

December 10, 2018

Thank you for your detailed feedback on Draft 1 of the School Counselor Education Self Study. We have responded to your feedback in the table below. Please read an important note at the end of this document regarding a change in data tables from Draft 1 to the Final Report.

**USU Professional School Counselor Education Program
Response to Feedback**

Introduction	Response
Top of page 4: clarification: the mention of CACREP and ASCA standards here is meant to indicate that the program uses the standards of these two organizations, but is not accredited by nor a member of either—is that correct?	This section has been re-written to better clarify our standards. An explanation for the reason that USU is not seeking accreditation by either CACREP or ASCA is included in the re-write. See pages 4 – 7.
Page 4 under ‘Program Logic and Overview’ “An over-arching goal of the faculty is for students to develop knowledge and critical thinking skills through didactic and applied training experiences to illustrate the relationship between theory, research, and application.” This is more of an editorial comment than anything, but is the goal <i>to develop knowledge and critical thinking skills</i> (I’m guessing) or <i>to illustrate the relationship...</i> The sentence sets these up as equal goals. But perhaps the intent is to say that the program is really after the first of these which it achieves <i>through didactic and applied training experiences which illustrate the relationship...</i>	This section has been rewritten to reflect program logic more accurately. See pages 4 -7.
Bottom of page 5: “USU has adopted the CACREP 2016 standards. Both have approval by the USBE, with the choice for which set of standards to adopt left to university program faculty and sponsoring department head approval. There is no burden of proof for U of U standards for USU.” Re: the first highlighted section above, it’s not clear what the “both” are. And re: the second highlighted section, the meaning of the sentence isn’t clear – I’m guessing U of U doesn’t refer to the University of Utah, in this case, but as a reader, I am puzzled.	Information about the University of Utah has been removed. Reference to their accreditation choices is deemed to be unnecessary in our Self Study.

<p>Top of page 6: “Students are strongly encouraged to select different levels for the 150-clock hour practicum and the 600-clock hour internship.” Q: Does the program track which levels? And if so, though it need not be addressed HERE in the document, reviewers would be interested to know what proportion of candidates do (and don’t) manage to work at multiple levels, and whether that makes a difference in their preparation and performance.</p>	<p>Yes. The Program tracks levels at which practicum and interns complete onsite training. A table reporting basic data has been added to the Self Study on Page 7. The rationale for providing strong encouragement to students to work in two different settings for these two experiential components of training is also discussed on Page 6. In the conclusion section we establish a goal of analyzing outcomes for graduates who are in multiple settings across the experiential components of training as opposed to those who are in a single setting for the two components.</p>
<p>Middle of page 6: “Applicant geographic location is not a factor in the admission process of the program. We accept qualified applicants first and then activate sites within approximately one-hour driving time of the student’s home.” This is a great example of responding to state and local needs and of taking a contextual approach to operating the program.</p>	<p>Thank you for recognizing this as a strength of our program. In Section 4, Program Engagement in System Improvement, we cite our acceptance policies surrounding applicant context our section “Seeks to diversify the educator workforce through recruitment and support.”</p>

Standard 1: Completer Performance

Completers perform as professional educators with the capacity to support success for all learners.

Candidates and completers exhibit the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions of competent, caring, and effective professional educators. Successful candidate performance requires knowledge of learners, context, and content. Candidates demonstrate the ability to plan for and enact and/or support instruction and assessment that is differentiated and culturally responsive. Evidence shows that, by the time of program completion, candidates exhibit knowledge, skills, and abilities of professional educators appropriate to their target credential or degree.

All six aspects of this standard, included in the table below, must be addressed in the evidence set for the standard.

Evidence must include multiple measures, multiple perspectives (program faculty, P12 partners, program completers, graduates’ employers), direct measures of performance in program- appropriate field/clinical setting.

Does the evidence address each aspect of the standard?

