**Survey of Employers of Recent Graduates from the Counselor Education Doctoral Program**

**Sam Houston State University**

Sam Houston State University is seeking CACREP accreditation for the Counselor Education Doctoral Program. As part of the accreditation process, immediate supervisors of recent graduates from the program are to be surveyed about satisfaction with the University’s education preparation of the graduate.

Please take a few minutes to respond to the following questions about the graduate. Some questions request a written response and other questions are to be answered using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent.

Please select the response that best describes the position of the graduate:

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Counselor Educator

\_\_\_\_\_\_ School Counseling Program Director or Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Agency Director or Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Private Practice Administrator/Counselor

\_\_\_\_\_\_ Group Practice Director or Supervisor

Respond to all statements that apply to the graduate you supervise by selecting the number that represents your evaluation of the graduate.

1. Demonstrates of knowledge in the field of counseling.
2. Demonstrates of knowledge and skills as a counselor educator.
3. Demonstrates of knowledge and skills as a counseling supervisor.
4. Demonstrates responsible job behaviors.
5. Demonstrates professionalism.
6. Demonstrates knowledge and respect for people from different cultures.
7. Behaviors in an ethical manner.
8. Collaborates with colleagues and other professionals.
9. Advocates for the profession by being involved in professional activities.
10. Satisfaction with overall work performance.

Written Response Questions:

What is your overall rating of the University’s educational results with the graduate you have hired?

Would you recommend graduates of SHSU’s Counselor Education Program to another employer?

Are there any suggestions you would like to make that would help us do a better job?

Are there any other comments you would like to make?

Thank you so much for taking time to complete the survey. Your timely response is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Dr. Richard Watts, Director of Doctoral Studies

