strong

In February 2005, a continuing approval review of the College of Education was conducted by a Board of Examiners (BOE) consisting of representatives from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC). The 2000 NCATE Standards and the Georgia 2000 Standards were used to assess the unit and its programs. The BOE judged all standards to be met for the unit and for all initial and advanced programs.

Overall, the M.Ed. program in School Counseling is very strong and prepares highly qualified school counselors in elementary, middle, and secondary school settings who possess the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to promote academic, career, and personal/social development in all P-12 students. The program has been and continues to receive national accreditation by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

Program Productivity: Strong

The numbers of candidates in the School Counseling program has averaged 32.25 and are higher than or comparable to most other M.Ed. programs offered in the College of Education with the exception of Educational Leadership and Middle Grades Education. The number of M.Ed. candidates has remained relatively steady over the course of the last four years (39, 30, 24, and 36, respectively) despite the implementation of more stringent and consistent admissions standards. In addition, the number of M.Ed. degrees conferred through the School Counseling program is similar to graduation rates of many other M.Ed. programs in the College of Education with an average of nine graduates each year from 2001-2005.

The oversight of the M.Ed. program in school counseling is provided primarily by counseling faculty and in collaboration with adjunct faculty and the Program Advisory Committee who offer input in curricular matters. Program content, even with ongoing review, remains in alignment with CACREP, ASCA, and Board of Regents of The University System of Georgia (BOR) Standards.

List of Recommendations for Improving Program Quality

Though the program quality is very strong, we continue to look for ways to make improvements. Current initiatives include:

- Supporting efforts of the Counseling Student Association (CoSA) and Chi Sigma Iota National Honor Society to continue offerings of service and scholarly activities.
- Maintaining compliance with CACREP standards.
- Continuing to focus on enhancing program diversity.
- Continuing further integration into the Partner School Network, including possible training and research activities.
- Exploring the possibility of moving to a stricter cohort structure to tighten program of study and increase the number of classes students will have with full-time faculty.

- Continuing to seek monies and other resources to support faculty and student professional development opportunities and research.
- Maintaining faculty representation at Board of Regents initiatives to ensure compliance with standards and collaboration with partners in the education of P-12 students.
- Enhancing assessment strategies that are related to field experiences and also that reflect integration of CACREP, BOR, and NCATE/PSC standards.
- Expanding recruitment efforts to continue obtaining quality applicants.
- Continuing to strengthen admissions, orientation, and exit processes to support gate-keeping procedures reflective of candidates, knowledge, skills, and dispositions.
- Continuing staffing meetings each semester to enhance assessment of student progress.
- Assessing EDUF 6795, Collaboration for School/Student Improvement, a new course where candidates from the educational leadership, counseling, and teaching programs work together in devising collaborative strategies for improving schools and student achievement, to see where enhancements may be made.

List of Recommendations for Improving Program Productivity

Counseling program faculty, in collaboration with the School Counseling Program Advisory Committee and/or members of the Partner School Network, will oversee efforts to improve the curriculum, courses, and resources offered to counselors-in-training. Recommendations to improve program productivity are to:

- Continue aligning coursework with CACREP standards, while maintaining compliance with BOR initiatives and NCATE/PSC standards, is likely to help the program remain competitive with other nationally-accredited programs such as those at The University of Georgia and Georgia State University.
- Hire additional faculty members to balance resources with training and administrative demands.
- Continue focusing on enhancing program diversity, which is likely to attract a larger pool of quality applicants.
- Integrate further into the Partner School Network, including possible training and research activities, to foster productivity across multiple domains.
- Explore a more comprehensive cohort structure to tighten program-of-study issues.

Conclusion about the Program's Viability at CSU

The M.Ed. School Counseling program at CSU is a viable one. As indicated by the evaluation of the NCATE/PSC Board of Examiners in February 2005, the quality of the program is very strong. All NCATE/PSC standards were judged to be met for this program. In addition, program quality is enhanced by the fact that it is accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP). In fact, in a letter to President Frank Brown from CACREP Executive Director, Dr. Carol L. Bobby, dated August 2, 2004, Dr. Bobby noted that CACREP voted to extend the accredited status of both the School and Community Counseling Programs through June 30, 2009. Furthermore, the School Counseling Program received favorable feedback last month from the Board of Regents about compliance with the BOR's Principles and Actions for the training of school counselors.

Viability of the program is further supported in the integration with the College of Education's Partner School Network and in collaboration with other COE personnel and counselors in P-12

schools (e.g., through the Program Advisory Committee). Also worth noting is the fact that graduates of the Community Counseling Program and the counseling program at Troy State University often apply for post-graduate certification in school counseling through this department.

As the only USG institution within a 90-mile radius of Columbus that offers a CACREP-accredited master’s degree in school counseling, CSU provides candidates in its service region an opportunity to gain quality training in counseling. This is an opportunity that they might not have if CSU did not offer this degree program.

Program Improvement Plan

In response to the findings of the Comprehensive Program Review, the faculty members and administrators of the M.Ed. in School Counseling propose the strategies outlined below to improve the quality, productivity and viability of the program. These strategies will be facilitated by the School Counseling Program Advisory Committee (PAC).

