

January 15, 2014

Academic Program Review  
MSC 05 3400  
Scholes Hall, Room 240  
1 University of New Mexico  
Albuquerque, NM 87131

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you very much for your letter notifying the Counselor Education program of the status of our recent Academic Program Review (APR) on-site visit. The faculty of the Counselor Education program at the University of New Mexico very much enjoyed meeting with the reviewers, facilitating professional connections, and learning a great deal about how other counseling programs across the country have responded to and implemented the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP; 2009) national accreditation standards.

This letter (and the associated attachments) will serve as our Program Response to the Reviewer Report, highlighting and expanding upon the details found by the APR reviewers during the on-site visit. We will respond to each of the areas that were indicated by the site team, and provide supplemental documentation highlighting how we believe we have met, or could meet, the identified areas of suggestion. Please note that within the external reviewer report, suggestions were provided in two distinct sections; as such, we will respond to each suggestion in a similar fashion. Reviewer suggestions will be placed in bold, and our response to each item will follow.

We appreciate the time and dedication of our on-site reviewers, as well as the supportive attention the University of New Mexico's APR office has provided us during our national accreditation process. We believe having undergone this university-level process last year, and discussing suggestions with the external APR reviewers before they left, our program was that much more prepared for our national accreditation site visit in the Fall 2013 semester. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns that you may have throughout this process.

Warm regards,

The Counselor Education Faculty of the University of New Mexico

## **Section I: Strengths of the Program and Recommendations**

**1. The Program faculty has emerged from a very difficult past and has been able to not only maintain the Program but to plan for its development and implement initial steps toward that development. This is reflected in their strategic plan. This was also reflected in comments from the student population.**

The Counselor Education faculty appreciates that the reviewers witnessed the work we have invested. We believe that these efforts will position the program to run smoothly into the future and, furthermore, these efforts will prove responsive to both student needs, as well as national accreditation demands. We were glad to read that these review comments were also expressed in our students' comments, as well as other community stakeholders. The Counselor Education faculty have worked very hard to ensure that our program delivers high quality education to the students we serve.

**2. The Program has been very responsive to the past APR document given that the current faculty was not present during the last review.**

The reviewers are accurate that no current Counselor Education tenure or tenure-track teaching faculty was present during the program's last APR visit. We did review previous documents to understand the requirements from the most recent site visit to ensure that the faculty could respond to both the requests from the last reviewers, as well as ensure that we meet current standards as set by the university. The Counselor Education faculty wishes to thank the external reviewers for recognizing our attention to both APR requirements during our site visit.

**3. The Program has revamped the curriculum for the master's and doctoral programs to reflect the 2009 CACREP standards. Additionally, the Program faculty did a nice job of matching each of the CACREP standards with a course and specific assignments within that course.**

The faculty of the Counselor Education Program wishes to thank the reviewers for noting how each CACREP standard has been addressed within our courses, and specific assignment for each of the program track areas. In the last two years, we have revised both of our M.A. and Ph.D. tracks through the university's curriculum review process to ensure that each area meets both the credit hour and content-based requirements for our national accreditation.

In addition, the Counselor Education program faculty met each week for two years to ensure that all national standards for our three program area tracks (M.A. Clinical Mental Health Counseling, M.A. School Counseling, Ph.D. Counselor Education) had appropriate coverage that would remain even if different faculty members, or adjuncts, taught the courses. Working as a larger group, we have formed plans to maintain the individual-level student learning outcome (SLO) for each identified

standard in each of the three tracks; all of this individual level data was available for our national reviewers when they visited for our national accreditation site review in the Fall 2013 semester.

**a. The skills and the practice standards for the CMHC SLOs are currently addressed in content courses. It seems that the practicum and internship courses are better structured to address the skills and practice standards. We recommend that you revisit the skills and practice standards for the CMHC SLOs.**

Following the APR site visit, the Counselor Education Program has revised the placement of the skills and practice standards within the practicum and internship courses, as suggested by the site team. The Counselor Education faculty has created the *Professional Counseling Performance Evaluation* form, which is utilized by the course instructor, as well as clinical supervisor, in both the practicum and internship courses. Students must be observed in each of the listed areas prior to completing their second internship semester. Two versions of this form were created: one for the Clinical Mental Health Counseling (M.A.) track, and a second for the School Counseling (M.A.) track.

