Graduate Program (and degree(s)): (e.g., Special Education, MSE) MS, Counseling

Individual(s) Completing the Questionnaire/Report:
Brenda Rust O’Beirne, PhD
Counselor Education, Chair & Program Coordinator

BACKGROUND INFORMATION
1. Please list the emphases and post-baccalaureate certificate programs offered by your graduate program.

   **Emphases:** Community Counseling, School Counseling, Higher Education Counseling

   **Certificates:** Development in progress

2. Provide the number of students (both FTE and headcount) and number of individuals who have completed their graduate degrees through your program during terms and years indicated.

   *(Skip to Question #3. This information will be secured and filled in by the Campus Self-Study Coordinator)*

   **Enrollment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>FTE</th>
<th>Headcount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Spring 2005</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduates</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Year</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 03-04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 04-05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Overview and evaluate the adequacy of the human, physical, and fiscal resources your department deploys to serve students and meet other programmatic needs by answering the questions below:

   **Human Resources**

   Evaluate the general adequacy of the human resources (i.e., the # of faculty and instructional staff and their skills) relative to the graduate program’s ability to serve its student populations and achieve other programmatic goals. Do this by assigning a number between “1” (completely inadequate) to “9” (completely satisfies needs).

   | 5 | 1-9 |
In a paragraph or two, discuss why you've assigned the score you have. Include, in particular, a
discussion of unique strengths as well as important needs not being met or opportunities not being
explored because of limitations.

Though the “people resources” are not adequate in number (we would benefit from a
minimum of one to two additional full-time faculty), productive and dedicated faculty and
staff help to meet the curricular and supervision needs of our students. Through careful
planning and intentional scheduling, we are able to maintain the three emphases and
struggle to meet the CACREP accreditation standards (or at least come close), generally
with the involvement of part-time adjunct instructors. We are not able to offer electives or
explore additional program offerings (e.g. we consider the addition of an AODA certification
program for undergrads and grad but know that could not happen without additional
staffing). Supervision responsibility (especially in practicum) has been assigned to adjunct
staff; these important clinical experiences would more appropriately be supervised by full-
time faculty. Additionally, we are dependent on overloads to offer all of the courses
required for our students. Continuing education and extension alternatives have helped
us manage, but these are not the ideal solutions to the staffing issue. The consistency and
stability of these sources of support are also a concern.

Physical Resources
Evaluate the adequacy of the physical resources available to support the graduate program ability to
serve its student population and achieve programmatic goals by assigning a number between "1"
(completely inadequate) to "9" (completely satisfies needs). Consider such issues as office space,
classroom space, supporting technology, lab space to support research and/or instruction, etc.

6 1-9

In a paragraph or two, discuss why you've assigned the score you have. Include, in particular, a
discussion of unique strengths as well as important needs not being met or opportunities not being
explored because of limitations.

Classroom space is available within the College to accommodate most of the content
courses; the classroom space is adequate even if not always comfortable or ideal for group
size. More concerns exist with the lab. The Winther Counseling Lab has become an
important part of the overall training experience for our students, and additional space is
needed for observation and feedback, office and waiting areas. The present configuration
makes expansion or redesign difficult; we are currently exploring options for alternative
sites or different use of existing space.

Fiscal Resources
While recognizing that every academic program would benefit from a larger budget, evaluate the
adequacy of fiscal resources allocated to the program to serve its student populations and achieve
other programmatic goals by assigning a number between "1" (completely inadequate) to "9"
(completely satisfies needs).

6 1-9

In a paragraph or two, discuss why you've assigned the score you have. Include, in particular, a
discussion of key expenses, and key needs not being met or opportunities not being explored because
of fiscal limitations.

