Introduction

The following report is based on formal and informal data collected during the spring semester, 2008, as part of the program review required by The Teachers College at Emporia State University. Evaluation forms were mailed to individuals who have participated in the program during the two-year period from fall, 2006 to spring, 2008. Additionally, data were collected from the 2007-2008 School Counseling Program Advisory Board/Focus Group, which met on April 4, 2008 to discuss the results from the survey and to draw conclusions and make recommendations to the program faculty.

Procedure

Participants in the formal evaluation study of the program included interns/graduates, on-site supervisors, and employers. Evaluation forms (Form I—Program Evaluation for Candidate/Graduate, Form II—Program Evaluation for On-Site Supervisors, and Form III—Program Evaluation for Employer) were mailed to a total of seventy-five (75) participants. Participants were asked to complete the form by rating the individual candidate named on the survey on a total of twenty items. Items came from the ten Standards for School Counselor as identified by the Kansas State Department of Education. Ten of the items were considered knowledge or content-based in the form, “This candidate demonstrates knowledge of…” and ten were considered performance or skill-based, “This candidate demonstrates skills in…” Participants were asked to complete the form and return in a self-addressed stamped envelope within a two-week period.

Participants in the informal evaluation study were members of the program’s advisory board/focus group composed of graduates, on-site supervisors, and employers. This group met at The Earl Center on April 4, 2008 from 11:30-3:00 pm. After lunch and brief introductions, the program faculty presented the assessment system and described the nature of the current program evaluation study. Members of the group were provided with comments from survey completers describing strengths, limitations, needs for improvement, and additional comments. An overview of
the Kansas licensing requirements for school counselor was then discussed. After a short break, members of the advisory board were grouped into three grade levels (elementary, middle school, and high school) and were asked to identify current challenges/trends faced by counselors at their respective grade level. Once these issues were reviewed, the advisory board members were asked to discuss their views of the programs strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (S.W.O.T.) without the faculty present. They then presented their comments to the program faculty at the end of the meeting.

**Evaluation Method**

Participants, on-site supervisors, and their employers (principals) completed either Forms I, II, or III each consisting of two rating scales (ranging from “1” as low to “5” as high). Participants were asked to rate the candidate’s demonstration of knowledge and skills or *performance* and the level of *importance* on twenty items. As mentioned, ten of these items (1-10) were listed as knowledge or content-based (This candidate demonstrates knowledge of…) and ten items (11-20) were listed as skill-based (This candidate demonstrates skills in . . .). These twenty items were chosen from the ten standards identified by the Kansas State Department of Education for school counselors (PreK-12).

Participants were also asked to respond in writing to several open-ended sections that included the following: strengths of the program, limitations of the program, needs for improvement of the program, and additional comments. The following represents the results from the evaluation.

**Results**

Evaluation forms were mailed to seventy-five participants. Thirty-four were completed and used in the study for a 45.3% return rate. Average or mean scores were calculated for each item, as well as a difference score between the *performance* and the *importance* mean to help identify possible needs for program improvement.
Candidates/Graduates tended to rate themselves highest in areas such as knowledge of “the importance of continual lifelong learning and development,” and “students from a developmental/stage perspective.” In the demonstration of skills area, “working in a professional manner with students, teachers, and parents”, “reflecting an understanding of current needs, issues, and trends in counseling field”, “supporting other programs within the school and district,” and “consulting with teachers, parents, and other professionals” were rated highest. On-site supervisors rated candidates/graduates highest in demonstrating knowledge of “aspects of multiculturalism and diversity in working with students and parents” and skills in “working in a professional manner… “working effectively with students of varied social and cultural backgrounds” and “supporting other programs within the school…” Employers/Administrators gave graduates high marks in demonstrating knowledge in “the inclusion process and how to work with teachers, students and parents in this model,” and demonstrating skills in “working effectively with students of varied social and cultural backgrounds.”

Candidates/Graduates tended to rate themselves lower in the knowledge areas of “the design and management of a comprehensive guidance program,” “developing strategies for working with special needs students”, and “conducting small group counseling and classroom guidance lessons.” On-site supervisors rated candidates lower in demonstrating an understanding of “how current societal and environmental issues affect students,” “the purpose of testing and assessment procedures and instruments” and demonstrating skills in “developing strategies for working with special needs students.” Employers rated the candidates lower in demonstrating knowledge in “the purpose of testing and assessment procedures and instruments,” skills in “developing strategies for working with special needs students.”