<i>Departmental Plans and Priorities</i>	<i>CPR Indicator</i>	<i>Projected Timeline</i>
1. Refine the College of Education Recruitment Plan to focus on specific methods for recruiting School Counseling graduate students from diverse backgrounds	Productivity Viability	2006-2007
2. Explore various funding sources to provide scholarships for students seeking advanced degrees in School Counseling	Productivity Viability	2006-Ongoing
3. Continue further integration of School Counseling candidates and faculty into the Partner School Network, including possible training, networking and recruitment activities	Quality Productivity Viability	2006-Ongoing
4. Enhance assessment strategies related to field experiences that reflect integration of CACREP, BOR and NCATE/PSC Standards	Quality	2006-Ongoing
5. Refine and assess the quality of EDUF 6795: Collaboration for School/Student Improvement	Quality	2006-Ongoing

The Interim Dean and the Vice President for Academic Affairs have reviewed the plan and will commit financial and personnel resources to accomplish priorities 1, 3, 4, and 5 for program improvement. Resources from external funding will be necessary to support priority 2. The Program Coordinator will communicate additional resource requests as needed to the appropriate administrator within the College of Education at Columbus State University.

Summary Recommendation and Supporting Rationale

Recommendation: *Maintain and Strengthen the Program*

The program quality is very strong, and graduates are successful in securing employment. Recent program reviews by CACREP, NCATE/PSC, and the BOR all support the strength of the program. Increasing faculty resources should serve to enhance teaching, supervision, research, assessment, and other administrative functions related to this program. Similarly, support for reducing numbers and moving to more of a cohort structure would alleviate some of the pressures associated with those issues noted above.

I. Program Overview

The initial certification program in school counseling prepares highly qualified school counselors in elementary, middle, and secondary school settings who possess the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to promote academic, career, and personal/social development in all P-12 students. The program has been and continues to receive national accreditation by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The 48-semester-hour degree program is designed around the eight core areas of (1) Human Growth and Development, (2) Social and Cultural Foundations, (3) The Helping Relationship, (4) Group Dynamics and Processes, (5) Lifestyle/Career Development, (6) Appraisal of Individuals, (7) Research and Evaluation, and (8) Professional Orientation. The program is aimed to prepare students to design and implement comprehensive developmental school counseling programs. Curricular experiences include clinical supervision of a 100-hour practicum and two 300-hour internships in a school setting. The program leading to the M.Ed. in School Counseling is designed also to prepare students for state certification in School Counseling (neither teaching experience nor teacher certification is required for admission to the program).

In core, concentration, field experiences, and elective courses, candidates have multiple opportunities to demonstrate excellence in counseling and guidance, research, and professionalism. Creating opportunities for candidates to demonstrate excellence in these three areas is consistent with the COE Conceptual Framework and is reflected in the broad goals of the school counseling program. These goals are briefly summarized as:

School Counselor candidates:

1. Advocate for school policies, programs and services that are equitable and responsive to cultural differences among students.
2. Advocate for rigorous academic preparation of all students to close the achievement gaps among demographic groups.
3. Coordinate a school to career transition plan for each student.
4. Provide leadership in the development, implementation, evaluation, and revision of a comprehensive school counseling plan that contributes to school renewal by promoting increased academic success, career preparedness, and social/emotional development for all students.
5. Use student outcome data to facilitate student academic success.
6. Provide individual and group counseling and classroom guidance that promote academic success, social/emotional development, and career preparedness for all students.
7. Collaborate with other professionals in the development of staff training, family support, and appropriate community initiatives that address student needs.
8. Assess student needs and make appropriate referrals to school and/or community resources.
9. Demonstrate mastery and application of the content knowledge in each of the following eight core areas of counseling recommended by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP): (1) Professional Identity and Orientation; (2) Social and Cultural Diversity; (3) Human Growth and Development; (4)

Career Development; (5) Helping Relationships; (6) Group Work; (7) Assessment and Evaluation; and (8) Research and Program Evaluation.

These goals are congruent with CACREP standards and American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) National Standards [Campbell, C. A., & Dahir, C. A. (1997). *Sharing the vision: The national standards for school counseling programs*. Alexandria, VA: American School Counselor Association.].

The department has been offering an Ed.S. program in School Counseling. However, the department has instituted an admissions hold on this program, and plans are in place to explore deactivation. These decisions have been made as a result of having inadequate resources to support this program, compounded by recent changes made to the Educational Leadership program, which has been providing curricular sustenance for this counseling program.

The School Counseling program is housed in the College of Education at Columbus State University. Responsibility for preparing candidates lies primarily with faculty in the Department of Counseling, Educational Leadership, and Professional Studies. A professional core, a concentration of counseling-specific classes, and electives—together with a 700-hour set of field experiences—comprise the program. Significant features of the program are:

- Nine hours in a professional core of coursework (including COUN 6115: Introduction to Professional Counseling; COUN 6225: Counseling Skills I; and EDUF 6116: Research Methods/Action Research)
- Thirty-six hours of courses in a concentration in counseling designed to integrate recurring issues across all domains of the counseling profession, while also addressing new, relevant content issues to the school counseling curriculum
- A course focusing specifically on multicultural counseling (this content is also infused into all other courses)
- 700 clock hours of intensive, clinically-supervised field experiences
- a curriculum designed to assist students in gaining exposure to and proficiency with technology as it relates to enhancing the provision of school counseling services
- a new course for school counseling, educational leadership, and teacher candidates geared towards enhancing collaboration among all school personnel

Each candidate in the School Counseling program is assigned an advisor, a full-time Counseling faculty member. Furthermore, candidates meet with the Practicum and Internship Coordinator prior to applying for field experiences in order to facilitate appropriate placements. Counseling faculty also hold annual staffings in order to monitor student progress so that any problems needing remedial attention can be addressed with students. In addition, candidates receive assistance with certification issues from the Office of Student Services and Field Experiences in the College of Education.