Staffing is again the primary issue; more fiscal resources would allow for more courses and
different course rotations (offering more attractive timing and alternatives for students).
We would be able to expand our offerings and meet the expressed needs of the community
more effectively (e.g. there is a need for AODA training that we can not meet because of
our current staffing). We would also enhance staffing in the lab. A half-time lab director is
needed to help the Winther Counseling Lab reach its optimal level of functioning; there is
no position dedicated to these tasks at this time (so the Chair does it as “extra” work load without additional compensation). Two half-time grad assistants are invaluable assets in the work of the lab; ideally, there would be two more so the lab hours could be extended and services could be offered more broadly. Additional fiscal resources would allow for on-going professional development of faculty and staff, activities valued by all members of the department. At this point, unless there are special allocations from the college or university, there are no funds to support research, travel, conference participation or presentation. Limited personnel lines also mean that we function with a half-time program assistant within the department; there is a serious need for a full-time person dedicated to the work of the Counselor Education Department (to manage the multiple processes that are a part of the on-going work).

4. In a paragraph or two, overview significant changes made in your graduate program or its curriculum since 1996 (i.e., the last North Central Association Accreditation Visit).

Major curricular changes have occurred since 1996. These changes were prompted by a program review and evaluation in preparation for the CACREP accreditation process. More specific delineation of these curricular changes can be found in other documents (including our current Audit and Review report), but generally the changes are as follows: 1) a one-semester, three-credit practicum experience is now required for all students midway through their programs, 2) two courses were added, including “Counseling Across the Lifespan” and “Ethics and Professional Identity” (this course was later changed to incorporate content from “Consultation” and “Ethics” and is now called “Professional Practices”, required of all students), 3) “Clinical Studies in Counseling” has been added as a requirement for all students regardless of emphasis (in the past the course was required only for Community, not School or Higher Education), 4) credits for internship were reduced (from 6 each semester to 3 each semester) with the actual experience and expectations being defined in the same ways (20 hours per week for a full academic year), and 5) course rotations and course offerings were redesigned to accommodate part-time and full-time students in this new program. Our current program offers comprehensive training for counselors; these changes have been accomplished without additional resources. We are committed to maintaining these standards despite the tremendous challenges with staffing.

In another paragraph or two, describe why these changes occurred.

As mentioned above, the changes were largely related to the CACREP standards. It is important to our program (and potential students and employers) that we maintain those professional standards and that accreditation. In addition, feedback from current students, internship supervisors, alums and employers was used in the redesign of courses and the overall reconstruction of the program offerings. While the emphases have not changed, the content and courses within each has shifted to reflect the changing needs of clients and communities.

MISSION & PLANNING

5. In a paragraph or two, describing any significant projects/initiatives that the graduate program is planning or currently has underway, but has not yet completed.

Certificate programs are being developed that will provide opportunities for persons trained in one emphasis to return for retraining in another area and earn a certificate. There is increased interest from program grads and counselors in the area who would like to participate with on-going professional development and create new work options simultaneously. In addition, we will be exploring the possibilities of AODA and Marriage and Family Certificate Programs (the AODA program would be undergrad/grad).
There are a number of other initiatives that are collaborations with other departments or agencies (e.g. Center for Students with Disabilities, Marquette University’s Counseling Psychology Department, Crossroads Counseling Center). These projects are early in their development and offer potential for positive working relationships and excellent learning for our students.

6. Below are five “core values” the University identifies as central to its purposes. Please evaluate the importance of each core value in terms of how each aligns with the purposes of your graduate program (i.e., take a hypothetical 100 points and distribute them among the five values, with those values that align more closely to the purposes of your program receiving more points).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Value</th>
<th>Importance (100 points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to the pursuit of knowledge and understanding</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of the individual</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and professional integrity</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to serve</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to develop a sense of community, respect for diversity, and global perspectives</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total=</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 points</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Every academic program engages in planning. Review the list of variables below and evaluate the extent to which each of the following influences decision-making behind the planning process for your graduate program, particularly as it relates to your curriculum (i.e., take a hypothetical 100 points and distribute them among the planning variables, with those variables playing a larger role in your planning process receiving more points).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Variables</th>
<th>Importance (100 points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The mission of the University, the School of Graduate Studies, the department, or the graduate program</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic assessment data/information relevant to student performance against learning outcomes</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other data/information gathered relevant to performance (e.g., Audit &amp; Review feedback)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Societal/Cultural trends (e.g., changes in demographics, lifestyles, professions)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus trends (e.g., changes in university-initiated needs and demands)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology trends (e.g., technology developments that affect delivery of service)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional trends (e.g., changes evident at other universities/colleges)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available human resources (e.g., # of faculty, talents, etc.) within the unit</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available financial resources (e.g., budget, available and accessible $)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available physical resources (e.g., space, existing technology, etc.)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: Accreditation and professional standards</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total=</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 points</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. In 1997, the Graduate Council approved the following mission statement as one that characterized the overarching mission of graduate education at UW-Whitewater.