Dr. Mary Nichter, Counseling Program Coordinator

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| [**VISTAS 2006 Online**](http://counselingoutfitters.com/vistas/vistas_2006_Title.htm) |
| **Surveying Graduates of a CACREP-Accredited Counselor Education Program:  Instrumentation and Results** |
| ***Ross L. Flynn, Doctoral Candidate Luellen Ramey, Ph.D. Lisa Hawley, Ph.D.*** Oakland University Rochester, Michigan    A growing body of literature underscores the importance of program evaluation for counselor education programs (Engels & Wilborn, 1984; Osborne & House, 1995; Sayers, Carroll & Loesch, 1996, CACREP Standards, 2001).  Reasons for this changing climate include reduced resources (Osborne & House, 1995), increased accreditation requirements (CACREP, 2001), increasing demand for program accountability, improved decision-making and increased student/employer satisfaction (Hadley & Mitchell, 1995), and the need for quality data for program improvement (Osborne & House, 1995).  There are no standardized measures in the professional literature designed to evaluate graduate counselor education programs and fulfill CACREP’s standards (Engels & Wilborn, 1984; Osborne & House, 1995; Sayers et al., 1996).  CACREP’s 2001 Standards require formal follow-up studies of graduates, clinical site supervisors and program graduate employers at least once every three years “to assess their perceptions and evaluations of major aspects of the program” (Section VI.C.3, 4, 5).  Only three comprehensive graduate and/or employer surveys exist in the professional literature (Engels & Wilborn, 1984; Osborne & House, 1995; Sayers et al., 1996).  The first published survey was developed to assess the eight objectives of a particular counselor education program (at the University of North Texas) (Engels & Wilborn, 1984).  A *Survey of Graduating Students* was administered at the end of a students’ last semester prior to graduation.  A *Graduate Follow-Up Survey* was used to collect data from graduates at 1-, 3-, and 5-year intervals following graduation.  The survey included 91 items in 36 questions, including eight demographic questions (Engels & Wilborn, 1984).  The second survey in the literature was prepared by authors at Oregon State University (Osborne & House, 1995).  The items in their survey derive generally from the major elements of accreditation standards (Sayers et al., 1996) as well as the objectives of their individual program (Osborne & House, 1995).  The *Graduate Survey* included 93 items in 82 questions including ten demographic questions.  The *Employer Evaluation* had 14 items.  The authors mailed these surveys two years *after* graduation, suggesting this delay allowed both graduates and employers a base of experience to assess the value of their educational program.  The survey was administered to graduates twice before publication, resulting in graduate response return rates of 57% and 70%.  The employer survey return rates were 29% from community agency employers and 38% from school employers (ibid, p. 261).  The third survey in the literature was developed utilizing an ACES grant by authors at the University of Florida at Gainesville using a “consensus approach,” collecting question items from approximately 50 graduate surveys from universities with CACREP-accredited programs (Sayers et al., 1996).  The resulting 130 question items were submitted to 342 counselor educators who were asked to rate the items from 0 (not important to include) to 9 (very important to include) “to indicate the extent to which they believed it important to include each item listed in follow-up surveys for program graduates or for their employers” (Sayers et al., 1996, p. 181).  Means and standard deviations of importance ratings were calculated to identify the most highly rated items in this consensus of counselor educators.  The result was a Graduate Survey of 66 items and an Employer Survey of 46 items which was utilized with a greater than 75% return rate for both surveys.  In the Spring of 2002, the authors at Oakland University collaborated to refine their graduate and supervisor/employer surveys by researching the literature and comparing graduate and supervisor/employer surveys utilized among CACREP-accredited universities.  After discussion it was decided to develop and utilize a survey patterned after the Sayers’ et al (1996) “consensus” model.  After review and input by the entire full-time counseling faculty, an instrument with 85 total questions was designed for graduates, and an instrument with 47 questions was designed for supervisors and employers.  The *Graduate Survey* is included in the Appendix.  The *Graduate Survey* was sent in March, 2004 to the 520 graduates of OU’s Masters in Counseling program since December, 1995.  A cover letter from the department chair invited the graduates to give an enclosed *Employer Survey* and a postage-paid return envelope to their employers.  The *Supervisor Survey* was mailed to 156 supervisors active since Spring, 2002.  Respondents were assured in the cover letter that their responses would remain anonymous and confidential, and that only aggregate (i.e. grouped) data would be reported.  A total of 103 graduates (20%), 27 employers (5%) and 17 supervisors (11%) responded as of August, 2004.  The authors provided no means of identifying how many graduates gave their surveys to their employers as requested.  Results were distributed to counseling program faculty, university administrators, graduates who requested copies, and the counseling library for review by students currently enrolled in the program and for review by prospective students.  