

Morehead State University

Program Review

Master of Arts in Education Provisional Certification Elementary Guidance Counseling (K-8)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Conceptual Framework.....	3
2. Program Experiences	
2A. Relation to Standards.....	4
Matrix 1 Alignment with New Counselor Standards.....	6
Matrix 2 Alignment with CACREP Curriculum Standards...	7
2B. Course Descriptions.....	8
3. NCATE Themes	
Matrix 3 Integration of NCATE Themes.....	9
4. Assessment	
4A. Initial Candidate Screening.....	10
4B. Program Progress Evaluation.....	10
Matrix 4 Assessment Matrix in Elementary Counseling.....	10
4C. Program Exit Examination.....	11
4D. Counselor Education Candidate Transition Points.....	11
5. Professional Education Faculty.....	12
6. Elementary Counseling Checksheet.....	14

I. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework provided by the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences -Teachers as Architects: Designing environments where students construct knowledge and develop skills- provides the foundation upon which the programs of professional school counseling are built. School counseling is regarded as a critical supportive role in the entire education process. The theme, Teachers as Architects, permeates all programs in professional school counseling as educators pursue programs of study in which they acquire the ability to design and build environments which promote the optimal development of each child.

This program is designed to prepare professional educators for the role of elementary school counselors by participating in a fully integrated program of study that includes the mastery of both theoretical knowledge and a fundamental core of clinical skills. Through coursework, pre-practicum and practicum experiences students are introduced to the role and function of the counseling profession as it is currently practiced in elementary schools throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The experiences are designed to emphasize the unique and specialized nature of the counseling relationship as a vehicle for encouraging and promoting the development of socially, academically, and personally competent individuals who are prepared for the demands of life and work in the 21st Century.

Central to this program is the achievement of skills and knowledge that will permit the working elementary school counselor to provide the full range of professional counseling services to students. The program of study has been designed to provide the necessary training so that graduates can effectively meet the New Counselor Standards and required certification standards as adopted by the Kentucky Department of Education in 1996. The development of these New Counselor Standards was initiated in an attempt to address the critical role of the school guidance counselor as an integral component of the educational team implementing the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) and its initiatives. The role of the counselor as a consultant in all aspects of the development of core content areas of study, in setting and promoting the attainment of high academic expectations, and in the coordination of assessment programs is a fundamental component of the New Counselor Standards and KERA. The Kentucky Education Reform Act, in many ways, redefined the roles of all educational professionals in the Commonwealth. The New Counselor Standards further defined the role of the school guidance counselor as an important member of the KERA team. The process of closely aligning the program of study in Elementary Counseling with the New Counselor Standards insures that graduates of the program become fully involved with the counselor's role as a critical component in all appropriate KERA initiatives and activities.

Although the state standards form the principle foundation for the program of study, the standards adopted by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, The American Counseling Association (ACA), the American School

Counseling Association (ASCA) and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs (CACREP) are consulted as a means of insuring that the program remains both current and fully reflective of national trends and issues as they relate to the practice of school counseling.

The program in elementary school counseling is based upon the mastery of three principle strands of development. The first of these is the development of basic and fundamental knowledge in the fields of human development, research, and psycho-educational assessment. The second strand involves the development of skills and knowledge in the field of professional counseling beginning with the philosophical and theoretical bases for effective counseling intervention. The final strand involves the development of discreet clinical skills necessary for effective intervention in individual and small group counseling as well as in consultation with parents, educators, and other mental health professionals. The integration of these three strands represents the weaving together of a unique blend of skills and knowledge necessary for the provision of caring, compassionate, and competent counseling services delivered within the context of the elementary school setting.

II. Program Experiences

A. Relationship to Standards

Students pursuing elementary counseling certification and the Master's degree are required to complete a program of study consisting of a minimum of 36 semester hours of course work and practica. The matrix appearing below provides a descriptive map of the New Counselor Standards and the course experiences to which they relate. The seven new counselor standards include:

Standard 1. Program Management, Research, and Evaluation

The school counselor develops a process and procedure for planning, implementation, and evaluation of a comprehensive developmental program of guidance and counseling. This program should be developed with faculty, staff, administrators, students, parents, school councils, school boards, and community members. It is based on needs assessment, formative evaluation, and summative evaluation.

Standard 2. Developmental Guidance Curriculum

The school counselor provides a developmental, preventative guidance program to all students within the school. This proactive program promotes the mental health necessary for academic success, self-sufficiency and responsible group membership.

Standard 3. Individual/Small Group Counseling

The school counselor uses short term individual counseling and structured as well as unstructured small group counseling to address mental, physical, and

emotional barriers to learning and to help each child learn at high levels.

Standard 4. Consultation/Collaboration

The school counselor functions in a cooperative process to assist others to effectively meet the needs of students. Through consultation the school counselor advocates for students.

Standard 5. Coordination

The school counselor functions as a coordinator in bringing together people and resources in the school, the community, and the district for the fullest academic, career, personal, and social development of the students.

Standard 6. Assessment

The school counselor collaborates with other school and district staff to design and coordinate a testing program that helps students identify their abilities, achievements, and interests.

Standard 7. Adherence to Professional Standards

The school counselor is a professional who acts within legal and ethical guidelines to accomplish educational purposes.

The matrix depicted below portrays the alignment of the Master's degree program in Elementary School Counseling with the Standards for New Counselors adopted by the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board in 1996

The progression of difficulty/complexity throughout the program is indicated by the use of the follow scheme:

I indicates Introduction, the standard indicator is presented on an introductory level;

D indicates Development, the indicator is thoroughly implemented;

M indicates Maintenance, the standard indicator is reviewed and proficiency retention is confirmed.

Matrix 1

Standard/Course	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
EDGC 619	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
EDGC 620	I	I	I	I			
EDGC 656	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
EDGC 665	D	D	D	D	D		D
EDGC 666		D	D	D			D
EDGC 667		D	D	D			D
EDGC 668			D	D		D	D
EDGC 669A	M	M	M	M	D	M	M
EDF 661	I					D	D
EDF 600	D					D	D
EDF 610		D					