

**Department of Counselor Education
2004 Academic Plan
September 24, 2003**

Executive Summary

The University of Wyoming Department of Counselor Education has a distinguished record of preparing the very best professional counselors and counselor educators for more than 25 years. Our mission is to enhance the quality of life of children, adults, families, and the community. We base our work on our Caring Community model; humanistic interpersonal relationships; emphasis on prevention, wellness, and developmental strategies; the practical application of counseling and supervision techniques; intense faculty-student interactions; outreach activities, and the use of technology.

With solid CACREP accredited programs, curricula, and assessment practices, as well as several new faculty members, we envision our department as outstanding relative to *MFIII Professions and Issues Critical to the Region*, as partially judged by the following action goals during the next 5 years:

- answer the critical need for school counselors by enhancing our School Counseling Program and exploring alternative forms of delivery
- strengthen our collaborations and scholarship focus on critical issues facing children, families, and communities
- recruit and retain a diversity of qualified Master's and doctoral students at a level consistent with CACREP standards, our geographical limitations, and practicum and internship site availability
- develop stronger partnerships with schools, community agencies and university entities in the promotion, development, and application of practice, research and training in general counseling skills as well as disaster mental health and emergency response interventions.

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I. Progress on Action Items from the 1999 Academic Plan

1 Goal: to effectively compete, attract, and retain qualified Master's and doctoral students at a level consistent with CACREP standards, our geographical limitations, and practicum and internship site availability. We have met this goal and now are at capacity with an annual admission rate of 67% of all applicants and a retention rate of 95%.

2 Goal: to increase our number of doctoral students so that at any given time we have at least fifteen active doctoral students on campus. We have met this goal.

3 Goal: to continue our Counselor Education State Advisory Board. We have met this goal. This Board is in place and meets twice yearly.

4 Goal: to continue the efficiency of our course offerings in-keeping with our three-year curriculum evaluation plan. We have met this goal and continue to annually evaluate the curriculum plan for each of our four programs.

5 Goal: to continue our annual evaluation of our graduates by means of seeking evaluation information from employers and alumni. We have met this goal. Annual evaluations via mailed surveys are conducted and compiled. As a result, valuable changes are made annually.

6 Goal: to explore the feasibility of using distance education for the purpose of not only didactic counselor education but also supervision of practicum and internship students located in distant communities and also to evaluate the feasibility of providing resource information to counselors in the field relative to clients they serve by means of distance education. We have met this goal. We have used the WEN system for internship supervision as well as monthly sessions under the auspices of WyoCARE for Wyoming counselors.

7 Goal: to develop a State-wide and even region-wide Counseling Clinic, using technologies that can provide training as well as services to a variety of consumers. We have not met this goal. We may omit or revision this goal. The availability of the necessary technology does not support this goal.

8 Goal: to find additional federal funding sources for the purpose of increasing our CARE faculty by one full-time clinician and one fulltime graduate assistant. We have met this goal in part by adding one full-time clinician.

9 Goal: to provide ongoing energy and resources to an annual Addictions Institute. We have met this goal in-part with an Addictions Institute during summer 2000 and 2002. With a change of needs in the state, our focus has now changed to a series of local trainings.

10 Goal: to assist the school counselors of the Wyoming Counseling Association (WCA) in adopting standards and developing a pre-K-12 comprehensive, developmental guidance plan for the purpose of regulating the practice of school counseling in Wyoming. We have met this goal. The school counselors voted to adopt standards February 2003 and are now developing school counseling program guidance standards.

11 Goal: to add one full-time tenure track faculty position. We have exceeded this goal.

12 Goal: to be included in the WICHE sponsored Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP). We have not yet met this goal. We have successfully hired a new faculty member, Dr. Michael Morgan who will develop a play therapy certification program in order to complement our in-place programs and enhance the likelihood for WICHE inclusion.

II. Curriculum

A. Graduate Programs: Focused graduate students, even with those working part-time and balancing family lives, are able to complete our master's programs in 2 years and doctoral program in 4 years.

