Dear Stakeholder,

What follows below is the School Counseling program’s summary report of our programmatic assessment efforts and any improvements in pedagogy, curriculum, and advising that were undertaken in response to this self-evaluation. We appreciate any feedback you have regarding how to further support our assessment and program improvement efforts.

1. What program assessments were conducted by our program between Fall 2009 and Spring 2011?

At the student level, our assessment measures are largely embedded within our courses, with a sequence of formal assessments at specified program transition points (e.g. between practicum and internship; before graduation). (See item #2 below for elaboration).

Programmatic feedback is also sought during advisory board meetings. In the fall 2010 advisory board meeting, feedback was given by board members for the construction of our alumni survey and a site supervisor survey. These surveys are administered every three years, with the most recent administration occurring in the spring of 2011.

2. Which of the specific student learning outcomes in our program were assessed?

Our program is designed to assess student learning outcomes at specified program transition points. For example, student development is reviewed during students’ first semester in the Counseling Department, again following 510B (practicum), and students must demonstrate successful mastery of learning outcomes before they are allowed to proceed to the next stage (supervised field experience). This assessment includes oral and written feedback from the faculty, as well as student self-evaluation. Students are similarly assessed while engaged in their culminating supervised field experience as a requirement for graduation. This assessment includes oral and written feedback from site supervisors and/or faculty supervisors, as well as student feedback (self-evaluation), and student evaluation of their training site. We also periodically assess site supervisors’ perceptions of our training effectiveness informally during site visits and formally via the Supervisor Survey.

Students are also required to demonstrate proficiency through their culminating experience, a two-part process that includes an intensive case study (oral and written presentation) and completion of a grant proposal.

3. What were the results of the assessments conducted?

The School Counseling program typically admits 12-14 students per year. Of these, a portion may attend part-time, although a majority of students attend full-time. Although we have the ability to offer an Intern Credential to qualified students, no such credentials were granted during the 2010-2011 or 2009-2010 academic years, as no requests were made. The table below summarizes student information for the past two years.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total School Counseling Students</th>
<th>New MA Students</th>
<th>Continuing Students</th>
<th>Credential Only</th>
<th>Intern Credentials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total School Counseling M.A. Graduates</th>
<th>Credentials Granted</th>
<th>Dismissals</th>
<th>Remediation</th>
<th>Voluntary Withdrawals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (CR only)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data from the program assessments administered between Fall 2009 and Spring 2011 indicate that the vast majority of candidates have met or exceeded program expectations in all areas.

At the Practicum level, students appear especially strong in aspects related to professionalism and personal maturity, such as working well with others, helpfulness, treating others respectfully and inclusively, dependability and responsibility, enthusiasm, adhering to school policies/practices and understanding of professional ethics. We are particularly pleased to see the boost in the area of professional ethics, as it validates our decision to include a school counseling law and ethics course in our new curriculum.

Group work and effective delivery of classroom guidance, while still strong, receive lower practicum supervisor ratings than other areas. Our previous program review contained similar findings. Due to previous feedback suggesting classroom management as one area for improvement, we redoubled our efforts to address this during the current review cycle. Perhaps most importantly, we have a new group counseling course that focuses exclusively on group work in the schools. This course is well-reviewed and highly regarded. Thus, at first glance, the relatively lower ratings in these two areas were surprising. Upon consideration, these results may reflect both that these skills are more difficult for beginning counselors to master, and perhaps renewed vigilance that lead to increased stridency by faculty evaluators.

At the Field Experience level, knowledge of laws and ethics, as well as personal traits and attitudes, remain areas of strength. Our students also showed very strong ratings in the areas of:

- knowledge and understanding of the domains of educational counseling
- helping students advance their diversity awareness
- student goal setting and academic planning
- promoting students’ affective awareness and development
- respect and sensitivity for cultural differences
- decision making
- oral and written expression
- initiative, adaptability and enthusiasm
- understanding of the school system
Ratings of classroom guidance and management increased slightly from 2010 to 2011 and assessment of group-work knowledge and skills was very strong, both indicating that our curricular adaptations (noted in the above Practicum section) are having the desired impact.

Whereas competencies at the high school level of school counseling were an area of relative weakness for our previous evaluation, students came across as relatively strong in this area during the current cycle.

In addition, our previous review indicated room for improvement in: leadership, classroom guidance, consultation and outreach, groups, parent education and program evaluation. Strong supervisor ratings in each of these areas indicate that our curricular revisions lead to a positive impact on student preparation.

