

**SUPPORTING THE TEACHING/LEARNING PROCESS:
A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOL COUNSELOR TRAINING
AND
MODEL FOR EFFECTIVE COUNSELING PROFESSIONALS**

Master of Science in Education Degree in School Counseling

P-12 school counselors have an essential role in establishing learning environments that promote academic, personal/social, and career development of all students (Schmidt, 1996). To fill this role effectively, school counselors must have an educational and developmental orientation toward understanding their functions. Schmidt stated that school counselors develop different types of relationships with students “to prevent problems, develop human potential, and remedy difficult situations” (p. 3). They need to be highly trained professionals who offer specific skills in the context of comprehensive school guidance and counseling programs; these programs are based on developmental principles of growth (Gibson & Mitchell, 1995) and are designed to facilitate students’ self-understanding and self-development through both individual and group activities in P-12 school settings.

According to Myrick (1997), comprehensive school guidance and counseling programs include (1) activities for intervention in crisis situations, (2) activities for intervention to counter and remove identifiable deficiencies and barriers that inhibit students’ growth, (3) activities and programs for prevention of predictable risky behaviors and other challenges to students’ optimal development, and (4) programs that promote students’ self-understanding and development of the skills and qualities needed for success in academic endeavors and life experiences. In the “Missouri” model of comprehensive school guidance and counseling, Gysbers and Henderson (1994, 2000) identified four categories of program components including guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and system support. In the context of comprehensive school guidance and counseling programs, school counselors engage in a variety of practices (e.g., individual and small group counseling, classroom guidance, consultation and collaboration, coordination of projects and programs) to enhance the learning opportunities of all students.

To support the teaching/learning process effectively, school counselors must be interpersonally skilled leaders with a deep appreciation for the affective component of education. They have an understanding of the complex relationship between person and environment and know that social and emotional factors can and do impact student learning. They have a clear sense of their own identity as professional counselors and recognize that the differences between themselves and other professional counselors are matters of setting and orientation, not depth of training and level of expertise (Schmidt, 1999). Emerging professional school counselors must be uniquely prepared to design, implement, and evaluate a comprehensive school guidance and counseling program that is based on developmental principles of growth. Their training, therefore, must include not only the knowledge and skills required of all professional counselors but also understanding of the school community as the context for their work (Schmidt). Emerging professional school counselors also must be prepared “to promote comprehensive evaluation strategies and understandable, informative accountability information” (Baker, 2000, p. 299) and to maintain legal and ethical standards in all that they do (Baker). They value the benefits they can derive from technological advancements and are prepared to use various technologies in

their deliver of school counseling services to facilitate learning and involvement of all students (Schmidt).

The mission of the counselor education program at Arkansas State University is to train graduate students within the region as human service practitioners for settings that include college counseling, mental health counseling, school counseling, and student affairs in higher education institutions. The school counseling program area prepares entry-level school counselors who can effectively develop and implement comprehensive school counseling programs designed to maximize the academic, career, and personal/social potential of all P-12 students so that they may be successful in school and in life.

The structure of the School Counseling degree program is based upon professional standards for the practice of school counseling established by the American School Counselor Association ([ASCA]; Campbell & Dahir), the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision ([ACES]; ACES Executive Council, 1993; ACES Technology Interest Network, 1999), and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs ([CACREP]; 1988, 1994, 2001). This structure also is congruent with the Emerging Professional Model for master-level teacher education programs at Arkansas State University. Graduates of the MSE School Counseling degree program meet requirements for P-12 school counselor credentials in Arkansas and K-12 credentials in Missouri.

Preparation of the emerging school counselor includes development of a professional identity; study of social and cultural diversity, human growth and development, career development, helping relationships, group work, assessment, research and program evaluation, foundations of school counseling, contextual dimensions of school counseling (including programming, counseling and guidance, and consultation); and training in clinical skills adapted to the school setting. Goals and objectives of the School Counseling program represent basic preparation for school counseling practice with outcomes in the areas of professional identity, fundamental knowledge and skills, contextual dimensions, and empirical bases for practice.

SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal #1: *To produce graduates with strong professional identities who understand the importance of their professional roles.*

Objective #1: Candidates will demonstrate a strong professional identity as competent and ethical counselors or student affairs practitioners.

Objective #2: Candidates will demonstrate knowledge of history, philosophy, and current trends in the relevant area of specialization.

Objective #3: Candidates will demonstrate understanding of professional roles and functions in the relevant area of specialization, including similarities and differences with other professionals.