Aspects of Standard 1	Evidence of quality or capacity	Negative evidence or gap
Content knowledge relevant to credential Pedagogical knowledge relevant to credential Professional knowledge relevant to credential	The crosswalk to the Praxis and to relevant standards. Multiple measures converge	
Learners, learning theory (including social, emotional, academic); application of learning theory in practice	Courses, evaluations, surveys—multiple measures converge	
Culturally responsive practice, including intersectionality of race, ethnicity, class, gender identity and expression, sexual identity, and the impact of language acquisition and literacy development on learning	Courses, evaluations, surveys—multiple measures converge	
Assessment of /for learning, assessment; data literacy; use of data to inform practice; formative assessment	Courses, evaluations, surveys—multiple measures converge	
Creation and development of positive learning and work environments	Courses, evaluations, surveys—multiple measures converge	
Dispositions and behaviors required for successful professional practice	Courses, evaluations, surveys—multiple measures converge	

Comments

Page 18: virtually a 30% response rate – very good rate!

General comment: The evidence brought to bear on this standard is substantial and comprehensive.

Clarification questions?

Comments specific to text or tables including evidence characteristics (reliability, validity, consistency)

	AAQEP Questions/Feedback	Response to Feedback
Page 8-9 re Praxis crosswalk	Did the faculty make any changes to the curriculum to address the 7 areas with inadequate coverage and the 13 with low levels of coverage? If so, and even if it is discussed in more detail elsewhere in the report, some mention should be made here as it leaves the reader with a troubling question: what did they do about it?	Yes. There were 7 items (not areas) with inadequate coverage and 12 items (not areas) with low levels of coverage. This section has been rewritten to clarify the program's response to this discovery and can be found on pages 9-10 of the Self-Study.
Page 9 argument for validity of course grades	The alignments make a good argument for the content validity of the course grades in relation to the necessary professional knowledge. Is the argument undercut to some extent by the numerous areas from the Praxis crosswalk that were found to be inadequately covered? (See immediately above)	We do not feel that it impacts the content validity. As stated above, 7 items, not areas, were inadequately covered. As described on pages 9-10, the faculty made changes to address some, and determined that others were subsumed in other areas in the Praxis Crosswalk. In fact, the crosswalk, comprised of 183 items, has a fair amount of redundancy. Please view the Praxis Crosswalk document located here: https://cehs.usu.edu/evidence-room/Praxis%20Crosswalk%20-%20Instructions%20to%20USU%20Faculty.pdf .
Page 12, Table 1.3b	Looks like 2013 was a transition year to the new cut score. Did the program faculty make any changes to courses or to emphases within courses to bring the first time pass rate up to 100% in 2014? Was that a cohort effect? Does the delivery mode make a difference? (Too little data for this last question, I would guess.)	You are correct in thinking this may be a cohort effect and that we have too little data to address this question. We have made changes to page 13 of the Self-Study to clarify this point.
P 12: "They are supervised by highly qualified level 2 school counselors who oversee students functioning in the role of school counselors. "	Non-Utahans and non-counselors would have to guess what the credential, Level 2 school counselor, means in this context. A footnote or brief explanation might be helpful.	Page 13 of the Self-Study has been rewritten to clarify the qualifications of a Level 2 School Counselor license.

<p>Page 19: “Despite this, the return rate was very poor with only 21 of 245 possible responses collected (8.57%).”</p>	<p>Disappointing for the program, but not surprising. Interview with selected counselors (reflecting on the level of preparation, not on evaluation of the program completer) might work. Or a group (in person or virtually) interview of employers might be helpful.</p>	<p>Thank you for recognizing this. In future years we have streamlined our approach to contacting employers and will contact employers directly, instead of through the school counselor. We will also consider interviews of employers as another option.</p>
<p>Page 31: courses on data/assessment</p>	<p>Wouldn't the testing and measurement course be relevant here as well, as it ensures that candidates understand measurement and interpretation of assessment results?</p>	<p>Table 1.17 on page 29 includes PSY 6330, Principles of Psychological Measurement and Test Theory, which is our testing and measurement course.</p>

Standard 2: Completer Professional Competence and Growth

Program completers adapt to working in a variety of contexts and grow as professionals.