*The School of Graduate Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater oversees programs whose goal is to provide high quality, practitioner-oriented programs that use knowledge and skills acquired through baccalaureate degrees as a foundation for advanced preparation and professional development for careers in business and industry, education and human services.*

*The graduate programs achieve this through provision of learner-centered processes which couple professional experiences with advanced knowledge and highly-refined analytic, communicative and functional skills such that their students are capable of performances that characterize the best practices of their profession.*
To that end, all master's level graduates will be able to:

- comprehend and discuss advanced theoretical questions and current issues;
- collect, analyze and interpret data applicable to complex questions and problems;
- conceptualize, evaluate and implement solutions to complex problems;
- use appropriate technologies as needed; and
- synthesize and articulate multiple concepts in a clear, concise and persuasive manner.

Evaluate the extent to which this mission statement aligns with the purposes of your graduate program by assigning a “1” (has no alignment with the purposes of our program) to “9” (aligns closely with the purposes of our graduate program).

7 1-9

In a paragraph or two, discuss why you’ve assigned the score you have. Include, in particular, a discussion of how the Graduate Mission Statement diverges from the purposes of your graduate program.

Our graduate program is dedicated to preparing competent clinicians who will work in a number of different settings (community, school and higher education) providing direct counseling services. Their work will depend on their knowledge and theoretical grounding, ability to collect and understand data, problem-solving abilities, and most importantly their clinical skills to do that work. Our program is an applied program that helps students develop the skills and competencies to be effective counselors.

9. Does your graduate program have a mission statement?
   Yes  No x

If you answered “yes,” please list the mission statement here. Also, if your mission statement can be accessed on the web, please list the URL here. NA

If you answered “yes,” please describe how, if at all, this mission statement plays a role in your graduate program’s planning and/or decision-making, particularly as it relates to the curriculum. NA

**GRADUATE QUALITY**

10. In the 1996 Report of a Visit filed by the visiting accreditation team, the lone “concern” mentioned in the report related to graduate programming. The Report recommended that “Existing graduate programs should be carefully reviewed with attention given to issues such as: inclusion of scholarship, opportunities for a true graduate experience, elimination of a number of dual-level courses, and faculty loads.”

Evaluate the extent to which having students engaging in scholarly activity relates to the student learning outcomes (or the process of achieving the student learning outcomes) of your program by assigning a “1” (student scholarly activity plays no role in our graduate student's achieving our program's learning outcomes) to “9” (student scholarship is essential to achieving the student learning outcomes of our program).

6 1-9

In a paragraph or two, discuss why you’ve assigned the score you have. Include, in particular, a discussion of why and how student scholarship does and/or does not play a role in student learning in your graduate program.
Scholarly activities are a part of all content courses within the curriculum. Students participate actively with independent research and writing in those courses. Clinical courses require them to integrate that learning in different ways (not generally thought of as scholarship). There is no thesis required in the program (though the option is available for students who are interested). Students are encouraged to pursue independent studies with faculty if they have particular research interests where they would like to collaborate; in addition, opportunities for action research are embedded in courses, particularly during the internship experience. Because the department offers almost exclusively graduate courses (with two exceptions), there are opportunities for true graduate experiences (e.g. class sizes are generally compatible with course and program goals; course assignments are rigorous and intentional). Teaching loads challenge faculty and staff to create these experiences because 12 credits has been the standard, and there have been seemingly no options to lessen that load.

