

CACREP Mid-Cycle Report
Western Illinois University – Quad Cities
Department of Counselor Education
September 2012

I. CHANGES IN FACULTY

Since our site visit in April, 2008, the Department of Counselor Education at Western Illinois University - Quad Cities, faculty have resigned, retired, and some have been hired. The department gained an additional faculty line in 2010 as a result of moving to the 60-hour clinical mental health counseling specialization. Dr. Carrie Alexander-Albritton, with a doctorate in counselor education from a CACREP-accredited program was hired as a tenure track Assistant Professor in Fall, 2008. Dr. Shawn Parmanand, with a doctorate in counselor education from a CACREP-accredited program was hired as an Assistant Professor in Fall 2010. Dr. Ed Hamann retired in Summer 2011. His position has been filled by Tiffany Stoner Harris, an Instructor who is ABD at the University of Iowa, a CACREP-accredited program. Dr. William McFarland retired in Summer 2012 and his position will not be filled in the coming year, returning the department to pre-2010 staffing level. Dr. Frank Main, Department Chair resigned in May 2010. Dr. Rebecca Newgent was hired as Department Chair in January 2011. The department is currently staffed with a Department Chair and 5 tenure track faculty including 2 full professors, 1 associate professor, and 2 assistant professors, and 1 instructor. Adjunct faculty such as Eldon Partridge assisted with teaching when current faculty had sabbatical or maternity leaves. (See appendix A for vita of new faculty). Effects of the changes in faculty did not disrupt the course rotation cycle and faculty maintained similar teaching loads. (See Appendix B for a copy of the CNED Faculty Teaching Load History).

II. CHANGES IN CURRICULUM

M.S.Ed. in Counseling, Clinical Mental Health Counseling Option

Soon after the April 2008 site visit, the Department of Counselor Education made a decision to move quickly to a 60 credit hour Clinical Mental Health Counseling program from the 48 credit hour Community Counseling program. The main purpose was to comply with the 2009 CACREP Standards as well as prepare graduates for any future increases in state licensure requirements. The Department of Counselor Education Graduate Committee examined the community-counseling curriculum and determined that four new courses would be developed. Course proposals were written and during the 2009-2010 academic year the courses were approved at the college and university levels and appeared for the first time in the 2010-2011 *Western Illinois Graduate Studies Catalog* (The current *School of Graduate Studies Catalog* can be accessed electronically at http://www.wiu.edu/graduate_studies/20102011GradCatalog.pdf).

Therefore students enrolled for the first time in graduate coursework from Fall 2010 and onward enrolled in the 60 credit hour program. Students enrolled in the Community Counseling option prior to Fall 2010 were given the option of completing just the 48 credit hour community agency program, or requesting to upgrade from the 48 credit hour degree to the new 60 credit hour degree, or finish the 48 hour degree and then complete the new courses as elective credits. (See Appendix C for the new Clinical Mental Health Counseling Specialization Plan). The Department of Counselor Education website can be accessed at <http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/qc/cned/> .

The new and changed courses are:

- CN 519 Crisis and Trauma Counseling (3) (new)
- CN 520 Foundations and Professional Orientation to Clinical Mental Health Counseling (3) (new)
- CN 521 Standards of Care and Management in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (3) (new)
- CN 522 Psychopharmacology in Counseling (1) (new)
- CN 549 Ethical and Legal Issues in Clinical Mental Health Counseling was expanded from 1 credit hour to 3 credit hours. (change)

See Appendix D for the current syllabi for the above listed courses.

M.S.Ed. in Counseling, School Counseling Option

After the 2008 site visit, the Counselor Education faculty conducted a review of the 2009 CACREP Standards and compared them to the school counseling program curriculum. A decision was made to change the curriculum to address the new standards as well as comply with a suggestion from the CACREP team during our last site visit that an elective mini course become a required course for school counseling students. The credit hour total for the school counseling option was increased from 48 hours to 52 hours. A new clinical course was developed to replace an existing course that was removed from the curriculum. (See Appendix E for a copy of the school counseling degree plan).

The new courses and changes are:

- CN 519 Crisis and Trauma Counseling (3) (new)
- CN 602 Principles of Mental health Diagnosis and Pathology for Practitioners in School Settings (1) (new)
- CN 544 Counseling Technique for Children and Adolescents (3) (replaced CN 444G to increase clinical training for school counselors)

See Appendix D for syllabi for the above listed courses.

III. CHANGES IN CLINICAL INSTRUCTION

Minor changes have been made directly to clinical instruction since the site visit to continue to comply with the transition to 2009 standards. Each year we update our *Field Experience Manual for Practicum and Internship* (See Appendix F) and the *Department of Counselor Education Practicum and Internship Packets*, which contain applications, agreements, and contracts (See Appendix G). Updates include clarification of group counseling hours and changes to the contracts. We continue to conduct on-campus training for site supervisors (See Appendix H). Further, we have implemented a bi-weekly site supervisor contact form that all faculty who teach Practicum may use as they have contact with site supervisors (See Appendix H). Manuals and field experience forms may be accessed electronically at http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/qc/cned/current_students/forms.php

Several new sites were added for both school and clinical mental health students since the site visit (See Appendix I). These are updated regularly within the department. They are made available to the students prior to their clinical experience in CN593: Counseling Practicum.