During semesters when students are placed in practicum and internship, candidates are placed with an experienced site supervisor and assigned a university supervisor. CACREP places guidelines on the field experiences and supervision requirements.

II. Summary Findings of the Program's Overall Quality

In February 2005, a continuing approval review of the College of Education was conducted by a Board of Examiners (BOE) consisting of representatives from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC). The 2000 NCATE Standards were used to assess the unit and its programs. The BOE judged all standards to be met for the unit and for all initial and advanced programs. Following is a summary of the findings taken from the BOE final report.

Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions

Assessment data from Praxis I, Praxis II, GPAs, MAP evaluations, exit examinations, and national licensing exams indicate that teacher candidates know their subject matter and candidates for other school roles know their fields, both of which are aligned with professional, state, and institutional standards. MAP evaluations and the Disposition Evaluation Form give evidence that candidates and other school personnel know their subject matter and can deliver information in a clear and meaningful way so that all students enhance their academic development.

Areas for Improvement: Candidates in Art Education, Biology, Chemistry, and French do not demonstrate content mastery.

Rationale: While overall more than 80 percent of the candidates in the unit have passed their respective content licensure exams, fewer than 80 percent of candidates in Art Education, Biology, Chemistry, and French passed their respective content licensure exams. Note: Chemistry and French had only one program completer each over the past three years.

Standard 2: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation

The unit maintains a comprehensive assessment system for the initial and advanced levels to ensure the systematic collection of data, providing opportunities for the unit to analyze, evaluate, and improve the quality of programs, unit operations, and candidate performance. The assessment systems reflect the conceptual framework and are aligned with INTASC, NBPTS, and CACREP standards as well as specialty professional associations. The unit utilizes information technologies to effectively collect and aggregate data for candidate, program, and unit improvement.

Standard 3: Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

All of the unit's programs that prepare candidates to become teachers or fill other roles as members of the education profession include field work/clinical practice as an integral part. Use of the MAP Evaluation Instrument and the Dispositions Evaluations that connect with the Conceptual Framework supports the work of the unit and provides scaffolding so that candidates acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed by those who are in professional education roles. Candidates are also surrounded by experienced, caring, competent professionals representing both the University and P-12 partners. Innovations such as the use of information technology for scheduling and tracking candidate progress in a very flexible and comprehensive database, the STEADY new teacher mentoring program, and the refinement of the Partner School Network enhance the quality of the program and its graduates.

Standard 4: Diversity

The unit has clearly defined its candidate dispositions related to diversity, and these dispositions are assessed throughout required coursework in the initial and advanced programs. Three of the 32 unit faculty represent diversity. The diversity of candidates in unit programs roughly mirrors that of the university and service area as a whole. Because of the racial and ethnic diversity in the university's service area, initial and advanced candidates also work with a broadly diverse population of P-12 students.

Areas for Improvement: The college has not been successful in recruiting and retaining a diverse faculty.

Rationale: Even though efforts have been made to recruit additional minority faculty, currently there are three minority faculty in the unit. While this constitutes a slight improvement from 1998, a significant impact has not been made to ensure that candidates have the opportunity to work with diverse faculty.

Standard 5: Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development

Unit faculty have extensive academic backgrounds. Eighty-four percent (84%) of the full-time faculty, and seventeen percent (17%) of the part-time faculty hold terminal degrees while the remaining faculty either are working to complete doctoral studies or have master's degrees. Unit faculty are effective teachers who model best teaching practices in their areas of specialty. Most faculty have been engaged in scholarly activities and service activities to the local, state, regional, national, and international communities. All full-time tenured and non-tenured faculty are systematically and annually evaluated by their department chair, personnel committee, unit dean, and throughout the university input system. The faculty serve on committees and boards at the university and in the local community. They are also involved in local, state, and national professional associations. The unit has an expectation of professional growth/development of both full-time and part-time faculty, and faculty concur with the expectation by attending workshops and conferences, reading journals, and conducting research.

Areas for Improvement: Part-time faculty are not systematically evaluated.

Rationale: There is no systematic process for evaluating part-time faculty across the unit.

Standard 6: Unit Governance and Resources

The unit has the responsibility for authority for the delivery of the preparation of all professional educators. Systems and processes are in place to ensure that all constituencies are represented in the design, delivery and assessment of unit programs. Facilities, personnel and budget are adequate to meet the needs of candidates, faculty and programs. The unit does not require part-time faculty who teach or supervise student teachers to attend an orientation/training session on the conceptual framework or the use of the disposition or MAP rubrics.

Areas for Improvement: Not all part-time faculty are adequately trained on assessments used to evaluate candidates.

Rationale: The unit cannot ensure that part-time faculty have the requisite knowledge and skills to effectively assess candidates.