Combing the mean scores for all three subjects (candidates, on-site supervisors, and employers) shows that overall candidates were rated as highest in the areas of demonstrating knowledge of “aspects of multiculturalism and diversity in working with students and parents” and skills in “working in a professional manner with students, teachers, and parents” and “working effectively with students of varied social and cultural backgrounds.”
Interpretation of the Results

Although the sample size of this study is limited (45.3% return), there appears to be some reasons for the consistent high and low ratings in some of the areas. Some discrepancies among respondent groups can also be interpreted with a possible explanation for apparent differences.

First of all, the majority of the items were scored as either a 4 or 5 as to “rating of importance.” Some of the graduates and on-site supervisors did however question the relevance of such knowledge items as # 3: “the inclusion process and how to work with teachers, students, and parents in this model”, # 5: “technology and how to apply this knowledge to the job of the counselor”, and # 7: “students from a developmental perspective”. Viewing these items as less important could be explained in part by the difference in the level in which counselors work (i.e., elementary level may work more closely with students, teachers, and parents in the inclusion process than counselors at the secondary level). It is also possible that the individual resources and uniqueness of schools vary greatly as to requiring counselors to use technology as a part of the job. Likewise under the demonstration area, item # 14: “skills in conducting small groups with students” was rated of lower importance possibly because of the opportunity or unavailability of officering small groups at various levels. The employers rated only # 5: “technology…” as of less importance, which could again be the result of the variance across schools and the availability of technology at the local level. It could also be seen as a questioning whether counselors should be spending time on computers instead of working directly with students.

From the results of ratings of performance there appears to be some consistency across graduates, employers, and on-site supervisors as to the highest and lowest rated areas. Items in the knowledge area such as: #3: “the inclusion process…” and # 6: “504 plans and IEPs…” are rated lowest by all groups. This may be explained by the drastic changes that have occurred in the past five years with inclusion and the importance placed on all teachers and staff working with special-needs students. Teachers and counselors have not been prepared for the variety of students or the extreme nature of some of their needs. Lower ratings on such items as # 12: “consulting skills with parents…”, # 14: “skills in conducting small group counseling…”, and # 18: “a background in counseling theories and techniques…” possibly indicate that during the ESU program, emphasis may have
been placed on theory and information and less on specific counseling and consulting skills. It could also be explained by the variance of graduates and their experience levels (i.e., a professional working in his/her fourth year may be more proficient in consulting with parents than someone in the first year). Another item that was rated somewhat lower by graduates was item # 9: “the design and management of a comprehensive guidance program”. Previous School Counseling Program evaluations have identified this as an area of weakness, and since 2000 the course has been drastically revised. Some of the graduates may have taken this course before the curricular changes were in place.

Conclusions

After examining the formal and informal data, and from the discussion with the graduates, several conclusions can be stated.

1. Counselors working in schools are expected to work effectively with a variety of people: students, teachers, parents, and resource professionals from within and outside of the school environment.

2. The importance of working with students, teachers, and parents in the inclusion model is a view that is held strongly by employers more than counselors.

3. Counselors, generally, do not feel competent working in the area of inclusion (i.e., IEPs. 504s) and the role of the counselor in special education.

4. Counselors, generally, do not feel competent in the area of technology and how to apply this knowledge to the job of counselors.

5. Counselors, generally, do not feel competent in the area of design and management of comprehensive guidance programs.

6. Counselors, generally, do not feel competent in counseling and consulting skills beyond listening and rapport building skills.

7. Counselors appear to have a positive perspective in their ability to work with other professionals, in skills necessary to conduct large group guidance activities, and in their professional and ethical behavior.
8. Counselors need more knowledge and skills in the area of grief and loss, parent consultation, and behavioral management issues, identifying and working with special needs students and identifying symptoms of serious pathology.

9. Graduates generally appreciate the faculty and are positive about the 48-hour program that allows the opportunity to learn more through such courses as Multicultural Counseling and through the practicum and internship experience.

