

**University of Southern Maine**

**COUNSELOR EDUCATION  
PROGRAM**

**ASSESSMENT &  
EVALUATION PLAN**

**Approved 10/2008  
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# **University of Southern Maine Counselor Education Program Assessment & Evaluation Plan**

The following document provides both a contextual overview of systemic policies about assessment as well as specific information about the required assessment and evaluation procedures for the USM Counselor Education program. The plan is framed by the School of Education & Human Development (SEHD) Assessment Plan that was approved in 2001.

A set of Guiding Principles was established that direct SEHD programs in the selection, creation, use, and/or review of assessment and evaluation practices. These guiding principles suggest a unit-wide dedication to valid and informed practices related to the assessment and evaluation process. The SEHD Guiding Principles are:

1. The stated program goals, standards, and outcomes are clearly stated and measurable
2. The admissions criteria represent the program's philosophy and goals
3. There should be multiple sources of evidence for meeting standards
4. Programs should monitor courses to make sure course activities are aligned with program standards and goals, and in keeping with the College's Conceptual Framework
5. Criteria for major assessments and projects are clear and valid
6. Procedures are in place for providing feedback to candidates about their progress and standing
7. Appeals and review processes are in place for programmatic judgments and decisions

In keeping with these principles, the Counselor Education Program Assessment Plan includes the following five components: (a) Context Statements; (b) Program Goals & Standards; (c) Summary of Current Student Performance Assessments; (d) Summary of Current Program Evaluations; and (d) Appeal and Review

Process, and (e) a Reflections section that identifies current issues and projected activities related to Assessment and Evaluation.

## I. CONTEXT STATEMENTS

- ◆ *Name of Program:* Counselor Education  
The Counselor Education program is one of two programs in the Counseling, Adult & Higher Education Department, which, in turn, is one of five departments in the School of Education & Human Development.
- ◆ *Degree(s) Awarded, Credits Required:* Master of Science in Counseling, with concentrations in Mental Health (60 credits), Rehabilitation (54 credits), and School Counseling (60 credits). MHRT (12 credits) certification and a Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) (30 credits post-Master's) are also offered.
- ◆ *Number of Candidates:* Annually admit (and graduate) approximately 47 students. Currently there are approximately 150 students matriculated in the three concentrations.
- ◆ *Ages/Grades of Students/Clients Candidates Will Serve:* Students and/or clients range from as young as 3 or 4 to seniors in their 70s and 80s.
- ◆ *Accreditation:* USM's Counselor Education program maintains the highest professional standards through program accreditation, meeting state requirements for licensure and/or certification, as well as through professional development and involvement with national and state organizations. The Clinical Mental Health Counseling and School Counseling concentrations are accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and the Rehabilitation Counseling concentration is accredited by the Council on Rehabilitation Counseling (CORE).

## II. PROGRAM GOALS & STANDARDS

The basic belief of the USM Counselor Education program is that people often need assistance in addressing typical developmental transitions and difficult life situations. Counseling and guidance services provide professional helpers who can effectively facilitate growth and development. In addition to teaching counseling skills, the program promotes students' personal growth by encouraging them to develop attitudes, values, and beliefs that will enhance and facilitate the helping process. Specifically, the counselor education program is designed to foster:

- Knowledge of human development and behavior.
- An understanding of the history, philosophy, and practice of the specialty area.
- An understanding of theories and techniques related to individual and group counseling.
- Knowledge of career development theory and techniques and skills in the development of information services.
- Knowledge of psychological measurement and evaluation and its application.
- An understanding of the means used for obtaining and applying information from appropriate research sources.
- An integration of academic and applied knowledge into a personal model of professional practice.
- An awareness of individual strengths, weaknesses, and biases, especially in relation to clients, colleagues, and family.
- Sensitivity to the unique perspectives of people living and working in a pluralistic society.
- A commitment to ethical practice in counseling.
- A professional identity within the counseling profession.