III. Summary Findings of the Program's Overall Productivity

III A. Enrollment of Students in the Program

The enrollment pattern for the M.Ed. program in School Counseling is shown in Table 3.1.

	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Full-Time	7	5	10	13
Part-Time	32	25	14	23
<i>Total</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>36</i>

Table 3.1 Number of Declared Majors in M.Ed. School Counseling – Fall Semester

The majority of students in the M.Ed. program are part-time students who work at least part time, although the number of full-time graduate students is increasing. The total enrollment has remained relatively consistent over the last several years, despite the implementation of more stringent and consistent admissions standards. Furthermore, the program of study has been revised since 2001-2002 to reduce the number of times courses are offered each year and to tailor the program more consistently around two entry points (although students are still being admitted three times per year), reducing the number of adjunct faculty employed and creating more of a cohort effect among students entering the program.

Table 3.2 shows the total enrollment in all M.Ed. programs housed in the College of Education at CSU. The numbers indicate that enrollment in the M.Ed. School Counseling program has been comparable to the enrollment in most other education programs, with the exception of Middle Grades Education.

Program	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Community Counseling	40	41	33	47
Early Childhood Education	26	25	24	22
Educational Leadership	50	52	51	36
Health & Physical Education	10	13	11	11
Middle Grades Education	29	50	53	58
School Counseling	39	30	24	36
Secondary English	9	24	33	27
Secondary Mathematics	12	13	21	20
Secondary Science	13	22	20	17
Secondary Social Science	7	19	22	15
Special Education – Behavioral Disorders	15	15	18	16
Special Education – Learning Disabilities	22	33	28	31
Special Education – Mental Retardation	10	17	8	8

Table 3.2 Number of Declared Majors in COE M.Ed. Programs – Fall Semester

The oversight of the M.Ed. program in school counseling is provided primarily by counseling faculty and in collaboration with adjunct faculty and the Program Advisory Committee who offer input in curricular matters. Program content, even with ongoing review, remains in alignment with CACREP, ASCA, and Board of Regents of The University System of Georgia (BOR) Standards.

III B. Annual Degree Productivity of the Program

Table 3.3 indicates that the number of M.Ed. degrees conferred each year in School Counseling is relatively comparable to most other graduate programs in the College of Education.

Program	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Community Counseling	21	19	13	12
Early Childhood Education	12	9	11	11
Educational Leadership	9	28	16	37
Health & Physical Education	1	3	6	6
Middle Grades Education	10	10	10	26
School Counseling	16	8	4	8
Secondary English	7	3	6	16
Secondary Mathematics	5	1	4	3
Secondary Science	1	4	6	10
Secondary Social Science	1	4	5	2
Special Education – Behavioral Disorders	7	5	8	3
Special Education – Learning Disabilities	10	8	13	7
Special Education – Mental Retardation	3	3	1	3

Table 3.3 Number of Degrees Conferred – Fiscal Year

There may be several factors contributing to the small number of degrees conferred each year.

1. Many students work full or part-time. Getting through the program often takes longer than the full-time program of study that is just over two years because of state certification requirements and the fact that field experiences cannot be completed during the summer term.
2. The M.Ed. program is an initial-certification program, which is greater in intensity than a program allowing for add-on certification.
3. Almost all master's programs in the College of Education require 36 semester hours. The M.Ed. in School Counseling requires 48 semester hours, given the CACREP accreditation.
4. There is only one faculty member assigned to the School Counseling program (another faculty member does offer advising support to M.Ed. students, and all four faculty members teach across both master's programs); therefore, departmental resources are already stretched to accommodate the number of students currently admitted and graduating.

III C. Program Completion Efficiency & Graduation Rate

Table 3.4 shows the graduation rates for all M.Ed. programs housed in the College of Education at CSU.

Program	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Community Counseling	53%	46%	39%	26%
Early Childhood Education	46%	36%	46%	50%
Educational Leadership	18%	54%	31%	103%
Health & Physical Education	10%	23%	55%	55%
Middle Grades Education	34%	20%	19%	45%
School Counseling	41%	27%	17%	22%
Secondary English	78%	13%	18%	59%
Secondary Mathematics	42%	8%	19%	15%
Secondary Science	8%	18%	30%	59%
Secondary Social Science	14%	21%	23%	13%
Special Education – Behavioral Disorders	47%	33%	44%	19%
Special Education – Learning Disabilities	45%	24%	46%	23%
Special Education – Mental Retardation	30%	18%	13%	38%

Table 3.4 Graduation Rate

With three entry points each year, graduation rates tend to fluctuate as students complete their programs of study at varying paces. While the program has attempted to redesign the course offerings to create more of a cohort effect, these multiple entry points and the fact that some students elect to engage in part-time study tend to make graduation rates difficult to predict. Again, other factors impacting graduation rates include the facts that (1) the M.Ed. program is an initial-certification program, which is greater in intensity than a program allowing for add-on certification; and (2) almost all master’s programs in the College of Education require 36 semester hours, while the M.Ed. in School Counseling requires 48 semester hours. Furthermore, students who do not hold teaching certification prior to enrolling in the M.Ed. program in School Counseling must complete additional requirements for initial certification.