**b. COUN545: School Counseling course is used to satisfy the majority of the School Counseling program's SLOs. It seems unrealistic to cover all these standards in one course. We recommend that the Program revisit the School Program's SLOs and determine if any of these standards could be addressed in other core courses.**

After discussions with both the APR review team, as well as the site reviewers from our national accreditation body, the Counselor Education faculty has discussed moving some of the School Counseling program's SLO's into other courses throughout the curriculum. Over the course of the Spring 2014 semester, faculty from the Counselor Education program will discuss and develop a plan to integrate the School Counseling SLO's into other courses across the curriculum. We anticipate this revision to occur through much of the Spring 2014 semester, and for these changes to be integrated by the Fall 2014 semester.

**c. In the body of the APR self-study, the Program indicated that the doctoral program's SLOs reflect the seven (7) knowledge content standards of the CACREP document yet; they provided SLOs using the five (5) CACREP learning outcomes. The doctoral program's SLOs need to reflect both the seven knowledge content standards and the five learning outcomes.**

Upon reviewing this statement from our site reviewers, the members of the Counselor Education faculty were confused, as we have followed SLO's for both the seven knowledge content standards, as well as the five learning outcomes. We reviewed the information provided to the APR site reviewers, and believe this

information may have been lost amongst the many other documents we also provided to them. The Counselor Education program underwent an external visit for the purposes of our national re-accreditation with similar materials in Fall 2013, and this was not a concern or issue for our national accreditation external reviewers.

**d. As the Program prepares for the CACREP site visit, the Program will want to provide more specific details related to the assessments used to evaluate each standard.**

After we received this feedback from the APR external review team, we paid special attention to providing individual level student data (e.g., specific course assignments, as well as each individual student artifact) for each of the CACREP program area standards. This information was made available to our CACREP external review team, and they commented about how overwhelmed they were with this information. However, we were able to successfully respond to our APR reviewers suggestions related to this issue.

**4. The Program has revamped the doctoral program to clearly reflect the goal of training and graduating competitive doctoral students for faculty positions.**

We wish to thank the external reviewers for their supportive comments related to the changes we made to our doctoral program. In the past two years we have made tremendous changes, including both course content and admissions considerations, both to respond to our national accreditation standards changes, as well as to further maximize the strengths of our doctoral program. Solidly in our second full year of implementation of this revised curriculum, we have seen our students rise to our new expectations and grow with excitement about the emerging field they are joining. Many doctoral students and recent graduates have been successful in having manuscripts accepted for publication, as well as presenting at national conferences within the field of Counselor Education and Supervision.

**5. Their master's level students reflect high quality and a competitive admissions process.**

The faculty of the Counselor Education agrees with the reviewers' comments, and is thankful for their positive feedback. The students within our M.A. programs have long been a strength of our program, and we are glad that national leaders can also recognize their strengths and potential.

**6. Their handbooks and policy manuals are thorough and provide students with detailed information about their program of study. The student handbooks, although thorough, do not include a retention and remediation policy (i.e., due process procedure). Although policies are clearly delineated, we wondered if all are necessary or if there could be more flexibility given to the advisement process. This would also support the CACREP ideal that individual needs of students are accommodated.**

Following this comment from the APR review team, the Counselor Education program created and implemented a retention and remediation policy for students. The policy has been added to both the M.A. and Ph.D. student handbooks, was advertised via program listserv messages, announced at a required student meeting, and hung on program bulletin boards.

Student accommodations are provided through the Office of Disability Services, and are announced at multiple points through a student's progress in the Counselor Education program. All syllabi address this issue, and it is additionally addressed in the new student orientation program. If students require additional assistance in advisement, accommodations are made between the student and their advisor. The program is also flexible in allowing for "back-up" advisors, to allow students to meet with a different faculty member if they can better serve the student's needs.