## **Course Requirements (60 credits)**

### Core Courses (36 credits)

HCE 500 Orientation to the Counseling Profession  
EDU 600 Research Methods and Techniques  
HCE 604 Career Development  
HCE 605 Psychological Measurement and Evaluation  
HCE 612 Multicultural Counseling: Social & Cultural Foundations of Helping Diverse Families  
HCE 620 Fundamentals of Counseling Theories  
HCE 621 Fundamentals of Counseling Skills  
HCE 626 Group Process and Procedures  
HCE 627 Group Counseling  
HCE 668 Human Development  
HCE 690 Individual Counseling Practicum Seminar  
HCE 691 Individual Counseling Practicum Laboratory  
HCE 642 Perspectives in Chemical Dependency (effective Summer 2009)  
HCE 644 Crisis Intervention (effective Summer 2009)

### Required Specialty Courses – School Counseling (15 credits)

HCE 607 School Guidance Programs and Services  
HCE 609 The Practice of School Counseling  
HCE 622 Counseling Children and Adolescents  
HCE 686 Internship in Counselor Education (6 credits – 600 hours at a minimum of two grade levels)

### Required Specialty Courses – Rehabilitation Counseling (18 credits)

HCE 510 Introduction to Rehabilitation Counseling & Services  
HCE 514 Evidence-based Psychiatric Rehabilitation Practices & Treatment  
HCE 611 Medical & Psychological Aspects of Disability  
HCE 615 Vocational Counseling & Placement in Rehabilitation  
HCE 619 Recovery-oriented Origins of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Practice

### Required Specialty Courses – Clinical Mental Health (18 credits)

HCE 640 Professional Issues for Mental Health Counselors  
HCE 645 Diagnosis and Treatment Planning  
HCE 686 Internship in Counselor Education  
(9 credits – 900 hours)Electives (9 credits)

### Substance Abuse Expertise

For those persons interested in working in the area of substance abuse, the counselor education program offers coursework which enables students to obtain a Certificate in Substance Abuse Counseling within their master's degree. Students who complete this certificate as part of their master's degree meet all academic requirements necessary to become a licensed alcohol and drug counselor (LADC) in Maine. *The following courses are required for the certificate:*

HCE 642 Perspectives on Chemical Dependency  
HCE 643 Psychopharmacology, Substance-Related Dx. & Integrated Co-Occurring Treatment

HCE 644 Crisis Intervention

HCE 650 Basic Concepts in Couple and Family Therapy

HCE 686 Internship in Counselor Education (6 credits, 600 hours in an in-patient/out-patient substance abuse treatment facility)

### **Connection of Program to External Standards & Guidelines**

◆ *Alignment of Program Goals with State and National Standards:*

The goals of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling concentration align with the standards of the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP); the goals of the Rehabilitation Counseling concentration are aligned with the standards of the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE); and the goals of the School Counseling concentration are aligned with the standards of the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and the Maine Department of Education.

◆ *Partnerships with Professional Community:* The practica and internships, in particular, rely of formal partnerships with local schools and agencies. The partnerships are legitimized through signed contracts or Memos of Understanding.

◆ *Alignment of Program Goals, Courses, and Assessments with SEHD Mission and Values:*

All course blueprints have been reviewed to identify the multiple ways that courses and student outcomes align with the College of Education & Human Development core mission and values.

### **Relevant Policies & Practices**

1. All Counselor Education students must pass the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) before entering their Internship.
- 2a. Students seeking Maine certification as School Counselors must have a written recommendation for certification from the Counselor Education submitted to the Maine Department of Education certification office and pass the PRAXIS II Examination.
- 2b. Students seeking licensure as Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors (LCPC) in Maine must pass the National Counseling Exam (NCE) and have their credentials reviewed by the Maine State Licensing Board.

3. Other policies and practices related to enrollment, admission credit, leaves of absence, minimum GPA, etc. are outlined in the on-line Student Handbook.

### III. SUMMARY OF CURRENT PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS

#### Pre-Admission Requirements

- *Pre-admission test results:*  
MAT or GRE scores are used as part of the screening device for the admissions process; scoring criteria are also used for assessing application narratives, recommendations, and writing samples.
  - *Special Admission Requirements*
    1. In addition to the general requirements of the College, candidates to the master's program should provide a narrative, preferably typed, in the form of an autobiography that relates the applicant's experiences that have led to an interest in counseling and application to the counselor education program. It should be limited to three typewritten, double-spaced pages which will be evaluated in terms of clarity of expression, grammatical construction, and other facets of English composition, as well as the quality of responses.
    2. The admissions process requires a formal interview. Candidates to be interviewed will be rated on three areas of personal criteria: a) understanding of and commitment to the counseling field; b) self-awareness; and c) thinking skills/decision making ability.
    3. As part of the interview, applicants will be required to provide a brief, spontaneous writing sample.

