

July 10, 2020

Dear Stakeholders:

This report provides updates on the MS in School Counseling program at Butler University for the 2019 - 2020 academic year. Feel free to contact us with any questions, suggestions, or general feedback you might have. Thank you for your involvement with and ongoing support of our program and the profession of school counseling!

VITAL STATISTICS

Cohort 21 Program Completion Rate: 87.5% (21/24) completed on-time in May or last year on Fast-Track. 1 is still enrolled.

May 2020 Graduate Placement Rate: 93% (13/14). 1 student moving out of state has yet to find employment.

ALUMNI SURVEY

The program surveys recent graduates every 3 years. The most recent version was distributed in November 2019 to graduates in cohorts 19, 20, and 21. We received responses from 24 of 41 individuals surveyed. Results are detailed in the table below and followed by a brief response from program faculty.

Please rate the degree to which you agree that the School Counseling program at Butler University prepares professional school counselors in these areas, using the following scale:

1 - Strongly Disagree, 2 - Disagree, 3 - Neutral, 4 - Agree, 5 - Strongly Agree

	Mean Rating (1 – 5)
Human growth and developmental characteristics	4.24
Strategies for assessing abilities, interests, values, personality and other factors that contribute to career development	4.17
The process of collecting, analyzing, and utilizing data in school counseling	4.65
Ethical and legal considerations in school counseling	4.88

Basic statistical and measurement concepts (mean, median, percentile rank, T- score, reliability, correlation, etc.)	4.18
Plan and facilitate group counseling	4.82
Understanding of counseling theories	4.71
Advising students regarding postsecondary options	4.47
Advocating for appropriate school counseling roles	4.65
Components of a comprehensive school counseling program based on the ASCA National Model	5.0
Various theories and styles of leadership, including your own personal style	4.47
Crisis response (i.e., suicide, traumatic event, etc.)	4.35
Self-care	4.29
Strategies to help students deal with issues of grief/loss	4.64
Developing a school counselor identity (connection with profession)	4.59
Activities to promote college and career readiness	4.29

Alumni were also given the opportunity to share in an open-ended manner about program strengths and areas for growth, but no notable patterns were detected in the responses. As the table reflects, graduates view their preparation extremely positively, with mean scores above 4.0 (on a 5-point scale) in all areas. Furthermore, the mean response increased in all areas except two when compared to the 2016 survey results. While these differences were not analyzed for statistical significance, they seem to represent a positive trend in student beliefs about their preparation. As is the case with other data gathered by the program, the results were discussed in a weekly department meeting with a focus on possible implications, responses, and modifications. Given the overwhelmingly positive results, no major changes are under consideration as a direct result of the survey.

EMPLOYER SURVEY

The program surveys employers of recent graduates every 3 years. The most recent version was distributed in November 2019 to administrators or school counseling supervisors at schools known to have hired alumni of cohorts 19, 20, and 21. We received responses from 9 of 33 individuals surveyed. Results are detailed in two tables below and followed by a brief response from program faculty.

Thinking only about school counselors you employ who graduated from Butler University in the past 3 years, please rate their abilities in the following areas on a scale from 1 (Very Weak) to 5 (Very Strong).

	Mean Rating (1 – 5)
Work as part of a team (collaborative, dependable, flexible, etc.)	4.86
Academic counseling (scheduling, grades, study skills, etc.)	4.57
Social-emotional counseling (crises, anxiety, conflict, etc.)	4.71
College/career counseling (career awareness, college advising, etc.)	4.0
Work with students and families from diverse backgrounds	4.14
Advocate for systemic change as needed	4.14
Make ethical decisions (confidentiality, legal issues, etc.)	4.86
Collaborate with teachers and staff	4.86
Deliver classroom guidance lessons	4.71
Accept direction and constructive feedback	4.71
Use data to inform practice	4.14
Collaborate with families	4.57

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements on a scale from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). - The school counseling program at Butler University prepares highly competent professional school counselors.