10. Members of the advisor group appreciated the opportunity to evaluate the program and are looking forward to continuing in this capacity for the future.

**Recommendations**

The advisor group involved in this evaluation is to remain intact and will meet with the faculty at least once per semester for the next three years. Information from the current evaluation allows for several recommendations that can be made to the School Counseling Program.

1. Courses taken in the program should emphasize counseling techniques, as well as counseling theories, with opportunities to practice these skills.

2. Information on special education, the inclusion model, etc. should be provided through specific school-related courses (i.e., Intro to Elementary/Middle School Counseling, Intro. to Secondary School Counseling, etc.).

3. Knowledge and skills in consulting with parents should be emphasized and encouraged not only in the Parenting and Parent Consultation course.

4. Knowledge and understanding of mental health issues (i.e., diagnosis, treatment planning, etc.) should be provided through several courses in the program.

5. More opportunities to gain knowledge and skills in specific areas needs to be addressed (working with ADHD students, loss and grief, etc.).
Summary

The opportunity to have faculty meet with graduates currently employed as school counselors was a very worthwhile experience. Identifying an advisor group that is designed to stay intact and meet on a regular basis appears to be promising. This group can serve to give feedback to the program and the department as to needs of those currently working in the field and to make suggestions for potential changes in the curriculum. It also can serve as a sounding board as the faculty makes adjustments in the program due to NCATE and CACREP standards and requirements.

The identified advisor group serves as very positive role models for current students in the program. Their level of professionalism and effectiveness in working with students may be the program’s best tool in recruiting new students and new professionals to the field of school counseling.
**Form I—Program Evaluation for Candidate/Graduate**

Instructions: Please circle the appropriate number rating the candidate on his/her performance and how important you believe this area is for school counseling. NO represents little knowledge of the candidate or Not Observed on this item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This candidate ( ) demonstrates...</th>
<th>Rating of Performance</th>
<th>Rating of Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. the role of the professional counselor in the school.</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. the design and management of a comprehensive guidance program.</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. students from a developmental/stage perspective.</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. the major techniques and theories of individual and group counseling.</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. the purpose of testing and assessment procedures and instruments.</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. the importance of career development and how to assist students through their developmental stages.</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. the inclusion process and how to work with teachers, students, and parents in this model.</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. aspects of multiculturalism and diversity in working with students and parents.</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. how current issues societal and environmental issues affect students.</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. the importance of continual lifelong learning and development.</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This candidate ( ) demonstrates...</td>
<td>Rating of Performance</td>
<td>Rating of Importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. professional and ethical behavior in working with students, teachers, and parents.</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. support to others programs within the school and district.</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. skills in developing strategies for working with special needs students (ADHD, LD, etc.).</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>NO 1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. skills in conducting small group counseling and classroom guidance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
15. skills in utilizing data to assist all students, teachers, and parents.

16. skills in helping students make decisions and create a career plan.

17. skills in consulting with teachers, parents, and other professionals.

18. skills and techniques necessary to work with students of varied social and cultural backgrounds.

19. skills in helping students, teachers, and parents cope with change and crisis.

20. techniques that reflect an understanding of current needs, issues, and trends in the counseling field.
Form II—Program Evaluation for On-Site Supervisor
Instructions: Please circle the appropriate number rating the candidate on his/her performance and how important you believe this area is for school counseling.

This candidate ( ) understands…

1. the role of the professional counselor in the school. 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5
2. the design and management of a comprehensive guidance program. 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5
3. students from a developmental/stage perspective. 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5
4. the major techniques and theories of individual and group counseling. 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5
5. the purpose of testing and assessment procedures and instruments. 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5
6. the importance of career development and how to assist students through their developmental stages. 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5
7. the inclusion process and how to work with teachers, students, and parents in this model. 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5
8. aspects of multiculturalism and diversity in working with students and parents. 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5
9. how current issues societal and environmental issues affect students. 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5
10. the importance of continual lifelong learning and development. 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5

This candidate ( ) demonstrates…

11. professional and ethical behavior in working with students, teachers, and parents. 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5
12. support to others programs within the school and district. 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5
13. skills in developing strategies for working with special needs students (ADHD, LD, etc.). 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5
14. skills in conducting small group counseling and classroom guidance lessons. 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5
15. skills in utilizing data to assist all students, teachers, and parents.