Program completers engage in professional practice in educational settings and show that they have the skills and abilities to do so in a variety of *additional* settings and community/cultural contexts. For example, candidates must have broad and general knowledge of the impact of culture and language on learning, yet they cannot, within the context of any given program, experience working with the entire diversity of student identities, or in all types of school environments. Candidate preparation includes first-hand professional experience accompanied by reflection that prepares candidates to engage effectively in different contexts they may encounter throughout their careers. Evidence shows that completers:

All six aspects of this standard, included in the table below, must be addressed in the evidence set for the standard.

Evidence for this standard will show both that program completers have engaged successfully in relevant professional practice and that they are equipped with strategies and reflective habits that will enable them to serve effectively in a variety of school placements & educational settings appropriate to the credential or degree sought.

Does the evidence address each aspect of the standard?

Aspects of Standard 2	Evidence of quality or capacity	Negative evidence or gap	Response
Understand and engage local school and cultural communities; communicate and foster relationships with diverse families/guardians/caregivers	Multiple sources		This aspect of Standard 2 now has a heading of it's own on page 46.
Engage in culturally responsive educational practices with diverse learners and engage in diverse cultural and socioeconomic community contexts	Multiple sources		
Create productive learning environments and use strategies to develop productive learning environments in diverse contexts	Multiple sources		
Support students' growth in international and global perspectives		No mention	Evidence of meeting this aspect of Standard 2 has now been included in the final report, page 54.
Establish goals for their own professional growth; engage in self-assessment, goal setting, and reflection on their practice	Table 2.11 has some powerful stuff.		
		Not addressed head on, is there	This aspect of Standard 2 has now

Collaborate with colleagues to support professional learning		support in courses, in instruments	been fully addressed and evidence has been provided on pages 58 - 59. This is also an area we would like to pursue further by adding an item or two to the graduate/completer survey.
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Comments

The section needs to at least comment upon each aspect of the standard, even if an aspect is either not addressed or is not seen as relevant to a school counselor’s role. What is the case for such aspects in relation to the program’s chosen framework and contents? All areas have been addressed.

Clarification questions?

Any plans to change any of the instruments to address additional aspects of the standards? I’m thinking in particular about the graduate survey, which doesn’t address many specific aspects. Not a necessary action, but in relation to standard 2, what can be gleaned from program completers (graduates) and their employers is definitely at a premium!	Response: This is now addressed in the Conclusions section in both the narrative and the table titled “Findings and Recommendations,” Standard 2 on pages 96 – 102.
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Comments specific to text or tables including evidence characteristics (reliability, validity, consistency)

	AAQEP Questions/Feedback	Response
Page 51 Professional Growth>> Practicum Supervisor	Many of these are related to professional behaviors in the Standard 1 vein; it strikes me that the last item in the table (top of page 52) might be the one that is actually relevant here. The same goes for the internship evaluation section.	The dispositions that are relevant to Standard 1 have been removed from this table.

Standard 3: Quality Program Practices

The program has the capacity to ensure that its completers meet standards 1 and 2.

Preparation programs ensure that candidates, upon completion, are ready to engage in professional practice, to adapt to a variety of professional settings, and to grow throughout their careers. Effective program practices include: consistent offering of coherent curricula; high quality, diverse clinical experiences; dynamic, mutually-beneficial partnerships with stakeholders; and comprehensive and transparent quality assurance processes informed by trustworthy evidence. Each aspect of the program is appropriate to its context and to the credential or degree sought. Evidence shows the program:

All six aspects of this standard, included in the table below, must be addressed in the evidence set for the standard.

Evidence related to this standard will include documentation of program practices and resources as well as the program's rationale for its structure and operation.

Does the evidence address each aspect of the standard?