The Counselor Education program uses a rating scale to assess the various components of the Admissions process, and uses the ratings to help determine which candidates will be invited for interviews, and which ones will eventually be admitted into the program. *Appendix A is the rating form and Appendix B for an explanation of the scoring criteria.*

#### Candidacy Criteria (prior to Practicum and Internship)

- *Individualized Faculty Assessments*  
In all academic courses, faculty are given the freedom to assess the attainment of content knowledge, skills, and dispositions through a variety of assessment

formats. These assessments typically include in-class tests, projects, research papers, observations, and journals. Many faculty use scoring rubrics to assess group and individual projects and skill-based observations.

- For each course, faculty are asked to identify which assignments in the course syllabus relate to the assessment of each outcome for the course.

The following USM policy is printed in the Student Handbook so that students can identify the expectations for grading:

**USM Policy on Disposition of Written, Graded Material**

1. Faculty members giving students any type of test, quiz, exam, research or other type of paper or any type of written proficiency exam which affects the student's final (cumulative) grade shall be required to:
  - Return the written, graded material to the student within fifteen (15) days (including the day which the faculty member receives the material) in which the University has classes; OR
  - Hold the written, graded material for the period of thirty (30) days in which the University has classes. The material must be available for inspection by the students who did the work on the material. The day on which the material is due is included in the 30-day period.
2. In the case of final (end-of-semester) written, graded material the instructor shall:
  - Offer to mail the corrected (graded) material to the student provided the student supplies the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Exams that are to be mailed must be post-marked within fifteen (15) calendar days of the last day of the semester. The day all classes and exams cease is the last day of the semester. This day shall be included in the 15-day mailing period.
  - Instructors who do not wish to mail the graded material or who cannot return the material because of standardized testing shall make the graded material available for inspection by the student who did the work for a period no shorter than thirty (30) days into the next semester in which the University has classes.

- *Assessment of Students' Counseling Skills*

Although many courses in the Counselor Education program rely on content knowledge and demonstration of skills through projects, several of the courses are what we refer to as *Skill Intensive*. Such courses are designed to help students develop critical skills that will be needed and applied in higher level courses, or more importantly, in one's future work as a professional counselor. Students are regularly engaged in hands-on opportunities in these courses so

that they are initially introduced to new skills, then they gradually move toward further refinement of those skills. Learning experiences in such courses often include skill-based assignments, checklists and protocols, journaling, reflection papers, observations, and individualized qualitative critique of student work. Learning activities are carefully sequenced and students are provided with regular feedback to foster growth and development. These classes also regularly involve small group role-playing and peer feedback activities.

Assessment in these skill-intensive courses is usually more qualitative, as it focuses primarily on levels of attainment, depth of reflection and understanding, and overall facility in the use of the counseling skills. The final grade is determined by qualitatively assessing the student's appropriate use of counseling micro-skills and the facility with which those skills are used in an integrated way to create an emerging counseling style that is facilitative and helpful, while also reflecting the statements students have made in their papers about their philosophical and/or theoretical frameworks.

A grade of A means that the student has performed at an outstanding level of skill, integration, and competence. The instructor has full confidence that the student has mastered the essential skills so that he or she is ready to practice those skills at the next developmental level in the program.

A grade of B means that the student has sufficiently and satisfactorily performed the required skills, but is still experiencing challenges that need attention and/or refinement. The B grade may also reflect a need for a deeper understanding of the counseling process, a greater awareness of self in the counseling process, and/or deeper reflection and insight about the needs of those being counseled. A grade of B means the student is doing good work, and it should *not* be considered a poor grade for this course.

A grade of C means that the student has done the required work for the course but his or her skills are not at an obvious level of minimum competence and/or he or she is having difficulty fully integrating those skills according to the standards of the profession. Students receiving a grade of C in the Counseling Skills course may *not* proceed into the Practicum classes. The course must be repeated.

## Practicum Candidacy

All students must complete all procedures and assessments for candidacy into the Counseling Practicum. The Practicum Application verifies that the student has completed all prerequisites for the Practicum course. The *Practicum Candidacy Rating Scale* (see Appendix D) is used as an assessment tool by the Counseling Skills course instructor to assess each student's skill readiness for entering into the Counseling Practicum course.

- *Mid-Program Assessments & Reviews*

The Counselor Education faculty conducts semi-annual reviews of all Counselor Education students to determine satisfactory progress or the need for review, focused advising, remediation, probation, or termination.

