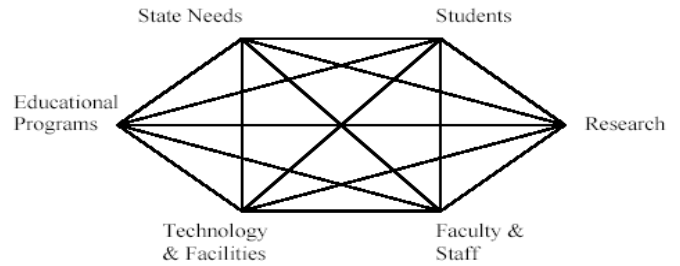


New Program Prospectus

MAU: University of Alaska Anchorage

Title: Graduate Certificate in Counselor Education

Target admission date: Fall 2009



Mission: The Graduate Certificate in Counselor Education provides graduates of counseling programs with continuing professional preparation as counselors in public schools and community agencies. The certificate program builds on the knowledge and skills acquired through previous master's level study in counselor education and related fields. Completion of the Graduate Certificate program does not automatically result in Alaska State licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor. The program focuses on professional development and advanced practice for counseling professionals under the guidance of a faculty advisor.

A stated priority for UAA is to "continue to design and implement new, mission-appropriate academic programs with special attention to advanced graduate study." The program addresses this priority by providing continued quality academic preparation to graduate students. The UAA priorities also include the need to "build, in partnership with our community school districts, a coherent, integrated, mutually reinforcing public education program from pre-school through post-graduate continuing education; and to collaborate closely with public and private sector partners to maintain and develop our programs supporting workforce development and high-demand careers." The program will support these priorities by providing structured support for practicing school and community counselors to achieve their career goals.

Proposal development and advisory committee input: This proposal was initiated following a comprehensive program review. One of the recommendations was that program curriculum be created that will fulfill the state's requirements for the counseling credential of Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). The recommendation to create an avenue for completing the academic requirements for licensure was also expressed by the Alaska Board for Professional Counselors (Eleanor Vinson, personal communication; August 8, 2007 & January 30, 2008)

The first step was to revise the Master's degree curriculum to be aligned with the national standards espoused by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP). The program alignment was completed during the 2007-2008 academic-year.

Input about the program was received from many sources. The proposal was presented and discussed at the College of Education Graduate Committee, Course and Curriculum Committee, and College Advisory Board. Program faculty also engaged in sustained communications with the Alaska Board for Professional Counselors, the Anchorage School District school counselors, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District counselors, and the Alaska Counseling Association to develop a certificate option that will lead to a workforce of highly qualified counseling professionals.

State and local needs: The existing MEd. in Counselor Education is a 48-credit degree program. While this program adequately prepares school counselors for state licensure and community counselors for initial job placement, there is a need for continuing professional development for counselor education graduates. The typical next step in the career path for counselors is to obtain credentials such as the LPC or NCC. In order to attain these credentials, counselors must pass the National Counselor and Licensure Examination (NCE). Furthermore, counselors seeking the LPC must have a total of master/post-master 60 credits. This certificate program will provide a structured path for completing the 60 credit requirement.

The Counselor Education Program faculty conducted interest assessment focus groups with the Anchorage School District school counselors, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District school counselors, and current program students. A call for interest was also sent to the Department of Education and Early Development's listserv for school counselors and the Alaska Counseling Association's listserv. To date, 80 individuals have written to express their interest in applying to the program.

Student opportunities and learning outcomes: The Graduate Certificate program is designed to supplement each candidate's existing experience and training and the degree to which each candidate achieves the program outcomes included in the catalog copy. The department will identify for candidates those course offerings that may be used to satisfy specific outcomes. Completers of the Post-Graduate Certificate program will benefit from the professional development opportunities offered in the program.

Enrollment projections: To date, 80 practicing counselors and counselors-in-training have expressed interest in applying for admission into the program. In order to provide quality advisement and support for accepted students, admission will be capped at approximately 10 candidates per trimester.

Research: The post-graduate certificate program has a clinical education focus and is designed for counselors engaged in providing direct services to clients. As a result of the clinical education focus, it is not expected that the program will generate funded scholarly research. While opportunities for research are limited due to the nature of the program, graduates will be prepared to use qualitative and quantitative methods to evaluate the effectiveness of counseling programs in community agencies.

Program Budget: Budget analysis shows a significant net increase in revenue each year resulting from increased tuition revenue resulting from increased enrollments of existing courses. Expenses are low as no additional faculty and staff resources are needed. The major incremental expense is overload pay for administrative and program oversight.

Effect on GER departments: Because this is a graduate certificate, no departments providing GERs will be impacted.

Space and Facilities: It is anticipated that there will be a minimal impact on space and facilities since existing courses having the required capacity are already in place.

Student Services and Support: The College of Education Student Services Office, in cooperation with program staff, provides recruitment services, academic advising, internship placements, and general support with regard to registration, university deadlines, etc.

Distance Delivery: Some courses may be available by distance delivery. The College of Education has appropriate technology equipment and experience at distance delivery to successfully deliver these courses. Faculty members utilize the Elluminate Live (e-Live) technology to enhance distance education delivery.

Library and Information Resources: The Consortium Library is designed to support on-campus, community-based, and distributed learning programs. Certificate candidates have access to the Consortium Library's printed books, journals, and documents as well as the electronic library resources.

The current collection is sufficient to meet program needs, with nearly 2,000 volumes and 1,700 print journals that relate directly to counselor education. Additional related references are currently available both on site and through the electronic library initiative and interlibrary loan.