Goal #2: *To produce graduates who respect the importance of self-awareness, are committed to personal and professional development, and value the benefits of involvement in their respective professional organizations.*

Objective #4: Candidates will demonstrate understanding of relevant professional standards, credentialing, and professional organizations, including membership benefits, activities, services to members, and organizational structures.

Objective #5: Candidates will demonstrate understanding of how their personal characteristics and behavior impact their effectiveness in working with students, clients, consultees, and/or other relevant constituent groups. (See also Goal #5)

Objective #6: Candidates will demonstrate understanding of the importance of maintaining a life-long commitment to personal and professional development.

Goal #3: *To produce graduates with knowledge of relevant ethical and legal standards for practice and a commitment to behave with integrity in accordance with these standards.*

Objective #7: Candidates will demonstrate knowledge of policies, legislation, and ethical standards relevant to the area of specialization.

Objective #8: Candidates will recognize and resolve ethical and legal issues in accordance with professional standards and applicable laws relevant to the area of specialization.

Objective #9: Candidates will demonstrate understanding of the limitations of their training and skills.

Goal #4: *To produce graduates with knowledge of the systemic influences of social, cultural, and psychological factors on individuals, groups, families, and communities as well as demonstrated acceptance and respect for persons with diverse ideas, values, and behavioral practices.*

Objective #10: Candidates will demonstrate understanding of multicultural and pluralistic trends, including the characteristics and concerns of diverse groups and the implications of sociocultural, demographic, and lifestyle diversity.

Objective #11: Candidates will demonstrate respect for people of diverse backgrounds and beliefs, and the multicultural skills to practice effectively in a multicultural and diverse society. (See also Goal #7)

Objective #12: Candidates will demonstrate understanding of the way in which physiological, psychological, sociological, and environmental factors affect human behavior. (See also Goal #5)

Goal #5: *To produce graduates with foundational knowledge of human development, helping relationships, group work, career development, assessment, and research and program*

evaluation as well as specialized knowledge that is relevant and appropriate for their level of training and intended work setting.

Objective #5: Candidates will demonstrate understanding of how their personal characteristics and behavior impact their effectiveness in working with students, clients, consultees, and/or other relevant constituent groups. (See also Goal #2)

Objective #12: Candidates will demonstrate understanding of the way in which physiological, psychological, sociological, and environmental factors affect human behavior. (See also Goal #4)

Objective #13: Candidates will demonstrate understanding of relevant theories of human growth, development, and transition across the lifespan, including the influence of social institutions on individual development.

Objective 14: Candidates will demonstrate understanding of developmentally appropriate individual, family, and group strategies for working with diverse populations.

Objective #15: Candidates will demonstrate understanding of major theories of counseling, consultation, interpersonal relationships, and the person-environment interaction, including both individual and systems perspectives.

Objective #16: Candidates will demonstrate understanding of the theories and principles of group dynamics, including types of groups, group leadership, group process components, group formation and development, and group members' roles and behaviors.

Objective #17: Candidates will demonstrate understanding of major career theories, career assessments and information systems, career counseling, guidance, and decision-making models, including understanding of the interrelationships among work, leisure, and others factors (e.g., multicultural and gender issues).

Objective #18: Candidates will demonstrate understanding of the psychometric characteristics of assessment instruments, including validity, reliability, and statistics related to score interpretation.

Objective #19: Candidates will demonstrate understanding of basic research methods and data analysis techniques, and the ability to interpret research findings in the professional literature. (See also Goal #7)

Goal #6: *To produce graduates who are developmental specialists with ability to assume leadership roles, collaborate with other professionals, and engage in advocacy to promote optimum development for all their constituents.*

Objective #20: Candidates will demonstrate appropriate leadership skills and understanding of the importance of advocating on behalf of the profession and its clientele.

Objective #21: Candidates will demonstrate ability to integrate their professional activities in the relevant institutional contexts through collaboration with other professionals in the institution.

Objective #22: Candidates will demonstrate knowledge of leadership, planning, staff selection and development, and budgeting as relevant to their professional roles.

Goal #7: *To produce graduates with appropriate administrative, counseling, consultation, group work, and referral skills and who can apply these skills effectively to develop programs and deliver services consistent with their level of training, work setting, and program area.*

Objective #10: Candidates will demonstrate understanding of multicultural and pluralistic trends, including the characteristics and concerns of diverse groups and the implications of sociocultural, demographic, and lifestyle diversity.

Objective #11: Candidates will demonstrate respect for people of diverse backgrounds and beliefs, and the multicultural skills to practice effectively in a multicultural and diverse society. (See also Goal #4)

Objective #19: Candidates will demonstrate understanding of basic research methods and data analysis techniques, and the ability to interpret research findings in the professional literature. (See also Goal #5)

Objective #23: Candidates will demonstrate ability to select, administer, and interpret needs assessments and evaluations of programs and services.