- *Portfolios:*

The School Counseling and Clinical Mental Health Counseling (and starting in 2015 Rehabilitation Counseling) concentrations use a comprehensive portfolio to engage students in a process of collecting, reflecting upon, and refining a compilation of materials and personal statements that synthesize the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that help to comprise their professional identities. The portfolio is introduced in the HCE 500 Orientation to the Counseling Profession (HCE 510 for Rehabilitation Counseling) course. A scoring rubric is used for assessing the various components of the portfolio, and they are reviewed in the HCE 607 and HCE 609 courses for the School Counseling concentration and HCE 640 for the Clinical Mental Health concentration (and HCE 615 for Rehabilitation Counseling) as part of the Mid-Program review process.

- *Evidence of mastery in the content areas:* All students in the Counselor Education program must pass the Counselor Preparation Competency Exam (CPCE). The examination covers all domains and areas included in the Master's-level program and it provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate their mastery of the major content knowledge areas.

*Results of state or national licensure examinations:*

USM's Counselor Education students have consistently scored approximately one standard deviation above the national mean on the Counselor Preparation Competency Examination (CPCE) and the National Counseling Examination (NCE).

- *Assessment of Practicum Experience*  
In the Practicum class, students are provided both individual and group supervision. The Practicum Performance Criteria (<http://www.usm.maine.edu/cehd/CounselorEducation/690.htm#performance>) are used to assess student competence in the Practicum.

### **Internship Candidacy Assessments**

- A student must complete all course prerequisites, successfully complete the Counseling Practicum course with a grade of B or better, and pass the CPCE before being matriculated in HCE 686 Internship in Counselor Education. Students must also show evidence that they have liability insurance.
- For the Internship, students receive both on-site and university-based supervision. The internship seminar also includes various assignments and review procedures that document student compliance and attention to service delivery. Log sheets document that students are spending a minimum of 40% of their time providing direct service to clients/constituents.
- *Portfolios:*  
The School Counseling and Clinical Mental health concentrations (and starting in 2015 Rehabilitation Counseling) use a portfolio to engage students in a process of collecting, reflecting upon, and refining a compilation of materials and personal statements that synthesize the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that help to comprise their professional identities. A scoring rubric is used for assessing the various components of the portfolio. A summative presentation and assessment of portfolios takes place in the HCE 686 Internship classes. The final presentation of the professional portfolio is one of the culminating activities in the Internship Seminar.
- ◆ *Results of any assessments conducted in the first year of practice:*  
The Counselor Education program does not conduct induction assessments, but does conduct follow-up evaluations through the regular university program review process.

## **Comprehensive Assessment System and e-Portfolios**

As of 2012, the School of Education & Human Development is instituting the application of the Tk20 Assessment System for all programs in the school. The Spring 2012 semester will be devoted to training and system input, and the system will “go live” with students in the Fall 2013 semester.

### **IV. SUMMARY OF CURRENT PROGRAM EVALUATIONS**

- *Annual retreats:* Each fall semester the Counselor Education faculty and staff meet for a full-day retreat to address major program issues and engage in a reflective review of the qualitative issues having an impact on student and program success. It is at these retreats that the more substantive issues can be analyzed and initial action planning can evolve.
- *Program Meetings:* The Counselor Education program faculty and staff meet every other week to attend to on-going needs and raise issues that need attention. Both formal and informal procedures are used to assess program needs, conduct reviews of program and course proposals, discuss data, and apply or update policies and standards.
- *Curriculum Proposals:* Changes in Course Blueprints (description, goals, and outcomes) must be reviewed by the department and then the School of Education and Human Development Curriculum Committee before being sent to the Dean for final approval. Occasionally, programs are also asked to discuss their proposals with the Admissions & Retention committee and/or the Professional Educator Council. This thorough evaluation process examines the rationale behind the proposed changes, as well as the content and integrity of the proposal.
- *Peer Review Process:* The SEHD Peer Review process is both supportive and rigorous, with program and department faculty assuming primary responsibility for the evaluation process, with considerable assistance from the Dean’s office. The School Peer Committee then reviews candidates for re-appointment, tenure, promotion, and post-tenure review, and makes recommendations to the Dean, who in most cases then makes a recommendation to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs. SEHD has well-articulated standards for re-appointment, promotion, and tenure,

with Scholarship being aligned with Boyer's framework for multiple perspectives related to scholarship.