The Department of Counselor Education recently moved and expanded its' laboratory space to serve the program's training needs for the next several years. Due to new construction on campus and university departments and other operations moving in and out of the current facility, the Department was required to give up the two lab spaces we were using at the time of the site visit. All the equipment in those labs such as cameras and video recording devices as well as furniture were moved to other rooms in the building and were made operational during the Spring 2012 semester. The Department now operates three counseling labs, two for adult clients and one for children; all with the most recent electronic technology, including monitoring from faculty offices.

The Department spent approximately \$1,500.00 and received approximately \$500.00 in donations to outfit a new children's lab with equipment and materials such as: a new DVR, 2 floor mats, dolls, a doll house, a family play set, a bop bag, a dinosaur set, an ocean set, a fire department set, finger puppets, and posters. The goal was to create a child-counseling lab that is consistent with the recommendations from the Center for Play Therapy at the University of North Texas.

The limitations of the current laboratory arrangements were cited in the 2008 *On Site Team Report*, which also mentioned "Every effort should be made to develop a WIU clinic for practicum and/or internship with state of the art technology." The Department of Counselor Education will move to a new building with an expected completion date of 2015, which will include new state of the art laboratory facilities. Details of this clinic can be viewed in the *2012 Annual Report* posted on the department's website with the following link: <http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/qc/cned/>.

The new WIU-QC Counseling Center for Children, Adults, and Families will provide a clinical laboratory teaching space for CNED and its students. The Center will not only

provide a training facility for practicum and internship students, but will also provide direct service delivery based upon a sliding fee scale to members of the community. The tentative plans show the clinic will contain: 3 individual counseling rooms, a play therapy room, 2 family counseling rooms, 3 observations rooms, a waiting room, and office space. The proposed project includes a clinical director, a support staff worker, and a request for \$105,000 for the purchase of an integrated state of the art technology package.

IV. CHANGES IN PROGRAM OPERATIONS

a. Changes in Support Services

Since the site visit there have been personnel changes within primary administrative ranks of the university. At the university level, Dr. Al Goldfarb retired as President of Western Illinois University in June of 2011. Dr. Jack Thomas, the University Provost, was selected as President of the University. Dr. Ken Hawkinson, associate provost, was promoted to Interim Provost and later was selected as Provost in January 2012. At the college level, Dr. Nick Digrino retired as Dean of the College of Education and Human Services in 2011, and Dr. Sterling Saddler was hired as Dean. Dr. Erskine Smith was hired as Associate Dean for Administration in June of 2010. Dr. Lance Ternasky Associate Dean for Academic Affairs retired in May 2012. In July 2012 the College of Education and Human Services appointed Dr. Marcia Carter as Assistant Dean of the College at the Quad Cities Campus.

b. Changes in Budgets

The funding source for the Department of Counselor Education continues to be the same. Our primary source is still channeled through the College of Education and Human Services from the Provost's office at Western Illinois University. However, given changes in the state of Illinois fiscal status, funding has been delayed on occasions and tighter restrictions have been implemented. The primary impact of these changes is a delay in securing certain resources. Typically, these resources are able to be secured later in the fiscal year when the budget has been released.

The below figures indicate the fiscal year budget since the CACREP site visit in 2008.

FY08 \$16,092 (The college swept \$1,400)
 FY09 \$11,592
 FY10 \$15,000 (The college swept \$3,900)
 FY11 \$15,000 (+ \$1,500 computer money - we were told to not count it in)
 FY12 \$16,500 (The college swept \$717.32)
 FY13 We don't have our current budget as of yet.

c. Student Enrollment Figures

The Institutional Research and Planning office at Western Illinois University reports and publishes student enrollment numbers annually. Below are the enrollment numbers, according to their numbers. These are mostly consistent with our submitted vital statistics reports depending on the time of the report generation. Please find this information at: <http://www.wiu.edu/IRP/factbook.php>

Fall 2009

100

Fall 2010

103

Fall 2011

73 (86 at the time of our vital statistics report)

Fall 2012

76 (CNED numbers)

The impact of these lower enrollment student numbers were modifications in the course-offering schedule. For example, some courses that were only offered twice per year are now only offered at least once a year. However, each course is still offered at least once a year.

d. FTE Student to Faculty Ratio

Currently, the total enrollment for students in all Counselor Education programs is 76. The total full time equivalent for enrolled students is 57. Therefore, the FTE student to faculty ratio is 1: 5.7.

V. PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

Due to multiple changes in administration leadership, our Department has failed to complete any program evaluations during the period since our site visit. However, we have scheduled Spring of 2013 where we will do follow up studies with recent graduates, employers, site supervisors, and current graduating students. The evaluation will focus on outcomes and preparation while simultaneously allowing for feedback from all constituents. Results of these will be placed on the CNED website and will be available to the public and all interested stakeholders. Although the most recent, 2006 evaluation is not included, the summaries of the most recent evaluations are on the CNED website: http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/qc/cned/accreditation/eval_findings.php.

Student Learning Outcomes are assessed annually and generated reports can be found at http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/qc/cned/accreditation/eval_findings.php and are also included in appendix K. In addition, each year, an annual report is generated by the Department and can be found at http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/qc/cned/accreditation/eval_findings.php. A copy of the most recent has also been included in Appendix K. We will continue with this process in addition to reinstating our program evaluations as referenced above.

VI. PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION

There have been a number of program improvements since the site visit. The faculty examined the Department's admission, retention, and exit requirements. The following changes were implemented:

Admissions Changes:

A decision was made to increase the required undergraduate GPA from 2.75 to 3.0 and incorporate GRE scores into the admissions process. The Department website explains the current GPA and GRE requirement as follows: "Applicants must have a cumulative undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or higher (includes all undergraduate work attempted at all institutions), or 3.25 for the last two years (60 semester hours) of undergraduate work, or a cumulative graduate GPA of 3.0 or higher (includes all graduate work attempted at all institutions) and a completed master's degree from a regionally accredited university. Applicants failing to meet the minimum undergraduate requirements may be considered for probationary admission with a cumulative undergraduate GPA of 2.75-2.99. Applicants with a cumulative undergraduate GPA between 2.6-2.74 may request consideration for probationary admission – an additional portfolio must be submitted by the applicant at the time of application. The additional material included in the portfolio is intended to assist the Selection and Retention Committee's evaluation of the applicant's potential success as a graduate student in the Department of Counselor Education. All applicants admitted as probationary students must petition for full admission after completing nine graduate hours from any of the following courses: CN 540, CN 541, CN 545, CN 551, CN 554, or EIS 500." The complete admissions process can be viewed at:

http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/qc/cned/future_students/admission.php

Note that since this initial change, we have had time to review the impact on our program and made the determination to eliminate the GRE requirement except for applicants with cumulative GPAs less than 2.75.

The second change to the admissions procedures was the addition of a mandatory background check for newly admitted students. The Department web site explains: "As a part of the admission process to the Department of Counselor Education, all students are required to undergo a criminal background investigation, as many school/agencies require a criminal background check before considering students for clinical field experiences. Students admitted to the Department of Counselor Education are expected to comply with the Illinois State Police and FBI fingerprint background investigation requirements as set forth by the Department of Counselor Education, Background Investigation Policy. Students who do not comply with the policy will not be allowed to register and/or attend classes in the Department of Counselor Education. Student already admitted into the Department must immediately submit to the background check process. The complete Department Background Check Policy can be

viewed at:

<http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/qc/cned/Background%20Check%20Policy%20Revised.pdf>

Note that since this initial change, the FBI has informed the State of Illinois that Universities are not eligible to conduct fingerprint-based federal FBI background checks for AWA. We are currently working with our College administrators on how to address this change.

Retention Changes:

Since the CACREP site visit, the department has created a Remediation Policy which requires the creation of a Professional Development Plan to address areas of concern with of student. The plan is designed to be corrective rather than punitive, relevant to the specific areas of concern, and appropriate to the unique needs of the student. The complete Remediation and Retention Procedures can be viewed in the most recent *Counseling Student Handbook* at the following link:

http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/qc/cned/current_students/forms.php

Another significant change since the site visit was the reduction in the allowable semester hours of grades of C or lower for a degree. A proposal was submitted and approved at the college and university level to limit the semester hours of grades of C or lower to 6 hours from 9 hours. A degree will not be awarded to any student who earns a grade of C or lower in more than 6 semester hours of graduate work.

Exit Requirements Changes

A significant change since the site visit affecting counseling program exit requirement has been the addition of *The Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE)* as a requirement. The exam was first required of counseling students graduating in 2009. For all Master's degree counseling students admitted for the 2011-2012 academic year and on the exam will be used as the Department's required comprehensive exam and a policy was developed. The cut points will be 1.5 standard deviations below the National Mean for Exit Exams for the Total Score. Options for students whose score falls below the cut point are explained in the Counseling Student Handbook at:

http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/qc/cned/current_students/Counselor%20Education%20Comprehensive%20Exit%20Examination%20Policy%20rev.%2005.24.2012.pdf

VII. ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

CACREP does an excellent job of having a strong presence at most professional conferences and providing trainings and/or question and answer sessions. However, it seems that the website lacks specific examples of how other programs have been successful in obtaining re-accreditation with the new standards. Is there a way that examples of innovative program ideas could be shared on the CACREP website?