- Our department offers three accredited 48 graduate credit hour master's degree programs (M.S.) in School Counseling, Community Counseling, and Student Affairs Practice in Higher Education (counseling emphasis), with additional specializations in Addictions Counseling, and Marriage and Family Counseling available for Wyoming licensure.
- Our accredited Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) degree is offered with specializations in Higher Education or Advanced Counseling Practice and prepares students for positions as faculty in counselor education departments and/or professional positions as clinicians and supervisors in counseling settings
- Required Master's program semester credits hours have been reduced from 51 to 48.
- Required doctoral program semester credit hours have been reduced from 72 to 69.
- We will continue to partner with the College of Education Department of Educational Leadership so that school counselors and principals-in-training can meet together during the summer for several class sessions to engage in group discussion and practitioner panel presentations related to job goals, roles, and responsibilities in order to help to meet their school's mission of collaboration between principals and counselors. (Please see VI. Action Items, #4 Goal)

B. Undergraduate Offerings: All of our programs and courses involve personalized, developmentally oriented coursework emphasizing the integration of theory and experiential learning for professional competence.

- We offer advanced courses for undergraduate and enrichment students interested in fundamental counseling skills, helping relationships, and group work.
- Every semester, we offer a course required for Wyoming middle school certification regarding the role of educators in providing guidance, counseling, and growth experiences for children in intellectual, physical, psychological, learning, social, cultural, and behavioral domains.
- We consult and present with faculty and instructors of the teacher education program about complex issues including substance abuse and violence prevention, mentoring, communication skills, and conflict mediation strategies.
- A newly created I/L course taught by a faculty member will be offered fall 2003 entitled: *Relationship Skills: Counseling in Action*, CNSL 1000, in support of the 2003 University Studies Program (USP).
- Partnering our efforts with Dean Andrew Turner, Matthew Cairnes and Brandon Kosine, we support Dr. Deborah McGriff, Assistant Professor of Counselor Education, in planning a series of Leadership courses that we envision as the basis for a Leadership Certification Program in the future (please see VI.Action Items, #4Goal). Initially, to support the 2003 USP, we will offer CNSL 2200: *Introduction to Student Leadership* that carries the CS: Cultural Context-Social Sciences and L: Information Literacy designations.

C. Outreach: With regard to Access and Outreach, as emphasized in *MFIII*, we plan to continue our contributions.

- Our faculty teach on-site in Casper through the Outreach School at UW/CC for the purpose of site-bound and nontraditional students gaining a master's degree in counselor education.
- Every semester at least one faculty member and/or adjunct instructor offers a graduate level course via compressed video through the Outreach School to provide necessary learning experiences needed by site-bound educators and counseling practitioners for re-licensing and/or re-certification.

III. Assessment

We currently have a variety of assessments and indicators in place that provide helpful information to us and continue our faculty culture committed to student learning. We use the data to carefully consider our department's mission, goals, and objectives, as well as to prompt change that improves the operation of our department, the preparation of our students, and specific learning outcomes.

A. Assessment at the Level of the Program and its Overall Curriculum

1. Accreditation: Our programs are fully accredited by CACREP and Wyoming PTSB.

- The international organization that maintains quality control of counselor education programs is The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). Full CACREP approval involves satisfying a wide range of very detailed knowledge-based and clinical skill accreditation criteria which our department has successfully achieved since CACREP's inception more than 20 years ago.
- Wyoming Professional Standards Teaching Board (PTSB) recently approved the School Counseling Program as **Passing with Maximum Strengths** and awarded the **maximum possible 5-year accreditation**.

2. Employers, Alumni, and Supervisors' Evaluation Results

- Every 3 years, we mail to employers, alumni, and supervisors an anonymous survey regarding our curriculum, policies, and the department in general. We continue to use the feedback to implement appropriate programmatic changes.

3. Current Student Evaluation Results

- Annually, the faculty individually interviews each doctoral student regarding the department's strengths and improvement needs.
- Course evaluations and Brown Bag lunch feedback discussions concerning programmatic issues are conducted for master's students every semester.
- A formal evaluation process for all clinical courses informs the successful personal and professional performance of our students.