In a paragraph or two, define how your program defines a “true graduate experience," addressing, in particular, how graduate-level learning differs from undergraduate-level learning. (You may choose to address the difference in terms of the three conceptual differences identified by the Graduate Council: Content: What content areas of the course will graduate students explore with greater depth, and/or what additional content areas will graduate students examine? Intensity: What are the unique course requirements for graduate students—in terms of additional readings or assignments, different requirements in assignments, different role expectations, and/or different evaluation methods and/or standards—that reflect greater intellectual intensity and rigor? Self-Directed: What outside-of-class activities are required of graduate students, including research, and how do they reflect a greater degree of self-directed learning?)

A comparison is difficult here because all courses are offered at the graduate level (true for all courses that department faculty are involved with teaching).

In a paragraph, discuss the role that dual-level (i.e., 300/500; 400/600) courses play in your graduate curriculum.

Minimal. One course is offered for undergrads and grads (Life Work and Career Planning). This course is taught by an adjunct staff person who is a member of a Student Services Department on campus.

Does having responsibility for teaching graduate-level courses in your program alter the teaching load of your program’s faculty?

Yes  No x

If “yes,” take a paragraph to describe how faculty teaching load differs, and why such adjustments are made.

NA

STUDENT LEARNING & ASSESSMENT

11. List the student learning outcomes for each of the emphases areas and post-baccalaureate certificate programs identified in question #1.

The learning objectives are consistent across all three emphases. They are divided into three categories and include the following:

Performance Objectives

1. I am able to demonstrate facilitative counseling skills (warmth, primary empathy, genuineness, concreteness).
2. I am able to apply challenging skills (self-disclosure, advanced empathy, confrontation).
3. I am able to recognize and address emotions.
4. I am able to develop a theoretically based case conceptualization.
5. I have the knowledge and ability to design and plan a group.
6. I am able to implement and facilitate groups.
7. I am able to establish and maintain effective consultation relationships with persons within and outside the work setting.
8. I am able to utilize computer technology to enhance counseling (e.g. accessing information on counseling issues and treatment on the internet, bibliotherapy, and consultation on professional list-servs).
9. I am able to demonstrate working knowledge of services, policies and procedures
10. I am able to meet record keeping/maintenance requirements (forms, reports, case notes, etc.)
11. I am able to function effectively and ethically within the context of a professional work social system.
12. I am able to consume research and interpret results effectively for counseling purposes.
13. I am able to conduct research (including action research and program evaluation).

Academic Objectives

14. I have knowledge of facilitative skills (warmth, primary empathy, genuineness, and concreteness).
15. I have knowledge of challenging skills (self-disclosure, advanced empathy, confrontation).
16. I am able to identify client concerns and develop appropriate counseling goals
17. I am able to formulate a theoretically based approach to working with a client.
18. I am able to evaluate progress in the counseling process.
19. I am aware of the relationship between counseling as a social service and significant social-political variables in the local, state, and national communities.
20. I have knowledge and understanding of ethical and legal guidelines.
21. I am able to generalize learning from one situation to another.
22. I have an understanding of issues and trends in a multicultural and diverse society.
23. I have knowledge and skills to counsel effectively in a pluralistic society.

Personal Objectives

24. I am committed to personal development and am able to facilitate self-exploration (including willingness to address own issues affecting ability to be effective with others).
25. I demonstrate a commitment to personal development, and a readiness to participate and contribute to the profession and professional organizations.