Objective #24: Candidates will demonstrate ability to select, administer, and interpret appropriate assessment and appraisal techniques such as environmental assessment, performance assessment, individual and group test and inventory methods, behavioral observations, and computer-managed and computer-assisted methods.

Objective #25: Candidates will demonstrate ability to report results of assessments, appraisals, and evaluations to the appropriate audiences.

Objective #26: Candidates will demonstrate skills in interviewing, referral, counseling, and consulting with diverse individuals and groups as appropriate to the area of specialization.

Objective #27: Candidates will demonstrate competence in the use of technology as relevant to their professional roles.

Goal #8: *To produce school counselors who can design, plan, organize, implement, manage and evaluate school counseling programs which comprise the personal and social, academic, and career domains for all P-12 students.*

Objective #28: Candidates will demonstrate knowledge of the foundations and contextual dimensions of school counseling that include (but are not limited to) the nature of P-12 school environments, the relationship of the school counseling program to the total school curriculum, and current issues in P-12 education.

Objective #29: Candidates will demonstrate understanding of the four elements of the ASCA National Model for School Counseling Programs (i.e., foundation, delivery system, management system and accountability system).

Objective #30: Candidates will demonstrate competence in planning, designing, implementing, and evaluating comprehensive developmental school counseling programs for P-12 settings.

Objective #31: Candidates will demonstrate appreciation for the importance of evidence-based intervention.

EVALUATION METHODS

Emerging school counseling professionals are evaluated during their program of study for their mastery of content knowledge by performance on tests, papers, or projects for each course taken. Their professional school counseling skills are evaluated during Prepracticum and the supervised clinical experiences including practicum and internships during which they are required to provide counseling and consultation services to diverse populations. They are required to develop technical skills and use various forms of technology effectively in both content-based and clinical experiences. Throughout the program, candidates engage in reflective practices intended to develop the dispositions required for effective school counseling practice, and their reflections are stimuli for personal journal entries and discussions with faculty and peers. Overall mastery of the professional school counseling knowledge base and ability to apply that knowledge are evaluated by the comprehensive examination which is administered during a candidate's final enrollment period. Graduates are required to make a passing score on the Praxis II examination (#0420) in School Guidance and Counseling in order to obtain the school counselor endorsement to practice in either Arkansas or Missouri.

Candidates' perceptions of their levels of preparation for the school counseling profession are evaluated by the program exit survey which is completed during the term following graduation from the program. Follow-up studies of school counseling graduates and their employers are conducted at least once every three years with all graduates who have been out of the program for at least one year. Summary results of the exit surveys and follow-up studies are available in the department office to current candidates, program faculty, institutional administrators, and counseling practitioners in partner schools and other schools that participate in aspects of the clinical training sequence.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES AND INDICATORS FOR THE MSE DEGREE IN SCHOOL COUNSELING

Professional Identity. The professional school counselor demonstrates understanding of historical trends in the school counseling profession, professional ethics, and professional roles and functions relevant to the school system as it exists in a multicultural and pluralistic society.

KNOWLEDGE

Knows the history of the school counseling profession and understands its relevance in school systems as they exist in a multicultural and pluralistic society.

Knows the structure of professional organizations relevant to school counseling.

Knows the standards for preparation of professional school counselors and understands the professional credentialing process.

Understands ethical and legal standards relevant to school counseling.

Understands the school counselor's professional role and functions in relation to other school personnel.

Understands the importance of advocacy on behalf of the school counseling profession and its clientele.

PERFORMANCE

Evaluates current issues and trends in school counseling in view of its history and of the influences of multiculturalism and pluralism.

Belongs to and engages in activities of the professional organizations relevant to school counseling.

Seeks and takes advantage of continuing education opportunities, including web-based resources, to maintain current knowledge and skills.

Promotes and applies ethical and legal standards in decision-making as a school counselor.

Fulfills the functional responsibilities associated with the school counselor role.

Advocates for improvements in school counseling practice and for the benefit of students.

DISPOSITIONS

Appreciates the value of historical perspectives as a foundation for understanding current practices in a multicultural and pluralistic society.

Values the importance of professional organizations, training and credentialing standards, and the code of ethics as markers of one's professional identity.

Appreciates the diversity of roles and functions within the school setting and values the opportunity to advocate and contribute uniquely to the learning environment for students.

Fundamental Knowledge and Skills. The professional school counselor reflects mastery of a base of knowledge that includes human development, social and cultural influences, helping relationships, group work, career development, and assessment.