4. Counselor Education State Advisory Council: Our department's Advisory Council, which is invitational in membership, meets twice annually, and involves fifteen professional individuals throughout the state who serve staggered terms. The constituency includes: 2 community practitioners, 2 student affairs practitioners, 2 school counselors, 1 licensed addictions therapist, 1 licensed marriage and family therapist, 2 employers/program directors, 1 attorney, 1 consumer, and 2 students (master's and doctoral). Ex-officio members include the counselor education faculty and the Dean of the College of Education. During the Council meetings, participants offer beneficial feedback regarding the mental health needs of Wyoming's residents. Our department uses the feedback to better meet those needs.

B. Individual Student Assessment

1. National Counseling Examination (NCE): A passing score is required on the NCE for anyone intending to become a Licensed Professional Counselor in Wyoming and most other states. The NCE is administered twice yearly.

- Since the inception of the NCE, all of our students except two have passed the NCE with strong scores during their first attempt.
- For the past 5 years, our students have consistently scored significantly higher than the national average on the NCE.

2. Wyoming Mental Health Professions Licensing Board is the licensing agency for mental health professionals.

- All of our graduates who have applied for provisional and full Wyoming state licensure have been licensed.

3. Interviews and Admission process

- A formal application and interview process for Master's and doctoral applicants determines admissions.

4. Individual Performance Reviews

- The faculty reviews each Master's student during the initial clinical year related to academic, professional, and personal behavior. Any unsatisfactory rating leads to a written remediation plan that is signed by the advisor and student.
 - Performance Reviews may occur anytime there is a need for students in our program.
 - A written procedure is in-place for retention and dismissal.
- 5. Comprehensive Examinations, B-Projects, Oral Examinations, and Dissertations**
- Written comprehensive examinations and Capstone B-Projects must be passed by the Master's student's graduate committee to successfully graduate.
 - Doctoral student's performance on written comprehensive examinations, oral examinations, and dissertation must be evaluated as successful by the doctoral student's graduate committee to graduate.

C. Faculty Culture Committed to Student Learning, supported by Appropriate Institution Acknowledgement and Rewards

1. Personalized, Connected Education: Our Caring Community Department Model: We are proud that our department supports our students to achieve professional growth. We are pleased to report that the strengths of our department involve ripple effects that evolve from our overall goal of creating a Caring Community with an emphasis on humanism and wellness, relative to three different axes: (1) faculty to faculty, (2) faculty to students, and (3) student to student. Our Caring Community department model is expressed in a variety of ways for each axis.

- We hold weekly faculty meetings for the purpose of helping each other understand issues of importance, resolution of potential conflicts, and offering support to each other for professional growth (teaching, research & service).
- Faculty actively mentor students by means of inviting our doctoral students to co-teach courses with us, encouraging students to join us in professional publications, and including our students in professional presentations at state, regional, and national levels. Also, all faculty members attend a weekly seminar with our doctoral students during which we offer opportunities for personal and professional growth. Similarly, our students are required to conduct real live counseling and supervision activities, which are very carefully monitored and supervised by higher level students as well as faculty members. Individual and group supervision sessions occur for the purpose of personal and professional growth.
- We link our students as a cohort group at the master's and doctoral levels through an active mentoring program. We assign formal mentoring relationships between current students and newly admitted students. In addition, typical class activities include planned group projects that lead to peer clinical supervision in our counseling clinic.

2. Recruitment, Retention, and Graduation: We are pleased with the results of our targeted recruitment and retention efforts. We believe that our numbers indicate our culture committed to student learning.

- We have had a consistent increase of qualified applicants for our on-campus doctoral and master's programs during these last 5 years.
- On-campus, we have accepted our ceiling of 20 new master's students and 7 new doctoral students beginning fall 2003, including international students; our fall 2002 acceptance was parallel to fall 2003.
- We graduated 19 of a 23 member cohort group of UW/CC Outreach Master's degree students during May 2002 ceremonies.
- 45 applicants recently submitted fully completed packets and spent a full interview day with us relative to admission as members of our next cohort group for our intensive, weekends-only UW/CC Outreach program. We admitted 26 new students into our UW/CC program.
- 95% of our graduates have job offers by graduation day.
- 80% of our graduates remain in Wyoming.

IV. Areas of Distinction

Although we see ourselves in a variety of roles throughout *MFIII*, we have identified Areas of Distinction that directly relate to our college and department vision, leadership, and mission.