16. skills in helping students make decisions and create a career plan.

17. skills in consulting with teachers, parents, and other professionals.

18. skills and techniques necessary to work with students of varied social and cultural backgrounds.

19. skills in helping students, teachers, and parents cope with change and crisis.

20. techniques that reflect an understanding of current needs, issues, and trends in the counseling field.
Form III—Program Evaluation for Employer

Instructions: Please circle the appropriate number rating the candidate on his/her performance and how important you believe this area is for school counseling. NO represents little knowledge of the candidate or Not Observed on this item.

This candidate ( ) demonstrates knowledge of…

1. the role of the professional counselor in the school. NO 1 2 3 4 5 NO 1 2 3 4 5
2. the design and management of a comprehensive guidance program. NO 1 2 3 4 5 NO 1 2 3 4 5
3. students from a developmental/stage perspective. NO 1 2 3 4 5 NO 1 2 3 4 5
4. the major techniques and theories of individual and group counseling. NO 1 2 3 4 5 NO 1 2 3 4 5
5. the purpose of testing and assessment procedures and instruments. NO 1 2 3 4 5 NO 1 2 3 4 5
6. the importance of career development and how to assist students through their developmental stages. NO 1 2 3 4 5 NO 1 2 3 4 5
7. the inclusion process and how to work with teachers, students, and parents in this model. NO 1 2 3 4 5 NO 1 2 3 4 5
8. aspects of multiculturalism and diversity in working with students and parents. NO 1 2 3 4 5 NO 1 2 3 4 5
9. how current issues societal and environmental issues affect students. NO 1 2 3 4 5 NO 1 2 3 4 5
10. the importance of continual lifelong learning and development. NO 1 2 3 4 5 NO 1 2 3 4 5

This candidate ( ) demonstrates skills in…

11. working in a professional manner with students, teachers, and parents. NO 1 2 3 4 5 NO 1 2 3 4 5
12. supporting others programs within the school and district. NO 1 2 3 4 5 NO 1 2 3 4 5
13. developing strategies for working with special needs students (ADHD, LD, etc.). NO 1 2 3 4 5 NO 1 2 3 4 5
14. conducting small group counseling and classroom guidance lessons. NO 1 2 3 4 5 NO 1 2 3 4 5
15. utilizing data to assist all students, teachers, and parents.

16. helping students make decisions and create a career plan.

17. consulting with teachers, parents, and other professionals.

18. working effectively with students of varied social and cultural backgrounds.

19. helping students, teachers, and parents cope with change and crisis.

20. reflecting an understanding of current needs, issues, and trends in the counseling field.
### School Counseling Program Results (2006-2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This candidate demonstrates knowledge of...</th>
<th>Students/Graduates N = 9</th>
<th>On-Site Supervisors N = 13</th>
<th>Employers/Administrators N = 12</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance Mean Score</td>
<td>Importance Mean Score</td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>Performance Mean Score</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. the role of the professional counselor in the school.</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>4.78</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
</tr>
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<td>2. the design and management of a comprehensive guidance program.</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>4.78</td>
<td>-0.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. students from a developmental/stage perspective.</td>
<td><strong>4.78</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.89</strong></td>
<td>-0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. the major techniques and theories of individual and group counseling.</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>+0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. the purpose of testing and assessment procedures and instruments.</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. the importance of career development and how to assist students through their developmental stages.</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. the inclusion process and how to work with teachers, students, and parents in this model.</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. aspects of multiculturalism and diversity in working with students and parents.</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. how current societal and environmental issues affect students.</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td><strong>4.78</strong></td>
<td>-0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. the importance of continual lifelong learning and development.</td>
<td><strong>4.89</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.78</strong></td>
<td>+0.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bold** indicates highest individual/total mean scores \( \geq 4.75 \)

*Italic* indicates lowest individual/total mean scores \( \leq 4.25 \)