Despite the need for faculty resources, the program maintains focus on providing quality graduates to impact the personal/social, career, and academic development of students in P-12 schools, as well as preparing graduates to have the requisite education to eventually apply for state licensure as professional counselors. In the last several years, the program has received favorable reviews from PSC/NCATE accreditation and the Board of Regents report, and CACREP assessment resulted in the decision to reaccredit both the School and Community Counseling programs. Therefore, program improvement is an ongoing goal of the M.Ed. program. Other program improvement plans include seeking additional faculty resources and exploring the movement to a more structured cohort model.

COUN 6117		1			1	1		1	1		1	1	
COUN 6118						1	1		1	1		1	1
COUN 6119					1		1			1			1
COUN 6155	1	1		1	1			1			1		
COUN 6175		1	1		1			1			1		
COUN 6187	1		1	1		1		1			2		
COUN 6225	1	1	1	1		1	1			1		1	1
COUN 6245	1	1		1		1	1		1	1		1	1
COUN 6255	1			1			1			1			1
COUN 6265		1	1	1	1		1	1		1	1		1
COUN 6405	4	2	6	1	1	3			4			4	
COUN 6415	5	2		2	1		1	3		2	1		2
COUN 6555	1	1		1			1			1	1		1
COUN 6555		1			1			1			1		
COUN 6555			1			1			1			1	
COUN 6555	2	1	2	2	2	1	1		1	2			1
COUN 6697	5	4		3	3		1	1		2	4		3
COUN 6698	6	6		4	4		3	2		4	3		4
COUN 6785	1	1		1	1			1			1		
COUN 6786	1			1	1		1			1			1
COUN 6899	1	1	1	1	1					1	1		1
COUN 7165		1			1			1			1		
COUN 7175			1		1					1			
COUN 7185			1			1			1			1	
COUN7215			1			1			1			1	
COUN 7275		1	1										
COUN 7275	1			1			1			1			1
COUN 7285	1			1			1			1			1
COUN 7286			1			1			1			1	
COUN 7698	2												
EDUF 6116	3	7	6	7	4	5	4	5	5	2	4	3	2
EDUF 6795										1	1	1	1

Table 3.5 Frequency of Course Offerings

The recommended course of study follows a developmental sequence. While students may elect to deviate to some degree from the sequence with advisor approval, students entering during summer term and engaging in full-time study are recommended to follow this suggested course outline:

SUMMER I

COUN 6115	Ethics and Professional Issues in Counseling	3 hours
COUN 6225	Counseling Skills	3 hours

FALL I

COUN 6119	Human Growth and Development	3 hours
EDUF 6116	Research Methods/Action Research	3 hours
COUN 6265	Group Techniques and Procedures	3 hours
EDUF 6795	Collaboration for School/Student Improvement	1 hour

SPRING I

COUN 6155	Counseling Theory	3 hours
COUN 6187	School Counseling Services	3 hours
COUN 6117	Diagnosis in Counseling	3 hours

SUMMER II

COUN 6245	Individual Analysis	3 hours
Elective		3 hours

FALL II

COUN 6118	Career Development	3 hours
COUN 6415	Applied Practice in School Counseling	3 hours
Elective		2 hours
<u>SPRING II</u>		
COUN 6697	Internship in School Counseling	3 hours
COUN 6175	Cultural Perspectives in Counseling	3 hours
<u>FALL III</u>		
COUN 6697	Internship in School Counseling	3 hours

Note: minimum of 48 semester hours required; SPED and INTECH requirements for certification must be met prior to graduation

The recommended sequence for fall entry is:

<u>FALL I</u>		
COUN 6115	Ethics and Professional Issues in Counseling	3 hours
COUN 6225	Counseling Skills	3 hours
EDUF 6116	Research Methods/Action Research	3 hours
<u>SPRING I</u>		
COUN 6155	Counseling Theory	3 hours
COUN 6265	Group Techniques and Procedures	3 hours
COUN 6187	School Counseling Services	3 hours
<u>SUMMER I</u>		
COUN 6118	Career Development	3 hours
COUN 6117	Diagnosis in Counseling	3 hours
EDUF 6795	Collaboration for School/Student Improvement	1 hour
<u>FALL II</u>		
COUN 6119	Human Growth and Development	3 hours
COUN 6415	Applied Practice in School Counseling	3 hours
Elective		
<u>SPRING II</u>		
COUN 6697	Internship in School Counseling	3 hours
COUN 6175	Cultural Perspectives in Counseling	3 hours
<u>SUMMER II</u>		
COUN 6245	Individual Analysis	3 hours
Elective		
<u>FALL III</u>		
COUN 6697	Internship in School Counseling	3 hours

Note: minimum of 48 semester hours required; SPED and INTECH requirements for certification must be met prior to graduation

Prerequisites for practicum and internship include:

COUN 6115 Ethics/Professional Issues in Counseling
COUN 6225 Counseling Skills I

- COUN 6155 Counseling Theory
- COUN 6187 School Counseling Services
- COUN 6265 Group Techniques and Procedures
- COUN 6117 Diagnosis in Counseling

In AY 2002-2003, the program of study was modified in order to reduce the number of sections of courses offered annually. This revision was made to create more of a “cohort” structure, encouraging students to take certain classes at more predictable times, and to reduce the number of adjunct faculty required. While evidence regarding the impact of a cohort structure on program efficiency does not currently exist, further exploration of a more structured cohort model is currently underway.