A. Professions and Issues Critical to the Region: School Counseling Profession (please see VI. Action Items #1, 2, 3, & 4 Goals). School Counselors are in critically short supply in our state and region, thus we plan to answer needs of P-16 Education and society in general, as well as respond to student and practitioner interests in working in Wyoming schools and communities.

Our School Counseling Program supports College of Education focus of “P-16 Education for a Democratic Citizenry.” With Michael Smith joining Mary Alice Bruce to enhance and coordinate our school counseling program, plus the addition of Michael Morgan to emphasize Play Therapy (with children), Filial Therapy (with parents), and Kinder Therapy (with teachers) (PFKT), and re-evaluation of the Student Affairs Program, we see ourselves building on our existing department strengths, answering needs of P-16 Education and society in general, and responding to student interests by preparing counselors for practice in our state.

- Access to P-16 Education is demonstrated by our service to students throughout the state via Outreach Education delivery mediums. We teach courses every semester by means of compressed video for re-certification or licensure. Also, we offer Master’s degree programs through the Outreach School and UW/CC.
- Rural P-16 Education emphasis is evident in our department’s stated Rural-Generalist focus. Since its inception some 60 years ago, the UW Counselor Education program has adopted and marketed a philosophical orientation of preparing graduates for service in rural settings.
- Importance of Early Learning is in-keeping with our preventive and developmentally oriented philosophy of counseling. School Counseling with PFKT is a direct connection with early learning and cross-disciplinary teaming with the personnel of the College of Education Departments of Early Childhood and Elementary Education, Special Education, Educational Leadership, and Family and Consumer Sciences in the College of Agriculture.
- Strengthening Community is accomplished by all our counseling programs and counselors who serve children, adolescents, families, and community members in their personal and professional lives.
- Counseling Clinic: Grant money, donated money, and some college funds have facilitated the remodeling of our current clinic to provide a fresh, professional look to the facilities. As both a recruitment tool and campus resource, our Clinic is the cornerstone to professional training of school counselors. It is imperative that the enhancement of our Counseling Clinic remain a priority.

B. Professions and Issues Critical to the Region: Another Area of Distinction is our department focus on a range of critical issues facing children, adolescents, families, and community members in our state and region (VI. Action Items #2 & 4 Goals). This department focus includes critical issues such as substance abuse, violence prevention, mentoring, communication skills, community building, diversity, and conflict mediation strategies. As noted in *MFIII*, we see this theme as building on our strengths regarding faculty research agendas, ongoing successful grant activity, and enhancement of existing faculty interests and resources, plus meeting the career needs and interests of our students. Overall, we anticipate this focus as bolstering graduate education and cross-disciplinary teaming, thus resulting in increased applicant pools and external funding. As illustrative of our efforts:

- A major component of our department is our Wyoming Chemical Abuse & Research Education and Violence Prevention Program (WyoCARE), funded through grants from the Wyoming governor’s discretionary monies and the Wyoming State Department of Education. WyoCARE provides information and technical assistance to all Wyoming schools and communities for drug and alcohol abuse prevention, violence prevention, early intervention, rehabilitation referral, and education for all age groups. WyoCARE also participates in and provides training programs concerning violence and alcohol abuse education and prevention for teachers, counselors, other educational personnel, parents, law enforcement officials, judicial officials, plus other public service personnel throughout the state.
- Another ingredient of our department is our ongoing affiliation and subcontract with the University of Nevada Reno-based Mountain West Addiction Technology Transfer Center, funded by the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. Our activities include (1) reviewing and updating our competency-based graduate curriculum related to addictions, (2) eliciting increased involvement with practicing Wyoming counselors related to addictions, and (3) expanding our addictions curriculum offerings for professional development to reach all Wyoming professional counselors.
- Counseling services that have been funded for the Laramie area involve work with Albany County Partnership for Smoke Free Families (PSF) and the Alcohol Wellness, Alternatives, Research, and Education (AWARE) program, whose clients with whom we work are second offenders needing more than just the education piece offered by the UW.
- Certified Mediator Services offered by faculty (as certified under the auspices of the Wyoming State Department of Agriculture and other recognized bodies) facilitate open discussions and interdisciplinary expertise for those issues critical to children, families, communities, and business teams.
- Cross-disciplinary teaming opportunities with the University Counseling Center provide valuable training of counseling supervisors, graduate assistants, and interns.