**Underline** indicates individual/total difference \( \geq 0.5 \)
## School Counseling Program Results (2006-2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The candidate demonstrates skills in...</th>
<th>Students/Graduates N = 9</th>
<th>On-Site Supervisors N = 13</th>
<th>Employers/Administrators N = 12</th>
<th>Perform. Mean Score</th>
<th>Import. Mean Score</th>
<th>Difference Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>11. working in a professional manner with students, teachers, and parents.</td>
<td>4.89 5.0  -0.11</td>
<td>4.77 5.0  -0.23</td>
<td>4.58 5.0  -0.42</td>
<td>4.74 5.00  -0.26</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. supporting other programs within the school and district.</td>
<td>4.78 4.78 0.00</td>
<td>4.73 4.62  +0.11</td>
<td>4.58 5.0  -0.42</td>
<td>4.69 4.79  -0.10</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. developing strategies for working with special needs students.</td>
<td>4.33 4.56  -0.23</td>
<td>4.08 4.25  -0.17</td>
<td>3.91 4.73  -0.82</td>
<td>4.09 4.50  -0.41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14. conducting small group counseling and classroom guidance lessons.</td>
<td>4.33 4.33 0.00</td>
<td>4.46 4.62  -0.16</td>
<td>4.17 4.45  -0.28</td>
<td>4.32 4.48  -0.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. utilizing data to assist all students, teachers, and parents.</td>
<td>4.56 4.56 0.00</td>
<td>4.45 4.62  -0.17</td>
<td>4.18 4.55  -0.37</td>
<td>4.39 4.58  -0.19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. helping students make decisions and create a career plan.</td>
<td>4.67 4.78  -0.11</td>
<td>4.33 4.58  -0.25</td>
<td>4.22 4.27  -0.05</td>
<td>4.40 4.53  -0.13</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. consulting with teachers, parents, and other professionals.</td>
<td>4.78 4.78 0.00</td>
<td>4.46 4.92  -0.46</td>
<td>4.33 4.91  -0.58</td>
<td>4.50 4.88  -0.38</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18. working effectively with students of varied social and cultural backgrounds.</td>
<td>4.67 4.67 0.00</td>
<td>4.75 4.77  -0.20</td>
<td>4.70 4.70 0.00</td>
<td>4.71 4.72  -0.01</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. helping students, teachers, and parents cope with change and crisis.</td>
<td>4.56 4.89  -0.33</td>
<td>4.64 4.77  -0.13</td>
<td>4.55 4.82  -0.27</td>
<td>4.58 4.82  -0.24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. reflecting an understanding of current needs, issues, and trends in the counseling field.</td>
<td>4.89 4.78  +0.11</td>
<td>4.33 4.62  -0.29</td>
<td>4.18 4.73  -0.55</td>
<td>4.44 4.70  -0.26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bold** indicates highest individual/total mean scores ≥ 4.75  
**Italics** indicates lowest individual/total mean scores ≤ 4.25  
**Underline** indicates individual/total difference ≥ -0.5
Appendix C

School Counseling Program Evaluation
Summary of Comments from Candidate/Graduates
Spring 2008

Strengths of the program:

1. Preparation for individual counseling, small group counseling, and classroom guidance.
2. Teaching the counseling process – stages & skills.
3. Ability to discover my strengths and weaknesses.
4. Hands-on application of some classes and the practicum.
5. Willingness to help students obtain provisional license and complete degree.
6. Classes focused on knowing one’s self in order to better understand others. I am a better person after this experience. That is the best compliment I can give!
7. Very thorough with excellent instructors.
8. Good professors that are understanding. Theory is a good base.

Limitations of the program:

1. Working with clients outside the school counseling arena (practicum).
2. Having instructors from other teaching fields – rehab, mental health.
3. Some of the material does not apply to the school setting.
4. A lot of teacher turnover.
5. Unclear expectations, many differences in curriculum between professors.
6. As with any program, real-life job experience is always quite different.
7. Need more applications to go with theory. Some classes are good at this, not all.
8. Communication between professors or consistency is difficult.
9. At times there is a lot of high school type “busy” work.