**7. The dedication and commitment of the four active faculty members are another strength of the Program. It is clear that these four faculty members (which include the non-tenure-track lecturer) are well regarded by the students. However, in the absence of more senior faculty, an enormous amount of service responsibilities and scholarly mentorship has fallen on the most junior faculty members. Per the recommendation of the UNM Provost office, the service load for junior faculty should not exceed 20%. We would recommend that additional faculty be added to this Program so that there is more equal distribution of service and advisement responsibilities. We recommend an open rank search if possible. Although the Program has made efforts to hire additional faculty without success, we recommend that hiring of new faculty should include the following characteristics:**

- **Active in the counselor education profession nationally, such as, the American Counseling Association and Association for Counseling Education and Supervision. Additionally, hiring faculty from CACREP institutions and active in the field aligns with CACREP standards.**
- **Open rank hire that can take on heavier administrative roles. 5 Part of a historically under-represented group. Indeed, the faculty of four males, two females; and the racial make-up of four Caucasians, one Hispanic, and one who chose not to identify does not constitute a diverse representation.**

The Counselor Education program agrees with the APR reviewers that additional faculty would be helpful for our program's success. Our national accreditation body also raised this point in their on-site review during the Fall 2013 semester and recommended hiring additional faculty to support the program's current needs and future development. The Counselor Education program will work with our Department Chair and Dean of the College of Education to request additional faculty lines.

**8. The Manzanita Counseling Clinic provides excellent clinical training for the Program's students and provides a tremendous mental health service to the Albuquerque community, which is in dire need of mental health services. The Clinic also has great potential for research. In order to convert the Clinic from a pro bono community counseling center to a viable training and research clinic, there needs to be additional resources invested in the Clinic in the form of increased graduate assistantships, possibly increased space, and a permanent Lecturer dedicated to the running of the Clinic. The faculty also needs to revisit their Strategic Plan in order to link their research agenda to the Clinic and seek out external funding opportunities.**

The introduction of scholarly activity in the clinic was raised both by the APR review team, as well as the CACREP review team in the Fall 2013 semester. Members of the Counselor Education faculty have met to discuss how research could be conducted in the Manzanita Clinic, and the faculty is in the process of completing an IRB to begin such processes in the Spring 2014 semester. Additionally, the Counselor Education faculty has begun the process of searching for external funding, to allow for the processes described above to occur.

It would be fundamentally important for the Counselor Education program to retain our full-time faculty line in the Manzanita Clinic, which is currently occupied by a Lecturer-III. The Counselor Education faculty do understand both the APR and CACREP external reviewer's concerns of having a Lecturer occupying that position, as it appeared to the outside reviewers that this line may be less permanent than a tenure track line. The line is not viewed in this way by the program, department, or College level, and we have had commitments from our College Dean that this is a permanent (recurring) line. However, knowing how this has been viewed by both our APR and CACREP site reviewers, the faculty of the Counselor Education program will work with our Department Chair and Dean to see if there are other ways in which we could demonstrate to outside persons that the Clinic faculty line is permanent. One alternative the Counselor Education program faculty is reviewing is requesting that the Clinic Faculty line be converted to a *Clinical Assistant Professor* line, as this is common at other institutions within our field. Although this is not a common designation within the College of Education, it appears that other Colleges within UNM utilize these lines (such as within the School of Medicine). A change such as this might allow external reviewers to see the permanence of the Clinic Faculty line, and how the institution sees this as important to providing exemplary clinical instruction and care to our community-based clients.

**9. The diversity of the student body is a clear strength of the Program. This diversity is not reflected in the faculty. It would strengthen the faculty and the Program to increase the racial/ethnic and gender diversity of the Program that better represents the diversity of the State and the student population.**

The faculty of the Counselor Education program appreciates the reviewers' comments, and agrees that diversifying our faculty would be very important in the

future. The faculty actively works to recruit diverse faculty members that reflect the diversity of our students and state when we are allowed to search for faculty lines. The faculty hopes that we will soon be able to further grow our faculty, both to respond to our national accreditation body's concerns about our faculty size (see below), as well as to attend to the diversity our program faculty.

**10. The Upsilon Nu Mu chapter of CSI is a strong resource for the Program, providing leadership opportunities for their students and professional development activities.**

We appreciate the APR reviewers' comments regarding our student group. Our students have received multiple national awards in the counseling profession within the last three years, which helps to demonstrate the strong leadership skills they have developed and influence they will have in the counseling profession for years to come. The Upsilon Nu Mu chapter is one of many ways we allow students extra curricular activities to grow and harness their leadership skills, and we are committed to supporting this group's continued growth.

**11. The Program has collaborative relationships with several multicultural offices at UNM. The African American Student Services, the Women's Resource Center, and the LGBTQ Resource Center all employ Counselor Education doctoral students as interns.**

Collaboration has been an important goal for the Counselor Education program, and we wish to continue this trend and develop cooperative partnerships with other agencies in the near future.