	Mean Rating (1 – 5)
The school counseling program at Butler University prepares highly competent professional school counselors.	4.71
In general, graduates of the school counseling program at Butler are more well-prepared than those from programs at other institutions.	4.43
If my school hires a school counselor in the near future, I would strongly consider a graduate of the program at Butler University.	4.71

Employers were also given the opportunity to share in an open-ended manner about program strengths and areas for growth, but no notable patterns were detected in the responses. As the table reflects, school administrators/supervisors view our graduates as being well-prepared and desirable candidates as demonstrated by mean scores above 4.0 (on a 5-point scale) in all areas. As is the case with other data gathered by the program, the results were discussed in a weekly department meeting with a focus on possible implications, responses, and modifications. Given the overwhelmingly positive results, no major changes are under consideration as a direct result of the survey.

NATIONAL COUNSELOR EXAMINATION (NCE)

While the National Board for Certified Counselors prohibits distribution of NCE exam results, we can share that 90% of BU graduates who took the exam in 2019 passed (9/10), a rate which mirrors the national percentage of 90.6. The overall mean score of BU grads exceeded the national average (110.5 vs. 104.9), as did their scores in each core content area except one (which was virtually equal to the national average). Faculty also noted the relatively small standard deviation values for BU students indicating a fairly consistent level of knowledge in each content area. On the whole, the 2019 results continue a longstanding trend of strong performance by our graduates on the NCE.

DEPARTMENT COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

In 2017 - 2018, the program began administering a series of Comprehensive Department Examinations to replace the previous exit exam, the CPCE, due to the rising costs of that test. We also decided to administer 3 of the 8 core area tests following year 1 in the program in order to bolster the year 1 review process and provide another checkpoint at which to address potential academic issues early in the program sequence rather than waiting until students have nearly completed all course requirements. The results of exams administered in the 2019 - 2020 academic year can be found in the table below, followed by a brief response by program faculty.

	Mean Score Out of 20
Human Growth & Development	17.4
Professional Orientation & Ethics	18.4
Social & Cultural Foundations	16.2
Career Development	15.3
Research & Program Evaluation	15.9
Appraisal	17.9
Group Counseling / Group Work	16.1
Counseling & Helping Relationships	16.5

Student performance on comprehensive examinations was somewhat stronger than in previous years, both in terms of mean scores and the percentage of students needing to retake an examination due to earning a score below 13 on any attempt. Notably, all members of Cohort 23 (Year 1) passed all three of their examinations during spring 2020 and no student in Cohort 21 or 22 required more than two attempts on any exam section -- the first time that has happened since the department instituted these exams. As is typical, faculty reviewed student performance on each exam question and made adjustments to scores and/or test questions for subsequent cohorts as needed. The goal remains to tightly align exam content with the curriculum in each core area class to assess student performance on the CACREP standards.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Program faculty have identified 12 course assignments so tightly linked to both program objectives and CACREP standards that they are to be considered “Key Performance Indicators” or KPI’s. Student performance on these assignments is both an indicator of their growth and the program’s success towards achieving our objectives, and is therefore reviewed annually. The table below shows the program KPI’s, student performance on each during the 2019 - 2020 academic year, and faculty impressions.

<u>KPI</u>	<u>Overview of Data</u>	<u>Takeaways</u>	<u>Response/Modifications</u>
577 Group Project	100% passed without remediation	Students had an easier time connecting the project tasks after completing the group counseling school field experience at our lab school. The hands-on application of knowledge and skill allowed students to develop a much more meaningful and rich final project.	None
553 Case Studies	100% passed without remediation	Students continue making strong ethical arguments and applying the STEPS model appropriately. Will continue devoting class time to case study practice.	None
575 Theory Paper	95% passed without remediation	Students continue to demonstrate good research skills on library databases. Learning APA is easier for some, but providing multiple resources helps, along with referrals to the writer’s studio.	1 student needed to review initial attempt with professor and re-submit. Student passed on 2nd attempt. No changes to assignment are planned.
630 Cultural Immersion Project	N/A (see “takeaways”)	Due to COVID-19, modifications were made to this project. Students did not have the opportunity to fully immerse and complete the interactive component. Instead, most students completed the assignment by viewing documentaries, movies, and other	To prepare for the potential need for an online learning course, the professor is working to develop virtual opportunities to provide students interactive experiences in an online course.

