

CPR Report Submitted!

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- 5 **Institution:** Columbus State University
- 6 **Review Status:** Non-triggered Review
- 7 **Degree level:** Masters
- 8 **Degree acronym:** MS
- 9 **Degree/Major:** MS in Community Counseling
- 10 **CIP Code:** 13110101
- 11 **College,**
 School/Division: College of Education
- 12 **Department:** Counseling, Ed Leadership, and Professional Studies
- 13 **CPR Plan**
 followed: Yes
- 14 **Future institutional**
 plans for program: Maintain at present level
- 15 **Supplemental file:** CC MS Exec-Sum.doc
- 16 **File Type:** MS Word
- 17 **CPR Web site:** aa.colstate.edu/assess/cprtbl.htm

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR M.S. in COMMUNITY COUNSELING

Major Findings of the Program's Quality and Productivity

Program Quality: Very Strong

The **MS program in Community Counseling** has received national accreditation from the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) since 1994 and is accredited through 2009. The program is designed to prepare individuals to function as professional counselors in a variety of community settings including mental health centers, community agencies, hospitals, residential treatment centers, correctional facilities, or other helping or human service oriented programs. Course work in the Community Counseling program prepares graduates for licensure as a professional counselor in the State of Georgia. A specialization in marriage and family therapy is also offered in the program with course work available to assist students in meeting requirements for state licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist. An additional specialty track in pastoral counseling is offered in collaboration with the Pastoral Institute, Columbus, Georgia. All counseling programs require a practicum and internship totaling 700 hours at an appropriate placement site for developing skills as a professional counselor.

All potential candidates for the program are required to complete a departmental screening process that includes an interview prior to admission to the program. Interviews are conducted after potential candidates have applied for admission to Columbus State University. Prospective students for all programs must obtain and complete a departmental application in addition to applying to the university.

Program Productivity: Strong

Productivity in the Community Counseling program remains strong. The majority of graduates of this program continue toward licensure at the state level, and 97% of the graduates go on to become employed in local, regional and national settings. The average enrollment of the program from 2001-2005 is 40.25 with an average of 18 degrees conferred annually. Over the past two years an increasing number of graduates have gone on to doctoral programs in counseling psychology and counselor education. The students in the Community Counseling program are active in professional development and organizations at the local, state and national level. The faculty are among the most published faculty members in the College of Education. Faculty also maintain membership and officer status in national organizations and on editorial boards in professional publications in the field of professional counseling.

The Journal of Technology in Counseling, published in the department, provides additional national and international recognition. As a result, students, through their work as professional helpers, have made significant contributions at the local, state, regional, and national levels. Also, through the Community Counseling US Army chaplain training program, students provide counseling services throughout the world.

Finally, this program is directly responsible for training professional helpers that, upon graduation and during their internship experience, provide immeasurable care for the children, adolescents, adults, and families of this community and beyond.

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:

- The professional counseling faculty should continue to meet on a regular basis to review program issues and make recommendations for improving program quality.
- The program faculty continue to assess students in both formative and summative staffing evaluations each semester. Students receive assessment data from the faculty in written form.
- Informal discussions by faculty, including collaboration regarding teaching techniques and approaches are conducted.
- Faculty provide opportunities for students to engage in research activities leading to publications and presentations at regional and national conferences.

List of Recommendations for Improving Program Productivity

The faculty works to improve the curriculum, courses, and resources offered to students. Recommendations to improve program productivity are:

- Continue to monitor Student Results on the National Counselor Examination. Results are provided to the faculty of students taking this examination twice yearly. It compares our student results with other CACREP programs and provides a breakdown of core areas designed into our curriculum.
- Continue to maintain close working relationships in the community with those who provide additional supervision and training for our students during practicum and internship.
- Continue recruiting initiatives to increase the numbers of students in the program. Market the newly-approved introductory counseling course for all majors at CSU.
- Continue to maintain and further develop the program website as a source for information for new and current students.

Conclusion about the Program's Viability at CSU

The M. S. in Community Counseling provides high-quality training for its students and leads to licensure at the state level and to the national certification of its graduates. The program meets a need in the immediate service area and the region and, in the case of some graduates, to service in national and international arenas. Applications to the program remain high. Community clinics, organizations and hospitals work closely with the Community Counseling program, and their support is reflected in their willingness to partner in our training efforts.

Program Improvement Plan

In response to the findings of the Comprehensive Program Review, the faculty members and administrators of the M.S. in Community Counseling propose the strategies outlined below to improve the quality, productivity, and viability of the program. These strategies will be facilitated by the Community 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 Community Counseling graduate students from diverse backgrounds	Productivity Viability	2006-2007
2. Explore various funding sources to provide scholarships for students seeking advanced degrees in Community Counseling	Productivity Viability	2006-Ongoing
3. Involve graduate students in professional development activities, including presentations, publications, conference attendance, and journals	Quality Productivity Viability	2006-Ongoing
4. Strengthen the use of technology as a program emphasis in work with students	Quality	2006-Ongoing
5. Provide assessment data that shows the program's viability and accomplishments through the use of data gathering instruments, such as the NCE results, community and in-house survey results and other assessment instruments designed for this purpose and, where warranted, to make program changes based on data	Quality Productivity Viability	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*

It is the recommendation of the faculty that the program be maintained and strengthened. The program has been evaluated by the CACREP and determined to be extremely strong among programs of similar size.

CSU should continue to support this viable and important program that maintains the highest level of quality and graduates committed professionals who go on to help others.

Faculty members in the community counseling program are working closely with community agencies, professional counseling organizations, and other professionals in order to train counselors who provide the very best of care to those in need.