12. Complete the grid below by listing the emphasis areas and post-baccalaureate certificate programs from question #1 across the top row (and indicated by the example). Then, under each emphasis and certificate program, place an “X” indicating which data collection methods are used to assess the extent to which the student learning outcomes are achieved (evidence that students know and can perform against the objectives). Mark, where relevant, both “direct assessment methods” (efforts that directly evaluate student performance) and “indirect assessment methods” (efforts that evaluate student performance based on perception of student, alumni, etc. ).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Method</th>
<th>Example: Knitting (Emphasis)</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Higher Ed.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct Assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum-Embedded Exams/Tests</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum-Embedded Essays</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum-Embedded Projects</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please list specific data/information sets relevant to the graduate programs academic assessment efforts that the UW-W Self-Study Committees, and/or the Higher Learning Commission’s Visiting Accreditation Team can access to review/consult.

- Audit and Review Report, 2004
- CACREP Accreditation Report
- GSA-NCE test results for the past five years (national counselor exam)
- Survey Results (interns, supervisors, alums, employers)
- Advisory Board minutes
- Portfolios
- Reviews of progress

13. Indicate specific changes to the department’s operation or planning, if any, that have resulted from the collection and use of the data/information identified in the preceding question. Place an “X” in the appropriate box in the far right hand column for any of the following changes that have occurred.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programmatic Changes</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Outcomes (e.g., changes in what students should learn in the program)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum (e.g., revisions to sub-major, change in pre-requisites, addition of new courses, deletion or combining of coursework, changes in existing course content, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduling (e.g., when courses are offered, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departmental Procedure (e.g., changes in advising)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Methods (e.g., shift to hybrid courses)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Delivery Methods (e.g., online programming)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes in Assessment Procedures (e.g., addition of specific assessments, creation of Advisory Board)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In a paragraph, discuss your graduate program’s use of academic assessment data/information as chronicled in the table above. Discuss, in particular, how these changes have improved or stand to improve student learning.
The most significant changes have been in the area of curriculum; these changes are framed in the context of CACREP requirements, and very directly affected by the input from students, alums, field supervisors and employers in the area. In addition, our students’ performance on the GSA-NCE (now taken by the majority of our students) provides invaluable feedback about integration of content across eight core content areas. Feedback offered by the Advisory Council led to a redefinition of learning outcomes (resulting in additions and clarifications of several program objectives). Learning outcomes remain consistent with the professional standards defined by CACREP, and are now utilized across the program (admission, review of progress, practicum, graduation).

14. In the box below, indicate the extent to which you think your graduate program has fully implemented its academic assessment program, with 100% representing a fully-implemented program. Consider the extent to which the department has developed clearly stated learning outcomes, systematically collects data/information that informs the extent to which the outcomes are achieved, and uses the data to make changes to the curriculum, etc.

\[ 70 \% \text{ = degree to which academic assessment program is fully implemented} \]

If you've indicated a percentage other than 100%, please list actions that remain to be completed before implementation of the assessment program is complete.

Program objectives are being utilized for all students, regardless of emphasis. This plan has been in place for over 5 years, and while there has been some change to the instrument, there is consistency of administration. The portfolio process for school counseling students is still in its infancy; much work is being done to create an effective and efficient process that is meaningful for the students. This work will be in progress over the next few years as a new faculty member joins our department and provides leadership in that area.

If you've indicated a percentage less than 100%, what are the biggest obstacles to your graduate program fully implementing its assessment program? Consider such items as: faculty and instructional staff involvement, time, budget, understanding of academic assessment and the process, etc.

The biggest obstacles are time and staffing. The school counseling position in our program (only one) has been filled temporarily by an academic staff person for the past two years (she has done an exceptional job in that position, but was asked to maintain rather than keep building). We are hopeful that we will again move forward more quickly once that position is filled with a full-time tenure-track faculty person. Much time is invested in the assessment process (particularly the portfolios) and there is limited support staff to help that happen (e.g. limited graduate assistants, student help, and program assistants). With 12-credit teaching loads and research and service demands, the assessments can sometimes seem difficult to manage.

15. Describe any initiatives on behalf of your graduate program (and its faculty) that have specifically promoted enhanced student understanding of issues related to diversity and inclusion.