III F. Enrollment in the Program’s Required Courses

Table 3.6 shows the average enrollment per section for required courses in the M.Ed. School Counseling program. All M.Ed. students in the College of Education must take EDUF 6116 and EDUF 6795, so average enrollments in these courses are higher. Enrollments in COUN 6115 and COUN 6225 provide the best indicator of the number of students admitted in Community and School Counseling; whereas enrollments in COUN 6415 and COUN 6697 illustrate the number of students nearing completion of their degree in School Counseling. Due to CACREP accreditation, the program desires the opportunity to cap courses at a limit of 12-15, as “the recommended ration of FTE students to FTE faculty is 10:1” (Section V – Organization and Administration, Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs 2001 Standards, <http://www.counseling.org/cacrep/2001standards700.htm>). CACREP also endorses a 1:5 faculty:student ratio in field experiences (COUN 6415 and 6697). As stated in the previous section, “In AY 2002-2003, the program of study was modified in order to reduce the number of sections of courses offered annually. This revision was made to create more of a ‘cohort’ structure, encouraging students to take certain classes at more predictable times, and to reduce the number of adjunct faculty required. Further exploration of a more structured cohort model is currently underway” (Gillam, Section III E). Supporting a more predictable set of course offerings has also made summer course cancellations less frequent.

Average Enrollment Per Section													
Course ID	F 01	S P 05	S P 05	F 05	S P 05	S P 05	F 05	S P 05	S P 05	F 05	S P 05	S P 05	F 05
COUN 6115	17		10	14		8	19	10	12	17		10	12
COUN 6117		15			13	8		10	14		12	18	
COUN 6118						7	6		14	15		16	13
COUN 6119					5		15			24			28
COUN 6155	5	10		11	11			17			29		
COUN 6175		21	8		13			21			27		
COUN 6187	4		5	8		8		10			9		
COUN 6225	12	5	13	9		11	17			25		14	15
COUN 6245	15	7		6		12	5		16	3		17	12
COUN 6265	9	12		15	9		12	12		19	18		18
COUN 6415	3.5	3		2.5	1		3	2.7		3.5	2		4.5
COUN 6697	3.4	4		3.7	2.3		5	3		5	3.8		3.7
COUN 6786	9			9	6		10			10			12
EDUF 6116	25	8.8	12.2	7	13	16	13.5	19	18	25.5	14.7	17	21
EDUF 6795										35	12	16	65

Table 3.6 Average Enrollment in the Program’s Required Courses

III G. Diversity of the Program's Majors and Graduates

Table 3.7 shows the gender and ethnic origin of students in the M.Ed. School Counseling program. Overall, the student enrollment by gender has been 96% female and 4% male. The overall student enrollment by gender when combining both School and Community Counseling programs has been 85% female and 15% male. Women tend to select School Counseling as a major more frequently than do men. This finding is not unusual when making anecdotal comparisons to counseling programs in other locations.

Based on Columbus State University database categories, since Fall 2001, approximately 4% of the program's majors have been Asian, 22% have been Black, 1% has been Hispanic, and 73% have been White. Two international students have been in the program. CSU serves a population of approximately 501,401 in the nine-county service area that is 60% white and 34% black or African American. Thus, the percentage of minority students in the program does not coincide with the demographics of the community.

Gender	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Female	38 (97%)	29 (97%)	24 (100%)	33 (92%)
Male	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	3 (8%)
Ethnicity				
Asian	0	1 (3%)	2 (8%)	2 (6%)
Black	9 (23%)	5 (17%)	7 (29%)	8 (22%)
Hispanic	1 (3%)	0	0	0
Multi-Racial	0	0	0	0
White	29 (74%)	24 (80%)	15 (63%)	26 (72%)

Table 3.7 Ethnic and gender diversity among M.Ed. School Counseling majors

The gender and ethnic origin of program graduates since Fall 2001 is shown in Table 3.8. According to CSU figures, 100% of the program graduates overall since 2001 have been female. In general, though, the enrollment percentages by gender are consistent with the graduation rates by gender (96% female and 4% male).

According to CSU database categories, 74% of program graduates have been White, 23% have been Black, and 3% have been Asian. Although the percentage of minority students in the program does not coincide with the demographics of the community, these figures are congruent with enrollment patterns by race (73% White, 22% Black, and 4% Asian).

Gender	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Female	13 (100%)	7 (100%)	4 (100%)	7 (100%)
Male	0	0	0	0
Ethnicity				
Asian	0	0	0	1 (14%)
Black	3 (23%)	1 (14%)	1 (25%)	2 (29%)
Multi-Racial	0	0	0	0
White	10 (77%)	6 (86%)	3 (75%)	4 (57%)

Table 3.8 Ethnic and gender diversity among M.Ed. School Counseling graduates

Students in the M.Ed. program in School Counseling are from diverse age groups. The majority of students have been between 26 and 40 years of age. Table 3.11 shows the age composition of all M.Ed. students in the School Counseling program since 2001.