Needs for program improvement:

1. Additional work on crisis situations in core classes, like suicide, death/dying, divorce, etc., besides the hot topics papers/presentations. Actually teach us strategies for these situations.
2. Preparation work for the Praxis during Internship (or before). Make sure we are being taught the information we are tested on.
3. We need a “counseling law” class.
4. We need a class specific to the counselor’s role in special education.
5. There is a ridiculous amount of paperwork as well as an extremely high amount of credits required for completion of this degree.
6. The post-graduate hours are a waste of money and extremely redundant.
7. Consistency in program. At times various professors are on different pages.
Additional comments:

1. Overall a good program. It seems like there are several “hoops” we have to jump through that aren’t really necessary. Just make sure everything we do has a purpose.
2. I hope not too many classes go to on-line format. The interaction with peers is an important learning tool.
3. I’ve had a really great experience overall.

Not ESU specific, but I fear that although our knowledge base needs to be solid, the curriculum requirements, then post-degree requirements may start forcing good potential counselors to choose a different path due to money and time. There is a point where we put too much in the “preparation” side of education.
Appendix D

School Counseling Program Evaluation
Summary of Comments from On-Site Supervisors
Spring 2008

Strengths of the program:

1. Candidate was well prepared to perform their duties.
2. Courses offered to prepare school counselors.
3. When comparing candidates from other institutions (i.e. UMKC) students from ESU understand the role much better.
4. The addition of pre-practicum, practicum & the internship strengthens the skill level of the student. Counselors coming out of the ESU program are ready to take on the responsibilities of the job.
5. Individuals are well prepared in theory and active listening. Great knowledge of group counseling and overall preparation.
6. The program does an excellent job of preparing school counselors for designing and managing a comprehensive guidance program, aspects of multiculturalism and diversity in working with students and parents which is extremely important in today’s school climate and population.
7. Students are well prepared for conducting small counseling groups and classroom guidance activities, and for working effectively in helping students, parents, and teachers cope with some of the social issues and cultural issues in our society.
8. Emporia prepares their students with knowledge and importance of accessing resources and making them available along with the already existing resources for students and parents.
9. Another strength of the program is in the area of preparing students with excellent professional and ethical skills in counseling.
10. It is a distance-learning innovation.
11. Comprehensive coverage of all aspects of a school counselor’s responsibilities.

Limitations of the program:

1. On-line courses concern me.
2. Selling all ESU programs – undergrad and grad programs. I’d like to see ESU promote the college more in the KC area. As a high school counselor, I am invited to information luncheons, etc. from other Kansas colleges – I am able to find out about unique programs and in turn able to let my students know about those programs. ESU has a lot to offer – let us know about it!
3. Knowledge of testing at the high school level (ACT/SAT/PSAT/PLAN/Ks. Assessments/AP tests/ MAP tests/ ITED’s).
4. The counseling program is limited in its ability to help students in the area of empathy and discernment which are much needed skills when working with student/teacher issues, parent/teacher issues. Often, because we have been former teachers, we are not able to see the full picture, and on the flip side, because we are student advocates, we are blinded to the complete picture. Depending on the diversity in your school environment, counselors need to be able to see things from a broader view than just their own little world. These things can be taught in theory, but the program is limited in its ability to insure its practice even with internship.
5. The supervising counselor knows only her/his job and what she/he learned in college and has no way to relate the present situations with what the student counselor may be studying in class.
6. High amount of actual time spend in training/internship – lots of practical knowledge.
7. Great contact and communication between schools.
8. More on-site mentoring by ESU instructors to allow for inclusion in a candidates course work of specific material for that candidates weak areas.

Needs for program improvement:

1. I am concerned with the number of classes being offered on-line. I learned so much from the conversations with my peers during class, especially in Pre-Practicum and Practicum. It was also a good way to network. The main group of us who graduated together kept in contact, and we were able to ask each other for input concerning issues we were dealing with as first year counselors. I would hate for future students to miss out on that. I know it made me a much better counselor.
2. I feel the program is strong and very well developed.
3. Our candidate is so shy that they must come out of this to be a strong counselor.
4. Maybe having more specific assignments and a grading system – guide for each assignment.
5. The two areas that I think need improvement are crisis skills and skills in dealing with drug and alcohol related issues, personal as well as family. Bullying, drugs, and gangs are so entrenched in some of our school environments that the counselor really needs to be skilled in helping students as well as parents with these issues. I really think that learning to counsel effectively in these areas needs to be made a part of the school counseling program to some extent.
6. Possible internship at other areas than schools (i.e. drug rehab facilities, juvenile detention, court ordered anger management, children of divorce sessions, etc.).