All faculty are dedicated to helping students understand issues related to diversity and inclusion. In every content course and clinical experience, there is extensive discussion about these issues and how they relate to the work of counselors. While we have one course expressly committed to the research of diversity in counseling, all courses and instructors integrate that content across the curriculum. Those competencies are built into our program objectives and learning outcomes as well. Clinical experiences, including practicum and internship, afford students the opportunity to work with clients from diverse backgrounds.
Most recently, faculty members have worked to address concerns of ELL (English Language Learners) within our program. A series of workshops were held during the fall semester to explore teaching and learning options for students in our program for whom English is not the first language. These discussions will continue, and serve to strengthen our teaching for all courses and potentially all students.

**EXTERNAL CONSTITUENCIES**

16. Describe in a paragraph or two your graduate program’s relationships with constituencies external to the university (alums, employers or potential employers, advisory boards). What role, if any, have these groups played in (re)directing curriculum development specifically, and departmental planning generally?

The Counselor Education Program enjoys vibrant relationships with many employers and alums in the area. Practitioners in the field (school and community counselors, many of whom are graduates of our program, and most of whom would be potential employers) work actively with our internship program, and that keeps us connected professionally. We serve as consultants to schools and agencies in the area, and are often called upon to provide in-services or trainings. The participation of Advisory Council members is also valuable to our planning; the Advisory Council is made up of alums, employers, supervisors, current students and faculty and staff.

17. Does your department generally, or faculty or student groups specifically, offer special programming (e.g., non-credit workshops) or provide services (e.g., consulting services, project support) for constituencies external to the university?  
   Yes x No

If "yes," please provide a list of these initiatives and the constituencies they serve.

- Consultations and in-services are provided upon request by individual faculty
- Workshops are hosted on campus, and open to professionals in the area for continuing education credits (CEUs are required for all mental health professionals).
- Chi Sigma Iota (student honorary) hosts
- Work collaboratively with Tri-County Consortium to host trainings

18. Related to the preceding question, does the unit regularly collect data/information to evaluate how effectively it serves its constituency(ies)? (This might include surveys of constituencies.)  
   Yes x No

If "yes," please list specific data/information sets that the UW-W Self-Study Committees, and/or the Higher Learning Commission’s Visiting Accreditation Team can access to review/consult.

- Workshop evaluations
- Client assessments

19. Does your graduate program offer any service-learning courses, or do any of your faculty use service-learning as a teaching method?  
   Yes x No

If “yes,” please list specific courses and faculty.

- Service learning has been incorporated in some semesters with a number of courses (e.g. Social and Cultural Foundations and Intro to Student Services)
**SELF-EVALUATION**

**Strengths**

20. List and prioritize no more than three primary strengths that have emerged in your graduate program efforts to meet its mission, goals, or objectives. To identify these strengths, you may wish to consider: What does your graduate program do very well? What good things do people say about your graduate program? How has your graduate program aided the campus in meeting its mission? In what ways has your graduate program “gone beyond the call of duty?”

After identifying each strength, specify supporting evidence that suggests that the statement is true. This may include data/information gathered relevant to graduate program performance, trend data from the Office of the Registrar or Institutional Research, special recognition from external agencies, etc.

1. **Specific Strength:** Exceptionally competent and committed faculty and staff
   - **Supporting Evidence:**
     - Teaching and service records
     - Scholarship and professional leadership
     - Willingness to teach overloads and work creatively within limited resources
     - Outreach and service in the area – strong partnerships
     - Feedback from students, alums, supervisors and employers in annual surveys

2. **Specific Strength:** CACREP accredited program that provides current and comprehensive training for our students
   - **Supporting Evidence:**
     - Successful achievement of full accreditation
     - Feedback from Advisory Council members
     - Feedback from internship supervisors and employers

3. **Specific Strength:** Outstanding students
   - **Supporting Evidence:**
     - Performance on national counselor exam
     - Feedback from supervisors and employers
     - Post-graduation employment records

**Concerns**

21. List and prioritize no more than three primary concerns that have emerged in your graduate program’s efforts to meet its mission, goals, or objectives. To identify these concerns, you may wish to consider: What could be improved? What is done poorly? What do we, as a graduate program, avoid doing, even though we know it’s important?