Aspects of Standard 3	Evidence of quality or capacity	Negative evidence or gap	Response
Offers coherent curricula with clear expectations that are aligned with state and national standards, as applicable	Narrative		
Develops and implements quality clinical experiences, where appropriate, in the context of documented and effective partnerships with P12 schools and districts	Narrative	Any idea of the breakdown—are both levels experienced by most candidates?	A table with basic data has been added to the Introduction on Page 7. Further analysis will be undertaken and reported in the first annual report.
Engages multiple stakeholders, including completers, local educators, schools and districts, in data collection, analysis, planning, improvement, and innovation	Narrative. There is clearly a deep engagement on multiple levels.	Is there a stakeholder group that reviews USU data and participates in improvement-focused conversations with the faculty?	We have a steering and advisory committee, comprised of the program director, Psychology Department Head, Emeritus faculty member, and current faculty member. We also gather data via our Practicum and Internship Supervisor

			<p>Evaluation Forms. Completer and Employer surveys are conducted each spring, and findings are analyzed and reported to the entire faculty. We have made changes based on said feedback. While we feel these measures are valuable, completion of this Self Study has made us aware that we need to create a focus group to invite insight and guide future practices. We will do so in 2019.</p>
Enacts admission and monitoring processes linked to candidate success as part of a quality assurance system aligned to state requirements and professional standards	Strong admissions criteria.		
Engages in continuous improvement of programs and program components, and investigates opportunities for innovation, through an effective quality assurance system	Table is a great way to show this.		
Maintains capacity for quality reflected in staffing, resources, operational processes, and institutional commitment	Good evidence		

Comments

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Clarification questions?

See above under engages multiple stakeholders aspect: is there an advisory board of any sort for the program?	<p>Response: See our response in this section, above</p>
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Comments specific to text or tables including evidence characteristics (reliability, validity, consistency)

	AAQEP Questions/Feedback	Response
P 65 GPA at admission	The first sentence is repeated.	This has been fixed.
Bottom page 65-6	Great example of 'engages in continuous improvement' aspect!	

Standard 4: Program Engagement in System Improvement

Program practices strengthen the P20 education system in light of local needs, in keeping with the program's mission.

The program is committed to and invests in strengthening and improving the education profession and the P20 education system. Each program's context (or multiple contexts) provides particular opportunities to engage the field's shared challenges and to foster and support innovation. Engagement with critical issues is essential and must be contextualized. Sharing results of contextualized engagement and innovation support the field's collective effort to address education's most pressing challenges through improvement and innovation. The program provides evidence that it:

All six aspects of this standard, included in the table below, must be addressed in the evidence set for the standard.

Evidence for this standard addresses identified issues in light of local and institutional context.

Does the evidence address each aspect of the standard?

Aspects of Standard 4	Evidence of quality or capacity	Negative evidence or gap
Engages with local partners and stakeholders to support high-needs schools and participates in efforts to reduce disparities in educational outcomes	Documented engagement	
Seeks to meet state and local educator workforce needs and to diversify participation in the educator workforce through candidate recruitment and support	Program operates to meet these needs	
Supports completer entry into and/or continuation in their professional role, as appropriate to the credential or degree being earned	Multiple methods of following up and providing support	
Investigates available, trustworthy evidence regarding completer placement, effectiveness, & retention in the profession; uses that information to improve programs	Multiple aspects	
Meets obligations and mandates established by the state, states, or jurisdiction within which it operates	Documented	

Investigates its own effectiveness relative to its institutional and/or programmatic mission and commitments	Yes	
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<p>Comments Given the many ways in which the program continues to support completers, might questions about use of these supports, ratings of these supports, and suggestions for any others, be included (or inquired about in focus groups)?</p>	<p>Response: Yes, we do need to evaluate the effectiveness of the various methods we use to support our graduates, and inquire if we need to implement other, more effective strategies. We will explore our options for this. We refer to this as a goal in our Conclusions section, Standard 4, page 95.</p>
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Clarification questions?

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Comments specific to text or tables including evidence characteristics (reliability, validity, consistency)

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IMPORTANT NOTE: Please be informed that some data tables in our final report reflect a correction to our Draft. We realized that for the 2012 and 2013 cohort, an N/A response on the Practicum and Internship Supervisor Evaluations had been erroneously entered on our data sheets as a rating of 10 (highest rating). Statistical analysis using these values was incorrect in Draft 1. All effected tables have been revised to report corrected values in our Self Study final report.