Third Year Report: Graduate Education Programs

Assessment contact person, and person preparing the report, (if different):

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Attach annual reports submitted since the last Third Year Review: see links at the end of this report.

Attach an updated departmental assessment plan. See response to No. 3 below.

1. Describe any changes to the program’s educational goals since the last Third Year Review, and the rationale for those changes.

The Department of Professional Education Services of the School of Education has adopted the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) 2009 Standards for candidates preparing to become school counselors and community counselors. CACREP is an independent agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation to accredit master’s degree programs in the counseling field.

2. Describe any assessment techniques used for measuring the Educational Goals that have been added or discontinued since the last Third Year Review, and the rationale for those changes.

The Department of Professional Educational Services and School of Education rely on a number of data sources to measure progress of candidates in the Counseling and Human Services programs and to determine the success of the programs. Due to changes in CACREP requirements and assessment data, several of the assessments were eliminated.

Over the past three years, the following data sources were employed:

- Program Applicant Review
- Comprehensive Exit Exam
- Exit Project
- Annual Student Review
- Practicum/Internship Evaluations
- Alumni Survey
- Employer Surveys
- Bi-Annual Evaluations

3. Attach any assessment instruments that have been used during the past three years, and the data collected, (or, summarized data, if that is more appropriate.).

Program Applicant Review: The CHS faculty members review all applicants to the
program. Each applicant completes a graduate application, essay, and personal interview. In addition, the applicant provides three letters of professional reference.

**Comprehensive Exit Exam:** The comprehensive exit exam was modified for candidates who complete the program in 2008-2009. The exit exam was given in the final semester of students’ course of study. It was an oral examination where each individual student answers questions from two faculty members within a 60-minute time slot. The questions require a practical application of all the knowledge and skills outlined in the educational goals for CHS students. Based on CACREP recommendations and alumni surveys, the School of Education voted to eliminate the comprehensive exam beginning the Spring semester 2010.

**Exit Project:** The 2008 guidelines required all students to do a service project in the community. Student identified a community problem, created a program to address that problem, and implemented the program. Each project, which could be completed in teams, was supervised and evaluated by the G542/G585 instructor. Based on CACREP recommendations and alumni surveys, the School of Education voted to eliminate the comprehensive exam beginning the Spring semester 2010.

**Annual Student Review:** The counseling faculty conducts this annual review, and students are notified in writing shortly after the evaluations have been completed. Students who receive an unacceptable rating for overall performance meet with the program coordinator and often some sort of remediation plan is implemented. Some faculty members use formative evaluations in addition to summative evaluations during practicum and internship.

**Practicum/Internship Evaluations:** In addition to any evaluation for course requirements, university professors and site supervisors evaluate students in practicum or internship. These evaluations take place each semester. The counseling program keeps all of these evaluations, and uses them to look for general themes across cohorts in addition to any concerns for an individual student. If themes emerge in terms of student preparation, this information is incorporated into any future planning of course adjustments. Practicum and internship students are asked to evaluate their site supervisor and their site setting each semester. The site supervisor and site setting evaluations are also reviewed and filed for any future reference.

**Alumni Survey:** Every other year the IUSB Counseling and Human Services program conducts a survey of alumni and a survey of employers. In past years these were conducted via mail, with very small response rates. This year the surveys were conducted online, and the response rates were five to six times higher than previous surveys of former graduates. This survey asks a number of open-ended questions to gather qualitative data on program strengths and weaknesses. Demographic information is also obtained from the instrument, and several quantitative questions focus on students’ past coursework, classes, teaching strategies they found most helpful, and use of technology. The focus of these questions is to obtain feedback from graduates now working as counselors with regard to their training and preparation in our program.
**Employer Surveys:** Employers are surveyed to obtain minimal setting demographics. The remainder of the survey has two sections. Employers rate their employees (former graduates) on their competence with regard to a number of skills relevant to counseling and applicable to the work setting. The final section contains open-ended questions to gather qualitative feedback regarding our graduates and their preparation as a counseling professional.

**Bi-Annual Evaluations:** The bi-annual evaluations have influenced some recent changes in our program. As the counseling programs were adjusted our program to meet the new CACREP standards, the counseling faculty changed several courses and/or course requirements. Some courses were eliminated partially in response to student feedback. Likewise, different courses were either added, or the content of several courses were changed in response to alumni feedback over several rounds of alumni surveys.