After identifying each concern, specify supporting evidence that suggests that the statement is true. This may include data/information gathered relevant to departmental performance, trend data available from the Registrar or Institutional Research, information gathered from accreditation visit, etc.
Finally, identify one or more recommended actions to address the area of concern. This may include actions that your graduate program has already underway, actions being planned, or preliminary thinking about how to address the area of concern.

1. **Specific Concern: Need for additional staffing to support and enhance current programs**
   - **Supporting Evidence:***
     - Our reliance on adjunct staff over the past few years to teach core courses on a regular basis suggests the need for additional staffing (adjuncts bring less consistency and less shared vision and purpose; communication is difficult, and students have less relationship with temporary, part-time staff)
     - There are many initiatives in the developmental stages that will only be accomplished with additional faculty/staff
     - Faculty within department teach only graduate courses and always exceed the 9-credit teaching load mandated by NCATE (if this teaching load were applied for all graduate faculty, we would need another full-time adjunct instructor in addition to those we employ now)
     - CACREP response letter indicates need for additional staffing
   - **Recommended Actions:**
     - Re-evaluate staffing of department
     - Determine optimal number of students in each emphasis (based on re-evaluation of staffing) and align admissions procedures to help produce those results

2. **Specific Concern: Need to compete in recruitment of students while maintaining professional standards**
   - **Supporting Evidence:***
     - Numerous graduate programs in the area (especially private institutions) are offering efficient ways to complete Master’s degrees in counseling; they are generally not accredited and adhere to different standards. Prospective students (especially today) are now always aware or most concerned about the differences in quality (as noted in pre-admissions and admissions interviews). Practical considerations and professional commitments make it hard to compete with some of these options.
     - Staffing again affects our ability to offer more courses more often which might ease the concern of timing for some students
     - The matriculation rate for admitted students was down this past year – suggesting a need to reevaluate the timing of admissions, support we are able to offer grad students and other needs in recruiting students
     - The retention of students, particularly students of color, is also a concern.
   - **Recommended Actions:**
     - Actively market the benefits of our CACREP accredited program
     - Re-evaluate the timing of our admissions process (comparing particularly with other UW system institutions)
3. **Specific Concern: Staffing and physical setting of Winther Counseling Lab**

- **Supporting Evidence:**
  - Professional literature in Counselor Education speaks to the need for lab experiences closely supervised by faculty; the Winther Counseling Lab provides that setting, but with no administrative support for the functioning of the office (other than two very competent half-time graduate assistants and supervision by the Department Chair). The Counseling Lab is developing into a fully functioning counseling center, providing services to students and community members. Without additional staffing, the coordination and delivery of services is being severely hampered. There have been efforts to attain grant funding to support these needs. To date, none of those grants has been funded.
  - Persons using the lab provide feedback regarding the need for more consistent office support in the Winther Counseling Lab.
  - The physical setting is sufficient for individual sessions (generally) but there is no waiting area and no privacy for persons accessing the service; there are also challenges when providing services for families or children (limited space).
  - The combined functions of the office area (appointment scheduling, video taping center, file storage, etc.) make it an inefficient and ineffective work area for any of those tasks.
  - Practicum counselors are providing services to increasing numbers of students; as those numbers increase, the need for functional and comfortable space becomes even more of an issue.

- **Recommended Actions:**
  - Continue to seek grant funding for support staff to more fully staff the office.
  - When reviewing faculty/teaching staffing (as suggested above), include “clinic director” as part of the overall plan (ideally that person would be involved with part-time administrative and clinical supervision, and also teaching responsibilities).
  - Review options for expanded or re-designed physical space with the Dean and appropriate campus personnel (opportunities may be presented in the near future as departments and programs re-locate when new buildings are completed on campus).