		videos related to their selected topic and/or completing additional readings.	
672 Counseling Perspective Project	100% passed without remediation	Project has provided students an opportunity to reflect and synthesize the theories covered to help them better define and articulate their personal counseling theory.	None
571 Career Unit	100% passed without remediation	Amount of online resources and counselor sharing websites has helped students develop their units. Most students use their unit or a specific lesson during internship.	None
673 Research Paper	100% passed without remediation	Research teams were used for the first time as opposed to individual projects. Teams were strategically chosen based primarily on research interest/topic. Approach was very successful.	None. Plan to continue the team approach given the success. Improvements noted in quality and cooperative skills. Approach would likely mirror a team action research project in a school setting.
547 Assessment Project	100% passed without remediation	Quite difficult to do achievement or intelligence/aptitude testing online due to COVID. Not having access to WJR and WASI was a challenge. May have impacted student understanding of standard scores, but reports and final exam results indicated otherwise.	Instructor will explore more options for standardized achievement, intelligence, aptitude tests available online in the event COVID-19 forces a return to remote instruction.
503 Professional Development Training	100% passed without remediation	The assignment broadened both knowledge and skill in culturally - trauma responsive approaches and increased confidence in students' ability to provide future training for educators. It also helped develop numerous resources that students shared with each other.	None
671 Group Projects	100% passed without remediation	The class project was among the strongest in years. Taught 4th ed of ASCA Model for first	None

		time. Perhaps refreshing class materials, templates, and PPTs led to more student understanding and clarity of expectations for the assignment.	
676 Two-Year Plans	100% passed without remediation	Plans demonstrated depth of reflection and appropriate understanding of future professional selves.	None

OTHER PROGRAM UPDATES

Program faculty meet regularly to discuss student progress, trends in the field, and other issues related to the program. Below are some notable topics of discussion and/or action:

- Program faculty will be applying to CACREP for re-accreditation this summer and have been working diligently to prepare the required application, self-study, and supporting materials. The program has been accredited since 1998, and the faculty are excited to once again demonstrate to CACREP the high quality of our work, including the outstanding accomplishments of students and alumni. Re-accreditation will require a site visit during the 2020 - 2021 academic year, and faculty will likely be reaching out to select site supervisors and alumni to participate. Stand by for the call!
- Program faculty revised the program’s learning objectives to better align with national standards, feedback from alumni and employers, and the changing landscape in education and school counseling. The new program objectives are as follows:
 - (1) Students will be able to collect, analyze, and use data to inform practice.
 - (2) Students will have the knowledge, awareness, and skills necessary to work from an ethical and culturally responsive lens across the school community.
 - (3) Students will demonstrate knowledge and skills in college/career, academic, and social-emotional counseling.
 - (4) Students will be able to articulate the importance of leadership, advocacy, equity, and systemic change to create positive school climates for all learners.
- The *Group Counseling* course was moved from summer into year 2, with half the students taking it in fall and half in spring. This change is based on several factors, including:
 - a. Faculty sentiment that the relatively short summer term was not long enough to adequately cover all the course content while allowing for growth in student understanding and group facilitation skills;

- b. Allowing students to take the class concurrent to or following *Advanced Counseling Skills and Theories* so they might implement advanced skills during group facilitation;
 - c. Splitting the class into two sections will allow for closer faculty supervision of group facilitation and skills practice.
- Based primarily on feedback gathered during the alumni and employer surveys in 2016, the 1-credit *Crisis Response & Readiness* workshop was expanded to 3-credits and made a permanent part of the core curriculum. Dr. Oliver taught the course for the first time this year and added a great deal of content related to trauma, suicidality, mental health first aid, and schoolwide education and prevention.
- The *Administration of Counseling & Guidance Programs* course was moved to the fall of year 3 for all students except those on the “fast track.” This was done partly to accommodate the move of *Group Counseling* to the academic year, but also so that all students will be placed at a school site during *Admin*, giving them the opportunity to work directly with real school data from their site for in-class activities and the culminating large group project.
- The major project in *Seminar: Research for School Counselors* was completed in a group format rather than individually for the first time. Dr. Keller reported that the change was very successful in that each project was high quality and based on demonstrated needs at a school in which a group member was completing *Internship*. Students were grouped primarily by research interests, and when combined with the variety of skills and research experience on each team, the final products were quite solid.