- *Follow-up studies:*

For many years, the Center for Educational Policy, Applied Research, and Evaluation (CEPARE) conducted follow-up study of graduates and employers of graduates every five years to assess the overall quality and effectiveness of the program and its graduates. The follow-up studies provide valuable information about graduates' and employers' perceptions about the quality of the USM Counselor Education program, its course delivery, and the students graduating from the program.

- *Advisory Committees:*

The advisory groups for School Counseling, Rehabilitation Counseling and Clinical Mental Health Counseling concentrations provide significant benefits for reviewing program accomplishments and needs. The advisory committees have been instrumental in advocating for program changes and supporting critical transitions. Program data/decisions are shared annually with them

- *Accreditation/Alignment with Professional Associations:*

The Counselor Education program has been accredited by CACREP since 1987 and the regular reviews have been helpful for aligning the program with national standards of excellence. The review and formative evaluation process elicits input and participation in multiple changes. The Rehabilitation Counseling concentration is accredited by the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) and provides similar review, input, and support.

## V. APPEAL & REVIEW PROCESS

- **Petitions for Exceptions to Regulations:** A student has the privilege of petitioning for exceptions to the regulations to the department faculty by submitting in writing convincing evidence that the exception is needed and warranted. A petition is to be submitted to the Program Coordinator, who will notify the student when the faculty will review the request. The student has the right to be present during the review of the request and is encouraged to attend. The decision of the faculty is final.
- **Substitutions and Waivers:** Graduate students may petition to the Program Coordinator for substitutions and waivers. The student must assume responsibility for supplying all documentation that is relevant to the request. After receiving the student's written request, the Program Coordinator will consult with a faculty member in the student's area of study and review the evidence provided. This review will be presented to the program faculty for a decision. When the request involves a requirement established by the program faculty, the faculty vote is final. The student will be notified in writing of the decision.
- **Students who fail the Counselor Preparation Competency Examination (CPCE):** Students are initially given two opportunities to pass the CPCE. Students who fail to receive a passing total score on the first attempt must retake the exam a second time. On the second attempt, the student must receive either a passing total score or pass all subtests that were failed on the first administration.

Students who fail to pass the CPCE on the second attempt will be given three options. Within 14 days of being notified, students must submit, in writing, their selected option to their advisor.

*Option 1:* Retake courses reflective of all failed sub-tests and pass all courses. (Passing is a grade of B- or better.) A failing grade on any such course will result in termination from the program.

*Option 2:* Write and defend an in-depth research paper in response to a question created by a committee of three counselor education faculty. The student will then have 14 days to review the question, and set a date for completion of the research paper and defense of its content. Following the paper's defense, the faculty committee will determine whether or not the

student was successful. Failure to pass Option 2 will result in termination from the program.

*Option 3:* Retake the CPCE for the third time. If the student fails to obtain a passing total score or pass all subtests previously failed, s/he will be terminated from the program.

- In accordance with the USM Graduate catalog, the following appeal policies are available to students:

### *Non-Academic Complaints*

To provide graduate students with assistance in resolving disagreements or complaints of a non-academic nature, the University has designated the Office of the Dean of Student Life (ODSL) to respond to student inquiries. The mission of ODSL is to provide impartial guidance to students in identifying the nature of their disagreement or complaint. ODSL staff will guide students to the appropriate University policy or procedure to utilize in seeking resolution. The academic policies described below are not applicable to student complaints about unlawful discrimination or sexual harassment; however, an ODSL representative can advise the student about the University policies and procedures to follow when student complaints of this nature arise.

### *Academic Grade Appeal Policy*

The purpose of the academic grade appeal policy is to provide a fair and speedy review of all student appeals of academic grades in graduate/professional programs at the University of Southern Maine; this policy will permit such appeals to be determined in a manner that reflects the interests of both the student and the instructor. The only matters reviewable under this policy are claims of prejudice on the part of an instructor in an academic exercise or activity for which a grade leading to academic credit is awarded, and/or evident and prejudicial error in the administration or grading method used for any paper, examination, performance, or other exercise or activity for which a grade leading to academic credit is awarded, provided that the academic judgment used in determining the merits of the grade to be awarded to such exercise or activity shall not be reviewable.

An appeal under this policy shall be carried out according to the following procedures:

1. The student should present his or her claim, in writing, to the instructor involved and shall seek to have the matter resolved by the instructor. In no event shall there be a right of appeal hereunder for a claim presented to the

instructor more than 30 days after a final grade is posted to the student's record. The instructor must respond within 14 days of receiving the appeal.