Additional Comments:

1. More than ever counselors are more than just needed in the schools; they are essential. The more expertise we have in the myriad of issues facing school aged kids today, the more districts will be able to see how what we do benefits the school system as a whole. When kids can feel safe, when no matter what their special needs may be, they feel as if someone is there to advocate for them, when teachers and parents feel like someone is listening to what they are saying and their confidentiality is not breeched, the concept of school/home/community working together for the benefit of our children will become a reality. In my experience as a counselor, even the most difficult parent, when they feel valued, responds in a more positive way. That is what counselors who are professional, ethical, patient, and discerning can help accomplish in a school environment.
2. Our candidate continues to grow and learn as a professional counselor. I have a high regard for their abilities and skills!!
3. Our candidate will make an outstanding counselor. The work ethic, intelligence, and integrity are respected by the students. The compassion is loved by them.
Appendix E

School Counseling Program Evaluation
Summary of Comments from Employers
Spring 2008

Strengths of the program:

1. Comprehensive and gives students opportunity for a variety of experiences.
2. Our counseling program does a great job meeting the needs of “all” students. We have programs in place that allow us to reach not only students interested in post-high school education, but also have been nationally recognized for our work with our “at risk” needs.
3. Counselors appear to be ready to step into their role well prepared for the challenges facing them. They are very knowledgeable regarding all aspects of the counseling program.
4. Our counselor seems to have been prepared well, which speaks highly of the program.
5. Hands-on practicum experience.

Limitations of the program:

1. Not aware of any.
2. We have our counselor spread too thin because of responsibilities in a grade 6-12 building. We have designated so many responsibilities/programs for our counselor that there definitely is not enough time in the day for individual counseling sessions.
3. From an outsider’s perspective, certain classes have unreal expectation in terms of assignments.

Needs for program improvement:

1. More classes that are applicable to school setting.

Additional comments:

1. Pleased with the program. A positive experience for our candidate. They have done a wonderful job. We have hired them for a guidance counselor position that will open next year.
2. I feel our counselor and the program for our students has to be one of the best in the state! They make it a point to meet the needs of our entire student body. They have been well trained and do a great job “applying” the information they have acquired.
Challenges/Trends Faced by Counselors at the Elementary School Level
Deployment
RtI & MTSS
Loss of industry in town
Families in crisis
Incarceration of family members
Poverty and economic crisis
Transient families
Special needs and diagnosis of more disabilities
Abuse and neglect
Technology (Nintendo, text message, webkinz, etc.)
  Lack of social skills
Disrespect (of peers, authority)
Parenting

Challenges/Trends Faced by Counselors at the Middle School Level
Emot/gothic
Cyber bullying
Cell phone/text
U-tube
Sexual issues
Bullying bandwagon
Poor social skills- growing up
Kansas Career Pipeline
Crossland Construction Partnership
Deployment
Mental illness-parenting deficits
Meth, drinking (abuse in families)

Challenges/Trends Faced by Counselors at the High School Level
Cyber-bullying
Face book
Transition to high school
  Educational expectations
  Social/emotional
More kids on medications
  Some self-prescribed
Cutting
Problems related to sexual issues
Need to counsel parents
Appendix F

Written comments from advisory group during a discussion period
(without faculty members present)

**Strengths of the Program:**

Facility at The Earl Center is good. Practicum experience was great on campus.

Connection with faculty is great - a personal touch.

Connection with alumni and valuing what they have to offer.

**Weaknesses of the Program:**

Relevance of the post-degree internship and the redundancy of additional hours (for licensure).

Unrealistic ideas about what counselors do (master schedule, IEPs, etc.).

No school law class offered at this time.

**Opportunities for Program Improvement:**

Background information on administrative duties so counselors are aware (of real-life on-the-job duties).

Background on Special Education and other areas (truancy) where students will have special needs.

Use the alumni of the program to talk with current students about trends (e.g., on a panel or as a guest speaker).

**Threats to Program Improvement:**

Too much online course work disrupts the collegiality among students.
Cost of education is not in line with the pay raise you receive for the degree.