4. **What analysis has been done with this data? What conclusions has your department drawn?**

   The entire CHS faculty participated in collecting and analyzing the information received from the assessment tools. All members of the faculty as well as guest faculty members participated in the exit exam and the annual poster session where the exit projects were evaluated. The entire counseling faculty, in regularly scheduled faculty meetings, discussed and analyzed the outcomes of the exercises. The minutes of the faculty meetings reflect these discussions.

   The CHS faculty also altered the program content. Based on CACREP requirements, six semester credit hours were added to the Community Counseling Program. Additionally, based on community needs, a 15-credit graduate certificate in Alcohol and Drug Counseling was offered beginning Fall 2009. Additionally, a Master of Science in Education in Alcohol and Drug Counseling has been developed. The state of Indiana has a professional certification for substance abuse counselors, the Certified Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselor (CADAC) designation. This program was designed to fill the gap in quality training for substance abuse counselors in Indiana and Michigan, provide candidates with relevant and up-to-date research based training and ultimately to provide substance abuse services to the community.

5. **What changes have been made to the program as a result? (Curriculum, classes offered, classes discontinued, scheduling, advising, faculty education etc..)**

   The most relevant information obtained from student evaluations influenced the counseling faculty’s decision to endorse or discourage future placements at settings that consistently receive substandard evaluations. This information is shared with students pre-practicum, who are looking for future placements. In some cases, sites may be removed from the approved list.

   Based on the bi-annual evaluations, the reference group classes and format were eliminated. There have been numerous responses from students suggesting these two classes were the least helpful to them in their training. New classes were substituted in their place, which focus on basic counseling skills and counseling techniques, again in
response to alumni feedback over the past 4-6 years. Another recent change was the elimination of the exit project and exit exam. This requirement will be substituted with a pre-practicum exam that students must pass prior to starting their clinical courses. This decision was made, in part, due to feedback from past students.

Finally, to meet the needs of the community, a Master of Science in Education in Alcohol and Drugs Addiction has been developed. Currently, the proposed program has been approved by the School of Education and is currently waiting approval by the IUSB Senate Curriculum Committee.

6. How did assessment data and analysis support these changes?

Many of the changes were due to changing state and national accreditation requirements, student surveys, and bi-annual evaluations.

7. What changes does the department plan to make in the coming years to the program and to assessment techniques, and why?

Currently, many of the changes have already been made based on the assessment data. Further evaluation of the data sources will determine the effectiveness of the revised assessment techniques.

8. How were faculty, students, administration, alumni and other groups involved in assessment?

Faculty is actively involved with assessment activities. They are required to assess student artifacts at designated checkpoints. Students submit artifacts via OnCourse. They receive completed rubrics from faculty. In addition, all student teaching assessments are discussed with students.

9. How were assessment data and results shared with faculty, students, administration and alumni?

Assessment information was shared with the faculty members of the Department of Professional Services at the September departmental meetings. This information was also shared with members of the Counseling and Human Services Advisory Board at the annual meetings.

10. In one paragraph, please summarize the most important impacts of the assessment of student learning on the program.

The curriculum of the School of Education is driven by assessment information in light of an accreditation process which looks at performance based assessment. By providing defined checkpoints and looking at individual assessments, department assessments, and unit assessments, faculty are constantly informed as to the strengths and weaknesses in the program. Not only are faculty members able to provide remediation for individual students, but also they can recommend curricular changes and revise instruction to positively impact weaknesses in the program. Assessment of student learning outcomes has contributed to improvement of syllabi, and alignment of course objectives and performance standards. Faculty members use of formative assessment in
the classroom to provide feedback to both students and teachers. The assessment system (also known as the performance measurement system) assist the special education department in refining both the curricular goals in its program and also the assignments that are utilized to evaluate the students on the standards and curriculum objectives. Furthermore, by comparing the instructor’s evaluations across goals about individual students and groups of students (i.e. means scores) with both the quantifiable score from follow-up surveys and textual narrative reports from the open ended questions and focus groups the assessment of student learning is supported by both internal and external types of validity.

11. Is there any other information that you would like included in this report?

No

Past Counseling and Human Services Reports can be found at:

http://www.iusb.edu/~sbassess/Annual%20Reports%20home%20current.shtml

http://www.iusb.edu/~sbassess/Annual%20Reports%20home%202008.shtml

http://www.iusb.edu/~sbassess/Annual%20Reports%20home%202007.shtml