**12. The master's students engage in the Traverse program as a part of their Clinical Mental Health course and their School Counseling course, which provides them early exposure to the community as well as an opportunity to shadow professionals in the community prior to engaging in their own clinical work. Without appropriate graduate assistantship support, the organization of the Traverse program is another administrative burden on the faculty. Furthermore, having the administration of Traverse fall to the instructor of a particular course in any given semester is a cumbersome organizational plan.**

We thank the APR review team to their attention to the amount of work that some of our courses take, including the Traverse requirement within COUN521: Clinical Mental Health Counseling and COUN545: School Counseling. The Traverse program is a necessary part of our training program as it exposes students to the practical realities of the fields they have chosen to work in, and the experience covers many SLOs for our national accreditation standards. The Counselor Education program has been lucky in that in the past few years, we have had a Program Graduate Assistant, who has assisted with different needs for the counseling faculty. The Program GA has assisted with some of the coordination of the Clinical Mental Health traverse program, and can also assist the School Counseling course instructor

towards similar ends. We do hope that we are allowed to retain the Program GA so that they can further assist us for this program requirement, among others.

## **Section II: Additional Recommendations**

### **1. It appears that more collaboration with other units would be beneficial and would meet College/University goals; however, given the Program's current FTE this is unrealistic without adding additional faculty.**

The faculty of the Counselor Education program enjoys collaboration, and as noted above, have had a number of successful collaborations within and outside of the University of New Mexico. Although we would like to further expand these collaborations, as noted by the reviewers, this takes time, detailed attention, as well as faculty resources. With the limitations of the current faculty size, we would be unable to provide the intentional attention necessary for further collaborations at this time. However, we do have a number of potential partners we would like to work with, and with additional assistance, this may be possible. As such, the hiring of an additional faculty member or two would be necessary if we were to further expand our programmatic relationships at this time.

### **2. Increase faculty or reduce the number of students to arrive at the required CACREP standard of 10:1 for the Program. (The peer institutions mentioned in the Self-Study are slightly to significantly larger in terms of faculty and all are within the 10:1 ratio required by CACREP standards.)**

The Counselor Education program has attempted to attend to national accreditation standards related to faculty student ratio in the past few semesters through program admissions and attention to mentoring students to graduation. With this said, there are a number of pressures on the current faculty to have a minimum number of students, so that courses can make and that students have an appropriate cohort size. As such, reducing the number of students accepted into the counseling program is not possible at this time. As such, we will follow the reviewers' suggestions to consult with our Department Chair and Dean to see if we can request additional faculty lines for future faculty searches. This was also a concern for our national accreditation site team, raised at our exit interview, so we will be sure to attend to this issue as the College readies its requests for faculty lines in the upcoming academic year.

### **3. The Program needs an identified leader for each of the majors (i.e., school counseling, clinical mental health counseling, and the doctoral program).**

Following this comment from reviewers, the Counselor Education program has divided up programmatic leadership to ensure each program area has an identified point person. The Counselor Education Program Coordinator oversees the gestalt of the program, and ensures that all administrative requirements are met for the



Department and College's purposes. In addition, faculty members were assigned individual tracks to oversee, to ensure that each track has an identified leader. The following track assignments were voted on by the full Counselor Education Program Faculty and will be implemented in the Spring 2014 semester:

- Dr. Jeanmarie Keim is the Clinical Mental Health Program Coordinator.
- Dr. George "Chip" Hunter is the Manzanita Clinic Coordinator, and oversees daily operations of the clinic.
- Dr. Matthew Lemberger-Truelove is the School Counseling Program Coordinator.
- Dr. Kristopher M. Goodrich is the Doctoral Counselor Education Program Coordinator.

**4. We were surprised to discover that seven of the 20 master's level courses are taught online. Given the nature of the counseling curriculum and profession, this seems like an over-reliance on this delivery method. We would recommend that the Program revisit their ratio of face-to-face versus on-line courses.**

The Counselor Education program has strategically planned its course offerings, including format of course delivery, in the past few academic years. In any semester, no more than four online courses are offered, with many more face-to-face courses. The faculty has discussed our online course offerings and is open to offering some of these course face-to-face in the future. However, course format and delivery are at the discretion of the course instructor. Special attention will be paid in subsequent semesters about the amount of online courses offered, and how courses are assigned.