2. If the student remains aggrieved by the decision of the instructor under step (1), he or she may, within 14 days after formal receipt of the instructor's final decision, appeal, in writing, to the chairperson of the department or program director of the college in which the course or other exercise or activity is offered. The chairperson/program director must respond within 14 days of receiving the appeal.
3. If the student remains aggrieved by the decision of the chairperson or program director of the department under step (2), he or she may, within 14 days after formal receipt of the chairperson's or program director's final decision, appeal, in writing, to the dean of the college in which the course or other exercise or activity is offered.
4. The dean, after discussion with the student and instructor, may resolve the grievance by agreement or render a decision within 21 days of receipt of the written appeal. The decision may be (a) that the appeal be dismissed or (b) that a grade be changed or the student be allowed an opportunity to retake an examination or other exercise or (c) that another appropriate remedy be administered.
5. The student or the instructor may, within 14 days of the receipt of the decision of the dean, appeal to the associate provost and dean of Graduate Studies in writing, stating the reason for the appeal and delivering a copy of the writing to the opposing party and the dean. The opposing party may, within 10 days of receipt of the reasons for appeal, reply in writing to the associate provost and dean of Graduate Studies. The associate provost and dean of Graduate Studies shall review the original claim, the written decision of the chairperson or program director and dean, and the written reasons for the appeal and reply. The associate provost and dean of Graduate Studies shall, within 28 days of receipt of the appeal and after reviewing the matter, prepare a written decision which shall uphold the decision of the chairperson, program director, or dean, or prescribe any other appropriate remedy. The associate provost and dean of Graduate Studies' decision shall be final and not subject to further review. Copies of the decision of the associate provost and dean of Graduate Studies shall be delivered to the student, the instructor, and the chairperson or program director and dean. The total time for resolution from the first appeal to the final decision shall

be less than 120 days. If a faculty member/administrator fails to address the appeal within the specified time frame, the student may take the appeal to the next level.

### *Appeals of Dismissal or Withdrawal*

All appeals of dismissal or withdrawal must follow the appeals process defined by the program's school or college. The dean of the school or college must be included in this process. Within 14 days following the student's receipt, in writing, of the decision by the department/dean, the student may appeal in writing to the associate provost and dean of Graduate Studies. The decision of the associate provost/dean of Graduate Studies shall be rendered within three weeks and shall be final.

If a student withdraws or is withdrawn from the University during the first two weeks of the semester, there will be no courses or grades recorded. A student withdrawing or being withdrawn after the second week through the eighth week will receive a W grade for each course in which the student was enrolled. A student withdrawing or being withdrawn after the eighth week will receive regular grade designations as determined by the instructor(s). Under unusual circumstances, grades of W can be assigned after the eighth week if approved by the instructor and the director of the program, and with final approval of the associate provost and dean of Graduate Studies

## **VI. REFLECTIONS SECTION**

### *Noteworthy Reflections about Program Strengths & Needs, Candidate and Program Assessment, and Evaluation Procedures*

As part of its five-year review process, the Counselor Education program uses the opportunity to reflect on current practices, identify challenges, and set priorities for change and improvement. The Reflective Learning model is considered one of the hallmarks of a good evaluation process, and the process of critical review is important for maintaining the integrity of the program while keeping it current with the changes in the counseling profession.

**Appendix A:**

**Applicant Rating Scale**

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE  
Counselor Education Program - Applicant Rating Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewers: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>ACADEMIC CRITERIA</b>											
<u>GGPA, MAT, or GRE</u> (highest if both)											Score: _____
Points	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GGPA	3.0	3.0-3.09	3.1-3.19	3.20-3.29	3.3-3.39	3.4-3.49	3.5-3.59	3.6-3.69	3.7-3.79	3.8-3.89	3.9-4.0
MAT	0-29	30-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	61-65	66-70	71-75	76+
MAT	0-380	381-389	390-397	398-405	406-412	413-419	420-427	428-435	436-443	444-452	453+
GRE	0-749	750-819	820-889	890-959	960-1029	1030-1099	1100-1169	1170-1239	1240-1309	1310-1380	1380+
<u>Undergraduate GPA</u>						GPA: _____					
Points	0	1	2	3	4						
			2.0	2.00-2.49	2.50-2.99	3.00-3.49					3.50-4.00
											Total = _____
<b>A. NARRATIVE</b>											
Points	0	3	6	9	12	15	18	21			25
Criteria (refer to assessment packet)											Total = _____
<b>REFERENCES</b>											
Points	0	1	2	3	4	5	6				Total = _____

B.	<b>C. INTERVIEW</b>										
	<b>D.</b>										
	<u>Understanding of, and Commitment to, the Counseling Profession</u>										
	Points	0	3	6	9	12					
<u>Self Awareness</u>											
Points	0	3	6	9	12						15
<u>Thinking Skills/Decision Making</u>											
Points	0	3	6	9	12						15
											Total = _____
<b>WRITING SAMPLE</b>											
Points	0	2	4	6	8						10
											Total = _____
E.											