KNOWLEDGE

- Understands the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental levels.
- Understands issues and trends associated with a multicultural and pluralistic society.
- Understands counseling and consultation processes in helping relationships.
- Understands group dynamics and methods of working with groups.
- Understands career development and related life factors.
- Understands individual and group approaches to assessment and evaluation.

PERFORMANCE

- Selects and implements strategies that facilitate development and transition across the lifespan while enhancing capacities to cope with intrapersonal, interpersonal, and environmental factors as they affect normal and abnormal behavior.
- Selects and implements interviewing, assessment, and intervention strategies that are culturally and socially appropriate in view of the characteristics and behaviors of the client or consultee as well as one's own characteristics and behaviors.
- Applies knowledge of group dynamics and group counseling methods in a variety of group work approaches.
- Makes use of career development theory and technology in program planning, selection and use of information resources, selection and use assessment instruments and techniques, and selection of interventions to support career and educational decision-making and placement.
- Selects, administers, interprets, and uses assessment and evaluation instruments and techniques based on evidence of reliability, validity, and other psychometric issues.

DISPOSITIONS

- Appreciates the importance of individual differences in development and facilitation of transitions.
- Appreciates the effectiveness and efficiency of working with groups.
- Appreciates the central importance of career and lifestyle development in effective life functioning.
- Appreciates the importance of ethics and legal considerations in the conduct of appraisal methods

Contextual Dimensions. The professional school counselor demonstrates understanding of the coordination of counseling program components as they relate to the total school community.

KNOWLEDGE

- Understands the concept and parameters of a comprehensive, developmental school counseling and guidance program.
- Understands methods of integrating guidance curriculum into the total school curriculum.

- Understands methods of enhancing teamwork within the school community, including consultation with parents, teachers, administrators, support staff and community agency personnel.
- Understands helping approaches appropriate for the developmental stages and needs of children and adolescents, including referral for specialized help.
- Understands issues and trends which may affect the development and functioning of children and adolescents.

PERFORMANCE

- Designs and implements a comprehensive, developmental school counseling and guidance program with an organized and planned curriculum.
- Clearly specifies goals, objectives, and activities consistent with the developmental stages and needs of students.
- Coordinates efforts with resource persons, specialists, businesses, and agencies outside the school to promote program objectives.
- Prepares a schedule reflecting appropriate time commitments and priorities in a comprehensive, developmental program that is both sequential and flexible.
- Uses technological resources to support the implementation and evaluation of the school counseling program.
- Uses peer helper programs when appropriate.

DISPOSITIONS

- Appreciates the uniqueness and worth of each individual student while recognizing the necessity for interdependent functioning to promote living together within the common society.
- Believes that developmental school counseling programs are for all students.
- Believes that developmental school counseling programs are an integral part of the total educational process and are intended to promote student learning.
- Believes that developmental school counseling programs involve all school personnel, with school counselors providing specialized services and interventions consistent with their training and experiences.
- Believes that technology can be used to facilitate student development and promote student involvement in learning processes.

Empirical Bases for Practice. The professional school counselor applies scientifically-based knowledge in practice.

KNOWLEDGE

- Understands basic research methods.
- Understands basic statistics and knows how to use technology in statistical manipulations.
- Understands basic principles, practices, and applications of needs assessment and program evaluation.

PERFORMANCE

Summarizes, interprets, and evaluates research reports and other scholarly literature.

Uses surveys, interviews, and needs assessments to support program planning.

Uses program goals and objectives as the basis for program evaluation.

Uses computers for data management and analysis and for other aspects of program delivery.

Uses various forms of technology to disseminate appropriate information about programs.

DISPOSITIONS

Values school counseling practice that is empirically sound.

Appreciates the importance of ethics and legal considerations in the conduct of inquiry methods.

SUPPORTING THE TEACHING/LEARNING PROCESS
Alignment of Performance Outcomes with Required Courses

Master of Science in Education (MSE) Degree in School Counseling

Performance Outcomes	Professional Identity	Fundamental Knowledge and Skills	Contextual Dimensions	Inquiry
ELFN 6773 or PSY 6213				X
PSY 6113		X		
PSY 6513 or PSY 6523			X	X
PSY 6543		X		
PSY 6573		X	X	X
PSY 6613	X	X	X	
COUN 6013	X		X	X
COUN 6033		X		
COUN 6043		X		
COUN 6073	X	X	X	X
COUN 6123		X		
COUN 6203		X		
COUN 6213		X	X	
COUN 6223	X	X	X	X
COUN 6233	X	X	X	X
Elective				

SUPPORTING THE TEACHING/LEARNING PROCESS

Reference Support

General

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