**5. All Program faculty members need to develop a strong counselor identity and become actively involved in counseling professional organizations especially in ACES and Rocky Mountain ACES and publish in counseling journals. We also recommend that faculty target top tier counseling journals more frequently (i.e., Journal of Counseling and Development, Counselor Education and Supervision, Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development, Professional School Counseling, The AMCHA Journal).**

Each of the active faculty members in the Counselor Education program currently holds memberships in the American Counseling Association. In addition, many faculty members are leaders in both local and national divisions of the American Counseling Association, as well as associated groups (e.g., Chi Sigma Iota Professional and Academic Honor Society in Counseling). Several program faculty have submitted numerous manuscripts to leading journals in the field, and faculty have publications in many of the journals listed above. The Counselor Education Program faculty will continue to discuss ways to remain involved at the regional and national level, to further bolster the recognition of our program.

**6. Monitor teaching experiences for the doctoral students so that they have both on-line and traditional classroom teaching experiences.**

The Counselor Education Program Faculty plan to discuss doctoral student teaching experiences in the Spring 2014 semester, and in that meeting to create a strategic plan to assigning doctoral student teaching experiences. In addition, the Counselor Education Program faculty plans to discuss doctoral student teaching experiences at the start of every semester, to ensure that doctoral students have a good mix of traditional and online teaching experiences, as well as teaching experiences in the specific fields (or sub-specialties) within the Counseling profession in which they anticipate receiving future work.

**7. We recommend that the Program seek out research courses that better address the research in mental health as opposed to general education research or work with faculty currently teaching the research courses to make the course assignments and reading more relevant for students preparing to enter the counseling profession. In fact, we recommend that Program faculty consult with affiliate faculty for all required courses to confirm that CACREP curricular standards are met.**

The Counselor Education program has responded to this suggestion in multiple ways. First, the Interim Counselor Education Program Coordinator has scheduled a meeting with Program Coordinator in Educational Psychology to discuss the M.A. research sequence (which is offered through EDPY) and how the two programs can ensure that CACREP research standards are being covered within the required research courses. A similar conversation will occur between Educational Psychology and Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Studies related to the required Ph.D. research sequence. These meetings will occur in early Spring 2014. In addition, the Counselor Education Program has revised the COUN620: Consultation course to ensure that all CACREP doctoral research standards are additionally covered within that course.

**8. Continue to seek additional GA support for the doctoral program, as current numbers are not competitive with other Research 1 doctoral programs in counselor education. It is most important that incoming students are fully funded so that they can engage in their study full-time.**

The Counselor Education program has made many strides to develop relationships with different administrative departments at the University of New Mexico, such as the Women's Resource Center, Graduate Resource Center, and the Ombudsmen office, to ensure GA placement for doctoral students beyond the five positions (four in the Manzanita Counseling Clinic, and one Program GA) we currently have available in the Counselor Education program. In addition, members of the Counselor Education program have successfully competed in the competitive Office of Graduate Studies GA process to secure additional research GA positions for this

academic year. The Counselor Education Program faculty will continue to apply for internal and external grants, as well as will work closely with our Department Chair and Dean to see if any further GA support may be available for doctoral study so that we can become more competitive with other national programs in Counseling.

**9. As support for the doctoral program increases, the Program should seek to increase its selectivity in order to reach its goal of producing scholars and national leaders.**

The faculty of the Counselor Education program has paid special attention to this issue in the last two doctoral admissions cycle. We are happy to report that every year the cohort of doctoral students we accept are more competitive, and that in time we should be seen as a national leader in doctoral Counselor Education.

**10. We recommend that the Program maintain student and course data that documents students' participation in courses across the Department and College as well as non Counselor Education students enrolled in Program courses.**

The Interim Counselor Education Program Coordinator has a meeting scheduled with the Program Coordinator in Educational Psychology in Spring 2014, and part of that conversation will involve how the Counselor Education program could collect student level data in the required research courses taught in EDPY. In addition, the Counselor Education Program will discuss in Spring 2014 how they will require doctoral students to provide course related information for coursework that they will take in their required multicultural and supporting area sequences.

The Counselor Education Program will also discuss how to collect and maintain non Counselor Education student data for these students enrolled in Counselor Education Program courses in both our MA and PhD programs.