All mean ratings met or exceeded 3.5 (4=exceeds expectations), suggesting very strong performance overall. Relative areas for growth include:

- knowledge/skills facilitating teams and committee meetings
- knowledge/skills related to postsecondary options
- knowledge/skills related to class placement and scheduling

Our Supervisor Survey was given and analyzed in the Spring of 2011. This survey is given to current and former site supervisors and includes questions related to the training of our students. We received 22 completed surveys. For the questions “How would you generally rate pre-service school counselors from SSU’s School Counseling Program?” 77% responded “excellent” with the remaining 23% responding “good.”

In our Supervisor Survey, practicing school counselors who have worked with our pre-service counselors over the past few years judged crisis intervention, legal/ethical issues, learning theory and family-school collaboration as most critical to pre-service school counselors’ foundational knowledge. These areas reflect key components of our newly revised curriculum suggesting that our revisions were keeping with local school counseling trends. Furthermore, supervisors rated our pre-service school counselors’ preparation in each of these areas very highly (90-100% adequate prepared to extremely prepared). As in all other assessment measures, our students received exceptional ratings for professionalism, collegiality, personal maturity, reliability, dependability, and enthusiasm.

Supervisors rated as least critical several areas that our program also emphasizes, including: leadership, career development and assessment, suggesting a possible disconnect between local school counseling practice and traditional school counseling standards.

As in our previous self-assessment, knowledge related to working with English Language Learners remains an area of relative weakness. We worked to integrate this topic into our curriculum, and continue to seek innovative ways to train students to work effectively with this population. School violence prevention and safety was also an area of relative weakness.

Individual counseling and group counseling skills, as well as crisis response and classroom guidance, topped our supervisors’ list of essential competencies; supervisors rated our students very highly in each of these areas. Interestingly, data collection and evaluation were rated as relatively unimportant. Our program emphasizes this training component and views it as crucial to the profession. There are also statewide initiatives that further support the need for this function, and that our students have directly involved themselves with, which have been met with favorable results. In terms of relative areas for growth, working with students with special needs ranked second lowest in terms of pre-service school counselor competencies. This is notable in that, with the revised curriculum, our class dedicated to this topic was discontinued.
and content integrated throughout. It may be that we need to attend to this population more fully. Finally, the lowest rating was given to community outreach and service coordination, which stands in contrast to the favorable feedback we have received regarding our students’ involvement in activities such as SPARCs, career days and workshop presentations. We will strive to find ways give more attention to this topic, particularly as it relates to outreach to the larger community in which our training sites are embedded.

Our Alumni Survey was administered in 2011. We experimented with a new method of data collection. Rather than using traditional mail with read-and-return materials, we used our Facebook group with a link to Survey Monkey. Although we anticipated that this would result in a much higher response rate, the opposite was true. We received only 4 completed surveys and deemed this number inadequate for analysis. The poor response may reflect the new method of administration, or it may relate to the simultaneous administration of Supervisor and Alumni Surveys. Most of our site supervisors are also alumni and completing two surveys may have been too burdensome. In the future, we will aim to separate the administration of the two surveys.

However, we do keep track of recent alumni and thus have some data on their current employment situation. Of the twelve graduating students, we have employment information for eight. Three students have secured school counseling positions (public schools, private school, residential school). One obtained an academic counseling position at a university. One student secured a competitive Middle Grades CTE and Career Pathways Grant. Two are going on for MFT training. Finally, one student took a job as the school secretary at her field placement site. For the graduates in 2010, seven are employed in counseling-related agencies and one is a college coordinator.

4. What changes in pedagogy, curriculum, advising, etc., if any, have been made as a result of the assessment(s)?

Our syllabi were modified to integrate the revised school counseling curriculum, which was introduced in fall 2007.

Other notable changes include:
- Fall 2009 – Began use of new Pre-Practicum Student Evaluation Form
- Fall 2010 – Piloting of the Non-Academic Competency Evaluation Form
- Spring 2011 – Completed revisions to Site Supervisor Survey and Alumni Survey;
- Summer 2010 – Institution of a Credential Only orientation
- Summer 2011 – Establishment of a Student-Wide orientation
- Ongoing – Integration of content related to English Language Learners throughout curriculum, specifically Coun 511: Academic and Career Counseling and Coun 524: Counseling Children and Adolescents
- Add specific section on Community Outreach and Service Coordination to Counseling Children and Adolescents and Working with Families in the Schools

7. What program assessments will be conducted in 2011-2012?

During the 2011-2012 academic year, the Counseling Department will begin work on a self-study related to the review for its national accrediting body (CACREP). In addition, the School Counseling program will join the School of Education in the completion of an NCATE review document. The School Counseling program recently completed the CCTC Biennial Report. A joint site visit with NCATE and CCTC will occur in spring 2012.