Age	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
21-25	7	4	9	10
26-30	10	8	6	12
31-40	15	11	4	8
41-50	4	4	2	4
51-60	3	3	3	2
Over 60	0	0	0	0
<i>Total</i>	39	30	24	36
<i>Average</i>	34.5	35.3	31.9	31.3

Table 3.11: Age diversity among M.Ed. School Counseling students

The larger number of students in the 26-40 age range might be due to the fact that some students are teachers who are choosing to make a career move to school counseling. They already possess real-world experience prior to enrolling in a graduate program.

It is important to note that students in the 21-25 age bracket constitute a significant proportion of the total candidate pool. This suggests that there is a population of students choosing to enter graduate school not long after completing an undergraduate degree.

CELPS faculty go to almost every public relations event and to schools to talk about the department's graduate programs to seek qualified applicants across all demographics.

III H. Cost-Effectiveness of Instructional Delivery in the Program's Home Department

As shown below in Tables 3.12 and 3.13, the budget for the Department Counseling, Educational Leadership, and Professional Studies represented approximately 4% of the total instructional costs for Columbus State University (CSU) from 2001 to 2004.

For the graduate programs in Educational Leadership and Counseling, the cost per major averaged \$3,456.00 from 2001-2005. During the same period, the average per capita cost for the university as \$3,744.57. In 2004-2005, the cost per credit was \$260.00 compared to \$162.15 for the institution. The higher cost per credit is due to the smaller number of students enrolled in graduate courses.

	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Department Budget	\$871,463	\$1,193,163	\$1,038,656	\$977,689
Cost Per Major (M.Ed. & Ed.S. Educational Leadership and Counseling) <i>(Pro-Rated Expenditures/Number of Declared Majors)</i>	\$1,823	\$5,029	\$2,686	\$4,286
Credit Hours Taught Fall and Spring (M.Ed. & Ed.S. Secondary Education majors)	1,047	867	792	1,203
Cost per Credit (M.Ed. & Ed.S. Educational Leadership and Counseling)	\$192	\$690	\$393	\$260

Table 3.12 Instructional Costs for the Department of Counseling, Educational Leadership, and Professional Studies

	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Instructional Costs	\$23,311,457.76	\$23,963,598.65	\$23,784,544.59	\$25,240,030.43
Total Credit Hours	116,543	133,777	148,797	155,654
Cost per Credit	\$200.02	\$179.13	\$159.85	\$162.15

Table 3.13 Total Instructional Costs at CSU

By tightening the program of study to reduce the number of times courses are offered annually, the enrollment in courses is more cost efficient than in the past and summer classes have been less likely to be cancelled due to low enrollment. Nonetheless, some courses (e.g., Counseling Skills 1, Group Techniques and Procedures, Individual Analysis), while cost efficient, generally contain numbers larger than desired from a pedagogical standpoint, particularly given that these courses all involve laboratory experiences.

III I. Program's Responsiveness to State Needs and Employer Demand for Program Graduates

Most graduates of the M.Ed. School Counseling are successful in finding counseling jobs shortly after graduation. Many graduates become employed in Muscogee and the surrounding counties or in the Atlanta area. To illustrate the employment trend, five students graduated last spring. Anecdotal evidence suggests that, of those five, four are employed as school counselors, and one is currently teaching by choice. In fact, the two most recent vacancies in the Partner School Network were recently filled by graduates of this program.

Unlike, for example, the need for teachers in mathematics or special education, counseling is not currently a critical needs field, but the demand for school counselors still exists, particularly in more rural parts of the state. The generation of graduates from this program appears to be on par at least with local/regional needs. Frequently the program coordinator will receive phone calls or letters from administrators or other district personnel who are searching for school counselors. Requests also come from community agency directors from time to time, as well. The Board of Regents Principles and Actions for the preparation of school counselors continues to stress rigorous accountability of school counseling training programs, and some colleges and universities may have to discontinue operation if they cannot meet those demands. As a result, it is anticipated that the need for CSU graduates might increase over time. In addition, as the school counseling program becomes further integrated into the Partner School Network, the program’s vision of Network needs will continue to crystallize.

III J. Position of the Program’s Annual Degree Productivity among Comparable USG Programs

Table 3.14 represents the School and Community Counseling degrees conferred by institution. CSU’s program ranks fifth out of the ten universities that confer degrees in School and Community Counseling. CSU is the only Georgia university within 90 miles that offers these degrees.

Institution	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Average
State Universities					
Albany State University	16	13	15	19	15.75
Augusta State University	15	12	16	20	15.75
Columbus State University	25	37	27	17	26.5
Fort Valley State University	19	17	25	21	20.5
North GA College & State University	0	9	0	0	2.25
State University of West Georgia	48	29	40	28	36.25
Regional/Research Universities					
Georgia Southern University	29	26	30	26	27.75
Valdosta State University	6	9	13	13	10.25
Georgia State University	90	94	106	116	101.5
The University of Georgia	37	31	31	38	34.25

Table 3.14 School and Community Counseling Degrees Conferred by Institution

III K. This Program’s Contribution to Achieving CSU’s Mission

The COE mission to prepare “*highly qualified teachers, counselors, and leaders who promote high levels of learning for all P-12 students by demonstrating excellence in teaching, scholarship, and professionalism...and [have] faculty guide individuals in this developmental process*” is consistent with the philosophy of a comprehensive, developmental model of school counseling programs present in the current national guidelines mentioned previously. In harmony with these ideas, the program emphasizes growth toward skillful “whole” performance in addition to mastery of discrete knowledge and skills. The program emphasizes that candidates

move through stages to become professionals who demonstrate the capacity to promote academic, career, and personal/social development in all P-12 students.