<b><u>CUMULATIVE TOTAL</u></b>		
Academic	=	_____ of 14
Narrative	=	_____ of 25
References	=	_____ of 6
<i>Subtotal</i>	=	_____ of 45
Writing Sample	=	_____ of 10
Interview	=	_____ of 45
<i>Subtotal</i>	=	_____ of 55
<b>TOTAL</b>	=	_____ of 100

## **Appendix B**

### **Admission Packet Guidelines**

## ADMISSIONS PACKET

To: Interviewers  
From: Admissions Committee

To promote objectivity during the admissions procedure, we have devised some criteria for assessing each application. The enclosed packet defines the areas of assessment respective levels of point allotments.

In completing the “Masters Applicant Rating Form” for each applicant, please refer to the information on the following pages.

### ASSESSMENT

The following maximum points will be given to the five areas of assessment.

Academic Criteria	14
Narrative	25
Writing Sample	10
Interview	45
References	6

#### Academic Criteria (14 points)

Data for review of academic criteria will be in the applicant’s file. An applicant will receive the following percentages:

#### GGPA, MAT or GRE (highest if both)

Points	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GGPA	3.0	3.0-3.09	3.1-3.19	3.20-3.29	3.3-3.39	3.4-3.49	3.5-3.59	3.6-3.69	3.7-3.79	3.8-3.89	3.9-4.0
MAT	0-29	30-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	61-65	66-70	71-75	76+
MAT	0-380	381-389	390-397	398-405	406-412	413-419	420-427	428-435	436-443	444-452	453+
GRE	0-749	750-819	820-889	890-959	960-1029	1030-1099	1100-1169	1170-1239	1240-1309	1310-1380	1380+

#### Undergraduate GPA

Points	0	1	2	3	4
	2.0	2.00-2.49	2.50-2.99	3.00-3.49	3.50-4.00

Narrative (25 points)

The applicant shall submit an autobiography that relates to interest in counseling and application into the counselor education program. It should be limited to three (3) typewritten, double-spaced pages.

Points Scale for Personal Narrative

20-25	indicates a clear, well stated and constructed paper showing evidence of maturity in relating own experiences to the intent to be admitted into a graduate counseling program.
14-19	indicates an average presentation with some weak or questionable areas. There may be some lack of integration between personal experience and goals.
8-13	indicates minimal presentation about self, probably is not clearly presented, has contradictory elements, and is not well written
up to 7	indicates a poorly expressed, possibly contradictory and unclear presentation about self, strengths and weaknesses as well as about other areas.

Writing Sample (10 points)

Criteria to be applied:

- sentence and paragraph construction
- spelling, grammar, organization and presentation
- cohesion

Personal Criteria (45 points)

Personal Criteria will be assessed primarily through the interview. The applicant will be rated on three areas of personal criteria based on the responses. Interviewers will direct their questions to cover the following areas:

- understanding of & commitment to, the counseling field 15 points
- self awareness 15 points
- thinking skills/ decision making 15 points

References (6 points)

Data for reviewing references will be in the applicant's file.

5-6	indicates that the applicant has received outstanding recommendations on all references, that the narrative is consistent, and that the references relate to success or potential success in counseling.
3-4	indicates that the applicant has received average or better performance on all three letters, that the narrative is consistent, and/or that the references relate to success in the field.
1-2	indicates that the applicant has received below average references from at least two of the letters and they seem to relate to uncertainty about success in the field.