Benefits included curriculum changes and positive feedback from students about specific aspects of the program which improved faculty morale.  **Highlights of the Graduate Survey include:**        *Demographics of those who responded*:  mean age 39 years, SD = 10 years, range 25-63 years, 92% female, 97% white        *How they identified themselves*:  45% community agency or private practice counselor, 32% school counselor, 23% other (including social workers, career counselors, youth assistance caseworkers, “stay-at-home” mothers, etc.)        *Months between graduation and start of job*:  28% of graduates who responded (19 of 69) had counseling jobs immediately upon graduation  90% of grads who responded (62 of 69) had counseling jobs within 3-1/2 months of graduation        *Starting salary by identity for those working full-time* (Univariate ANOVA F=3.198, df=12, p=.002)  $30,188 Community Agency Counselors (n=16)  $44,221 School Counselors (n=28)  $36,500 Private Practice Therapists (n=2)        *Current salary by identity for those working full-time* (Univariate ANOVA F=8.217, df=11, p<.001)  $36,343 Community Agency Counselors (n=16)  $58,733 School Counselors (n=26)  $51,667 Private Practice Therapists (n=3)        *Current licenses/certifications held*:  NCC 63 of 93 responding (68%)  LLPC 43 (46%)  LPC 37 (40%)        *Graduates****’ Program*** *Components* (highest and lowest mean scores)  Highest:  Evaluation of program duration (ie, 48-hour program) 4.23  General evaluation of academic knowledge received, 4.21  Evaluation of supervised field experiences (ie, Internship), 4.2  Evaluation of faculty competence, 4.2  Lowest:  General evaluation of academic advisement 3.54  Evaluation of faculty as mentors to you 3.55  Evaluation of faculty accessibility/availability, 3.97        *Graduates’* ***Knowledge*** *Attainment in Specific Curricular Areas* and *Graduates’* ***Skills*** *Attainment While in the Program* were also provided, and are available from the authors.        *Major strengths of the program*  The *most frequently mentioned positive* comment by both groups described the **helpfulness of the faculty and staff**.        *How could the program be improved*?  The *single most consistent suggestion for improvement* came from those who identified themselves as school counselors, and described their need for **a more school-related, “real world,” curriculum** and application, including ….  Highlights of the Employer Survey and Supervisor Survey were also included in published reports.  In summary, the surveys indicated:              Graduates value highly the academic knowledge they received during their graduate program              Graduates who responded were employed within a few months of graduation              Employers rated graduates as dependable, conscientious, ethical, and professional (at the 97 to 99.6% level)(4.87 to 4.98 out of 5)              School counselors’ starting salaries average 46% higher than community agency counselors’ starting salaries              School counselors’ current salaries average 62% higher (> $20,000 higher) than community agency counselors’ current salaries              86% report being licensed as LLPC or LPC             Graduates, employers and supervisors agreed on  the need for more focus on marriage/family/couple knowledge and skills  the need for more focus on clinical diagnosis skills    ***Appendix A***  **Graduate Survey Oakland University, Department of Counseling**  *Please provide the following information as appropriate:*  **Graduates’ Demographic Information**  Age: \_\_\_\_\_\_  Gender: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Race/Ethnicity:  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  The month and year you received your Masters in Counseling degree:    \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_                                                                                                                 Mo/Year  Please indicate your major emphasis of study:  \_\_\_ community agency  \_\_\_ school  What elective(s) did you take?              \_\_\_ Significant Loss                              \_\_\_ Community Agency Cns              \_\_\_ Intro to Couple & Family               \_\_\_ Diagnosis & Treatment              \_\_\_ Experiential Cns                             \_\_\_ Art Therapy              \_\_\_ Intro to Chem Dep/Addictions       \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  What specialization(s) did you complete?              \_\_\_ Advanced Career Counseling         \_\_\_ Mental Health Counseling              \_\_\_ Child & Adolescent Cns                \_\_\_ Couple & Family Counseling              \_\_\_ Post-MA School Cns                    \_\_\_ Post-MA Teacher’s Cert for Cnslrs              \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  In regard to your world of work:              How do you identify yourself?                          \_\_\_ Community Agency Counselor       \_\_\_ School Counselor                          \_\_\_ Private Practice Therapist              \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_              Current position title:  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_              Current employment setting (agency, school, institution name):  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_              \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_              Current agency/institution City/State location:  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_              \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_              Current primary counseling clientele:  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_              Current primary position functions/roles/job duties: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_              \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_              Hours worked currently:  \_\_\_ fulltime \_\_\_ ¾ time \_\_\_ ½ time \_\_\_ ¼ time              Post-graduation starting date and salary:  Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_        $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ /yr              Current income from counseling activities:                      Salary   $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ /yr  Other counseling activities (private practice, etc)        $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/yr              Current licensures and/or certifications held:  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_              \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_              Additional professional counseling activities other than your primary employment setting (e.g., private practice); please briefly describe your activities in this capacity:              \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_              \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **Graduates’ Program Components**  Please use a scale of **1 = low/poor** to **5 = high/very good** to indicate your personal evaluation of each of the following aspects of the program(s) from which you graduated:  \_\_\_\_\_General evaluation of program curriculum  \_\_\_\_\_General evaluation of academic knowledge received  \_\_\_\_\_Self-evaluation of in-program skills development (e.g., Techniques)  \_\_\_\_\_Evaluation of supervised field experiences (e.g., Internship)  \_\_\_\_\_Evaluation of on-campus field experience (e.g., Practicum)  \_\_\_\_\_General evaluation of instructional effectiveness  \_\_\_\_\_Evaluation of faculty competence  \_\_\_\_\_Evaluation of faculty accessibility/availability  \_\_\_\_\_General evaluation of academic advisement  \_\_\_\_\_Evaluation of facilities and resources  \_\_\_\_\_Evaluation of supervisors’ competence/effectiveness  \_\_\_\_\_Evaluation of faculty as mentors to you  \_\_\_\_\_Evaluation of in-program student evaluation procedures (i.e., did you feel the procedures used to evaluate you were valid and effective?)  \_\_\_\_\_Evaluation of program duration (i.e., 48-hour academic length of the program)  **Graduates’ Knowledge Attainment in Specific Curricular Areas**  Please use a scale of **1 = low/poor** to **5 = high/very good** to indicate your personal evaluation of each of the following **knowledge areas** in your program(s).  **Use NA** if the area is **Not Applicable**.  \_\_\_\_\_Ethical and legal issues in your profession  \_\_\_\_\_Small group dynamics and counseling  \_\_\_\_\_Theories of counseling  \_\_\_\_\_Career and lifestyle counseling  \_\_\_\_\_Multicultural counseling  \_\_\_\_\_Human growth and development  \_\_\_\_\_General evaluation of practicum experiences  \_\_\_\_\_General evaluation of internship experiences  \_\_\_\_\_Large group dynamics and counseling  \_\_\_\_\_School counseling  \_\_\_\_\_Standardized (i.e., group) testing  \_\_\_\_\_Crisis intervention/counseling  \_\_\_\_\_Consultation  \_\_\_\_\_Psychological clinical diagnosis  \_\_\_\_\_Professional credentialing  \_\_\_\_\_Theories of personality  \_\_\_\_\_Family counseling  \_\_\_\_\_Case management/planning  \_\_\_\_\_Professional organizations  \_\_\_\_\_Research and statistics  \_\_\_\_\_Advocacy  \_\_\_\_\_General evaluation of practicum supervisor(s)  \_\_\_\_\_General evaluation of internship site supervisor(s)  \_\_\_\_\_General evaluation of practicum site  \_\_\_\_\_General evaluation of internship site  **Graduates’ Skills Attainment While in the Program**  Please use a scale of **1 = low/poor** to **5 = high/very good** to indicate your personal evaluation of each of the following **skill areas** in your program(s).  **Use NA** if the area is **Not Applicable**.  \_\_\_\_\_Individual counseling skills  \_\_\_\_\_Small group counseling skills  \_\_\_\_\_Multicultural counseling skills  \_\_\_\_\_Large group counseling/guidance skills  \_\_\_\_\_Career and lifestyle counseling skills  \_\_\_\_\_Crisis intervention/counseling skills  \_\_\_\_\_Child and adolescent counseling skills  \_\_\_\_\_Family counseling skills  \_\_\_\_\_Consultation skills  \_\_\_\_\_Case planning/management skills  \_\_\_\_\_Psychological clinical diagnosis skills  \_\_\_\_\_Assessment skills  \_\_\_\_\_Couples/marriage counseling skills  What were the major strengths of the preparation program(s) from which you graduated?  In what ways could the preparation program(s) from which you graduated have been improved?  What would you like to have added?  Deleted? (Use back of sheet if necessary)  **Please return this survey by [DATE] to: Oakland University, Department of Counseling, 491B Pawley Hall, Rochester, MI  48309**  **References**  CACREP. (2001). *The 2001 Standards*, [internet]. Available: http://www.counseling.org/cacrep/2001standards700.htm.  Engels, D., & Wilborn, B. (1984). Surveying graduating students and graduates of counselor education programs:  Instruments, rationale and genesis. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 23*, 234-243.  Hadley, R. G., & Mitchell, L. K. (1995). *Counseling research and program evaluation*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.  Osborne, J. L., & House, R. M. (1995). Evaluation of counselor education programs:  A proposed plan. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 34*, 253-269.  Sayers, R. D., Carroll, J. J., & Loesch, L. C. (1996). 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