The program also reflects a respect for and valuing of *individuals*; thus, counselor education faculty treat individual differences among candidates such as age, career experiences and aspirations, and ethnicity as a resource. The value of diversity is also evident in instructional practices that enable students to benefit from interacting with others. In addition, candidates interact regularly with colleagues in the Community Counseling program, which fosters collaboration across settings.

Furthermore, the M.Ed. program in School Counseling helps CSU to accomplish its mission of serving the educational needs of a diverse region. By preparing highly-qualified counselors, the program helps to improve the quality of P-12 education and the quality of life in the institution's service area.

IV. Conclusion about the Program's Viability at CSU

The M.Ed. School Counseling program at CSU is a viable one. As indicated by the evaluation of the NCATE/PSC Board of Examiners in February 2005, the quality of the program is very strong. All NCATE/PSC standards were judged to be met for this program. In addition, program quality is enhanced by the fact that it is accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP). In fact, in a letter to President Frank Brown from CACREP Executive Director, Dr. Carol L. Bobby, dated August 2, 2004, Dr. Bobby noted that CACREP voted to extend the accredited status of both the School and Community Counseling Programs through June 30, 2009. Furthermore, the School Counseling Program received favorable feedback last month from the Board of Regents about compliance with the BOR's Principles and Actions for the training of school counselors.

Viability of the program is further supported in the integration with the College of Education's Partner School Network and in collaboration with other COE personnel and counselors in P-12 schools (e.g., through the Program Advisory Committee). Also worth noting is the fact that graduates of the Community Counseling Program and the counseling program at Troy State University often apply for post-graduate certification in school counseling through this department.

While the program is not large, CACREP accreditation supports smaller faculty:student ratios (e.g., the requirement of a 5:1 faculty:student ratio exists for supervision of field experiences). Furthermore, it is comparable in size with programs from other USG institutions with similar faculty resources (e.g., Georgia Southern University, Valdosta State University). Programs with larger graduation rates also have larger faculties and other resources to train school counselors. With only one faculty member designated specifically to school counseling administrative functions and only four counseling faculty members in total, the program is in desperate need of additional faculty to support the operation of the program, remain in compliance with CACREP standards, supervise field experiences of counselors-in-training, and adhere to Board of Regents Principles and Actions.

As the only USG institution within a 90-mile radius of Columbus that offers a CACREP-accredited master's degree in school counseling, CSU provides candidates in its service region an opportunity to gain quality training in counseling. This is an opportunity that they might not have if CSU did not offer this degree program.

V. Program Improvement Plan

Counseling program faculty, in collaboration with the School Counseling Program Advisory Committee and/or members of the Partner School Network, will oversee the following efforts to improve the curriculum, courses, and resources offered to counselors-in-training:

- Support efforts of the Counseling Student Association (CoSA) and Chi Sigma Iota National Honor Society to continue offerings of service and scholarly activities.
- Maintain compliance with CACREP standards.
- Continue to focus on enhancing program diversity.
- Continue further integration into the Partner School Network, including possible training and research activities.
- Explore possibility of moving to a stricter cohort structure to tighten program of study and increase the number of classes students will have with full-time faculty.
- Continue to seek monies and other resources to support faculty and student professional development opportunities and research.
- Maintain faculty representation at Board of Regents initiatives to ensure compliance with standards and collaboration with partners in the education of P-12 students.
- Enhance assessment strategies that are related to field experiences and also that reflect integration of CACREP, BOR, and NCATE/PSC standards.
- Expand recruitment efforts to continue obtaining quality applicants, including male applicants (which tend to be an underrepresented group in school counseling).
- Continue to strengthen admissions, orientation, and exit processes to support gate-keeping procedures reflective of candidates, knowledge, skills, and dispositions.
- Continue staffing meetings each semester to enhance assessment of student progress.
- Assessing EDUF 6795, Collaboration for School/Student Improvement, a new course where candidates from the educational leadership, counseling, and teaching programs work together in devising collaborative strategies for improving schools and student achievement, to see where enhancements may be made.

VI. Summary Recommendation

Recommendation: Maintain and Strengthen the Program

Despite the small number of degrees conferred each year, the program quality is very strong, and graduates are successful in securing employment. Recent program reviews by CACREP, NCATE/PSC, and the BOR all support the strength of the program. Increasing faculty resources should serve to enhance teaching, supervision, research, assessment, and other administrative functions related to this program. Similarly, support for reducing numbers and moving to more of a cohort structure would alleviate some of the pressures associated with those issues noted above. Currently, there is an imbalance of resources available for the education, training, and

administrative demands internal and external to Columbus State University. Efforts among graduate faculty members and the College of Education's Graduate Council, with collaboration and support from the administration, have already had an impact on important areas of graduate studies such as admissions/screening processes and consistency in course offerings, especially during summer terms. As Columbus State University continues to grow, it is encouraging to think that ongoing advocacy for graduate programs will enable these programs to sustain the support of candidates' educational needs in this service region and, perhaps, beyond.