## **Appendix C**

### **Practicum Candidacy Rating Scale**





## **Appendix D**

### **Sections of the Portfolio**

**HCE 500 Orientation to the Counseling Profession**  
**Sections for *Counseling Portfolio***  
**(matriculated students only)**

Sub-Categories may be included to help organize materials

**School Counseling**

1. Foundations (History, Philosophy, Theory, Ethics, Professional Identity, Professional Standards)
2. Counseling, Prevention, & Intervention
3. Diversity & Advocacy
4. Assessment
5. Research & Evaluation
6. Academic Development
7. Collaboration & Consultation
8. Leadership
9. Resume & References

**Clinical Mental Health Counseling**

1. Foundations (History, Philosophy, Theory, Ethics, Professional Identity, Professional Standards)
2. Counseling, Prevention, & Intervention
3. Diversity & Advocacy
4. Assessment
5. Research & Evaluation
6. Diagnosis
7. Resume & References

**HCE 510 Introduction to rehabilitation counseling**

**Rehabilitation Counseling (starting in 2015)**

1. Foundations (History, Philosophy, Theory, Ethics, Professional Identity, Professional Standards)
2. Counseling, Prevention, & Intervention
3. Diversity & Advocacy
4. Assessment/ Diagnosis (CLRC-only)
5. Research & Evaluation
6. Career Development & Employment
7. Resume & References

**Career Status Check**  
**(for non-matriculated students)**

1. Resume & References
2. Evidence of Professional Competence (CEUs, certificates, credentials, etc.)
3. Assessment of Strengths and Needs
4. Professional Goals and Action Plan for reaching goals

## **Appendix E**

### **Portfolio Scoring Rubric**

## COUNSELOR EDUCATION PROGRAM PORTFOLIO FORMAT

**This new format is required of all counseling students admitted as of 2014.**

**Step 1:** Students are introduced to Tk20, Course Binders, Digital Filing Cabinets, and e-Portfolio in either HCE 500 or HCE 510.

A. **Tk20** is both an assessment system for students and faculty and an accountability system for the program (especially for accreditation). Materials must be developed that demonstrate how student learning is directly related to CACREP or CORE outcomes.

B. **Course Binders** are managed by faculty for each course and include all assignments, scoring rubrics, feedback to students, and documentation of completed requirements.

C. **Digital Filing Cabinets** are the student-managed files in which they must upload artifacts that include evidence of completion of ALL COMMON ASSESSMENTS, as well as other assignments and information that they believe might be included in their portfolios.

D. The **e-Portfolio** will be a student-designed collection of artifacts and reflections that demonstrate an integration of program requirements and an emerging professional identity that can assist with future career goals.

**Step 2:** Advisors periodically (at least one each semester is recommended) check on their advisees' progress in uploading artifacts, especially those that relate to program Transition Points. Thus, as the advisor meets with students to discuss readiness for program movement to the Counseling Skills course, Practicum, and Internship, he or she will also use the Digital Filing Cabinet as a check to assess the student's readiness. The advisor must have verification of the student's Candidacy Rating Scale for Practicum results (obtained from the course instructor for HCE 621) before the student will be approved for admission to Practicum.

**Step 3:** The student will be expected to present his or her **e-Portfolio** during the final semester of Internship. The e-Portfolio will include:

A. A list of at least five professional/career goals to which you aspire upon graduation.

B. 5 artifacts (no more and no less) uploaded from the Digital Filing Cabinet that most clearly represents your emerging Professional Identity.

C. An explanation that clearly demonstrates an integration and synthesis of your education experiences in the program, with special emphasis on the concentration. This should include a reflection on the significance of each of the five chosen artifacts in relation to your emerging Professional identity. A written synthesis statement focused on your educational experience should not exceed two double-spaced pages.

D. A narrative on personal change or transformation over the course of the program. Briefly describe, in 2 or 3 paragraphs how growth, personal experiences, during your time in the Counselor Education program resulted in change or transformation. Be specific about the personal strengths engaged to promote this change or transformation. If you are inclined to do so, please create a symbolic representation of the dimensions of this change (through a timeline, video, photograph, poem, drawing, sculpture, etc.) If you would prefer to describe the dimensions in narrative form, please add narrative (an additional 2 or 3 paragraphs) that describes how these personal changes affected other dimensions of your life. In other words, this summary assignment on personal changes can either be a brief narrative (2-3 paragraphs) and a symbolic representation, or a longer narrative (4-5 paragraphs).

E. A resume that is ready for use for job-seeking opportunities.

F. The student will be expected to make a 15 minute oral presentation of the portfolio, with 5 extra minutes made available for responses and questions. (Advisors will be invited to the presentation.) The faculty member of record will use a portfolio scoring rubric to document that the portfolio is complete, the presentation has been made, and all criteria are satisfied.

Updated 2013

## **Appendix F**

### **Tk20 Assessment System**