- Cross-disciplinary research and programming with the College of Agriculture's Department of Child and Family Studies prepares students for Wyoming licensure in Marriage and Family Therapy.

V. Issues in MFIII that are Germane to the Department

Diversity and Internationalization: We cultivate a diverse and international student body and faculty to build a rich culture and affect our ability to deliver our curriculum (please see VI. Action Items, #3 Goal). We continue our efforts by:

- Supporting faculty in their various roles as Director of African-American Studies, members of PACMWA, participator in *Warming up the Chill*, etc.
- Responding to the mandatory component of the CACREP standards with integration of diversity as a priority across the curriculum.
- Responding quickly and consistently to all inquiries as sent to us from the Graduate School and other referrals.
- Assessment of our current approved practice of eliminating the GRE as a requirement for those who can interview on-campus so as to avoid test bias and discrimination.
- Interviewing overseas and out of state applicants via telephone so as to personally connect with them. (Several international students have cited this personal interview as the reason they chose us over other universities for their studies.)
- Recruiting and retaining an increasingly diverse student body with current students from Japan, Kenya, China, India, and Malaysia.
- Cultivating faculty involvement and experiences internationally via our formal connections with an institution of higher education in Guatemala, Universidad Del Valle De Guatemala (UVG), with the result that two faculty members are teaching graduate courses at UVG during summer 2003, one again during spring 2004, and beyond.
- Encouraging faculty member research work in Guatemala during sabbatical leave 2003-04.
- Engaging in grant writing activity with Dr. Lew Bagby in hopes of securing USAID money to offer our doctoral program in Guatemala with the long-term goal of faculty/student exchanges.

VI. Action Items for 2004-2009

Goal 1: Answer the critical need for school counselors by enhancing our School Counseling Program and exploring alternative forms of delivery (please see IV.A. Professions Critical to the Region)

1. Increase marketing and awareness of the school counseling program throughout the state and region.
Success Measure: The department webpage will be updated to include a special section on School Counseling by Fall 2004.
2. Determine specific geographical areas that are in high need of school counselors.
Success Measure: In collaboration with the Wyoming Counseling Association, the Wyoming School Counseling Association and the Department of Education, specific geographical high needs areas will be identified by Spring 2005.
3. Explore and evaluate alternative forms of program delivery (summer school, outreach, compressed video, online...) that will meet the geographical challenges of Wyoming's school counselor shortage.
Success Measure: A written proposal identifying specific and viable options will be presented to the Dean by Fall 2005.
4. Re-evaluate the efficacy of the Student Affairs program in collaboration key departments and UW Student Affairs professionals, and make a decision to either eliminate the program or restructure the program to better address departmental resources and state needs by Spring 2004.
Success Measure: A written plan to either phase out the Student Affairs program or restructure the program will be presented to the Dean by Fall 2004.

Goal 2: Strengthen our collaborations and scholarship focus on critical issues facing children, families, and communities (please see IV.B. Issues Critical to the Region)

5. Build early childhood interdisciplinary collaboration with the Department of Early Childhood and Elementary Education, the Department of Child and Family Studies, and other stakeholders to strengthen initiatives in the biennial play conference, the UW Early Care and Education Center and for a UW Center on Children, Youth and Families.

Success Measure: Consistent interdisciplinary meetings; co-sponsoring of the Play Conference; and active participation in the development of the UW Center on Children, Youth, and Families throughout the 5-year cycle.

6. Expand the current CACREP Advisory Council to include representatives from early childhood, elementary education, and play therapy.
Success Measure: One representative from each area (early childhood, elementary education & play therapy) will be invited to attend scheduled CACREP advisory council meetings beginning Spring 2004.
7. Develop and sponsor an annual summer Play Therapy Conference (PFKT) designed to meet national certification with the Association of Play Therapy (APT).
Success Measure: A Summer Play Therapy Conference curriculum that meets APT certification standards will be designed (Spring 2005) and implemented (Summer 2006) in the form of a summer conference or institute.
8. Provide leadership to the state in the areas of substance abuse prevention and treatment and supporting healthy family functioning.
Success Measure: In collaboration with the Mental Health Professions Licensing Board and other state entities, streamline the process for counselors seeking professional competence and licensure in the areas of addictions (LAT) and family counseling (LMFT) by Spring 2007.
9. Join the WICHE sponsored Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP).
Success Measure: Application will be made for WICHE inclusion by Fall 2006.
10. As a department, define a departmental scholarship focus area for faculty and students specific to children, families and communities, while at the same time recognizing unique individual contributions in research.
Success Measure: Faculty will participate in a series of discussions designed to collectively determine a departmental research agenda by Spring 2004.
11. Collaborative research projects, grants, and resultant writings submitted for publication under the identified scholarship focus will be encouraged by the department and put forward to the college for support and financial resources.
Success Measure: Faculty will engage in at least one collaborative research project by Spring 2005.
12. Counselor Education students will be mentored as productive researchers.
Success Measure: The department will sponsor a yearly student research and writing competition beginning Fall 2004. Writings will be guided and submitted for publication
Success Measure: Each doctoral candidate will be involved as an author on at least one submitted manuscripts for refereed publication by Summer 2007.

Goal 3: Recruit and retain a diversity of qualified Master's and doctoral students at a level consistent with CACREP standards, our geographical limitations, and practicum and internship site availability (please see V. Issues in MFIII that are Germane to the Department)

13. Faculty and staff will implement a 12-month marketing plan (based on our Caring Community Model) that includes systematic initial and follow-up response to all applicant inquiries.
Success Measure: A larger and stronger pool of candidates, including international students, will be attracted to our program and make formal application.
14. Continue to focus on internationalization by engaging in grant writing activity with Dr. Lew Bagby in hopes of securing USAID money.
Success Measure: If funding is secured, one cycle of our doctoral program at Universidad Del Valle De Guatemala (UVG) will be offered during the 5-year cycle.
15. We will engage in faculty/student exchanges with UVG.
Success Measure: Beginning Fall 2004, two students slots per year will be reserved for qualified UVG applicants.
16. Report the evaluation results to the Graduate School of our newly instituted policy regarding the elimination of the GRE as a requirement for those who can interview on-campus so as to avoid test bias and discrimination.
Success Measure: Report will be submitted Spring 2006.
17. The number of graduate assistantships available to our department will be increased through application to our college, the Graduate School, and grants.
Success Measure: By 2008 the number of GA positions within the department will increase by 20%.

18. Enhance the technology, assessment protocols, public relations, and physical structures of our Counseling Clinic.
Success Measure: By Spring 2007, grant funding will be secured to enhance and update the Counseling Clinic for preparation of counselors.

Goal 4: Develop stronger partnerships with schools, community agencies and university entities in the promotion, development, and application of practice, research, and training in general counseling skills as well as disaster mental health and emergency response interventions (please see IV.A. Professions Critical to the Region).

19. Partner with those in UW Student Life to solidify an undergraduate Leadership curriculum (see II.B.4&5).
Success Measure: Initially, to support the 2003 USP, we will offer CNSL 2200: Introduction to Student Leadership that carries the CS: Cultural Context-Social Sciences and L: Information Literacy designations.
Success Measure: Partnering our efforts with the Office of Student Life, we will support a discussion during Fall 2005 regarding a series of Leadership courses and establish a Leadership Certification Program by Summer 2008.
20. Foster collaborative relationships with the University Counseling Center, Department of Social Work and the Department of Psychology.
Success Measure: Department faculty will initiate formal and informal gatherings to explore collaborations in the areas of teaching, research and service beginning Spring 2004.
21. Continue to partner with the College of Education Department of Educational Leadership
Success Measure: School counselors and principals-in-training will meet together during the summer for several class sessions to engage in group discussion and practitioner panel presentations related to job goals, roles, and responsibilities in order to help meet their school's mission of collaboration between principals and counselors.
22. Continue our discussions and support of the Red Cross and school related emergency/crisis teams.
Success Measure: Faculty will support continued disaster mental health and emergency response course offerings through our department.