

## **UCC Program Review Committee - Summary of Review**

### **Program – Counseling and Higher Education**

This program includes the following degrees, minors, and certificates:

- School Counseling (M.Ed.)
- Clinical Mental Health/Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling - (M.Ed.)
- Clinical Mental Health Counseling - (M.Ed.)
- Counselor Education - (Ph.D.)
- College Student Personnel - (M.Ed.)
- Higher Education - (M.Ed.)
- Higher Education - (Ph.D.)

### **Recommendation**

This program is found to be viable. See report for commendations, concerns, and recommendations.

**Date of last review – AY 2012**

**Date of this review – AY 2019**

This review has been sent to school director and the dean, their responses are attached.

Graduate council considered this review. Their comments are attached.

**Department of Counseling and Higher Education  
Patton College of Education  
Program Review Report  
December 10, 2018**

Review Committee:

External Reviewers: Jane Cox, Associate Professor, School of Lifespan Development & Educational Sciences, Kent State University, and Maureen Wilson, Professor and Chair, Department of Higher Education and Student Affairs, Bowling Green State University

Internal Reviewers: Fuh-Cherng Jeng, Associate Professor, Department of Rehabilitation and Communications Sciences, College of Health Science & Professions, and Sarah Poggione, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Political Science, College of Arts & Sciences

**Executive Summary**

The review committee found the graduate programs of the Department of Counseling and Higher Education to be viable and, in fact, thriving. We found the department highly effective in its research and teaching missions and that its members contribute actively to broader service of the Patton College, the broader University, and larger community. In coming to this conclusion, the review committee met with various groups of faculty and students in the Department of Counseling and Higher Education on November 28 and 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018, and reviewed the department's self-study report. The review includes the following programs offered by the department:

- Counselor Education
  - Master's Program in Counselor Education, Athens-Campus (M.Ed.)
  - Master's Program in Counselor Education, Regional-Campus (M.Ed.)
  - Doctoral Program in Counselor Education (Ph.D.)
- Higher Education and Student Affairs
  - Master's Program in College Student Personnel (M.Ed.)
  - Master's Program in Higher Education (M.Ed.)
  - Doctoral Program in Higher Education, On-Campus (Ph.D.)
  - Doctoral Program in Higher Education, Executive (Ph.D.)

The committee commends the department for its commitment to teaching, research, and informal mentoring of graduate students in all their programs as well as pre-tenure faculty. The department is aware of some areas of concern and is proactively involved in moving toward improvements including developing more specific and formal guidelines for tenure, promotion, and merit; enhancing department revenue; and directing and coordinating several graduate programs with a relatively small number of faculty. The committee also has some recommendations about the collegiality and arrangements of teaching schedules of the department.

## Commendations

- Curriculum. The review committee recognizes that the Ohio University Department of Counseling and Higher Education has developed a viable and appropriate curriculum across its various graduate programs and is effective in delivering this curriculum to students. In fact, the Counselor Education graduate were recently reviewed and just received their approval for external accreditation through CACREP (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs) for another eight years, the longest time span available—a testament to the quality and success of these programs.
- Students across all programs noted the accessibility, openness, and responsiveness of the faculty. Pre-tenure faculty also noted the accessibility and willingness of tenured faculty as well as department leadership to answer questions. Moreover, open and collegial environment integrates both master's and doctoral level students from the Athens campus with students pursuing their degrees through instruction at the regional campus and/or online.
- Diversity. The demographic diversity of both faculty and students is a strength of the department. Such variety enables students to better understand and affirm differences in race, sex, gender, perspectives, ideas, and so forth, thus enriching the learning experience for all. The diversity of faculty likely attracts a more diverse student body.
- Student Funding. All doctoral students are awarded a graduate assistantship for three years and many master's students have partial assistantships. This funding likely makes it possible to draw the highest performing applications and increases the likelihood of a diverse pool. It is also evidence of the support the administration has for the CHE programs. Continuation of such funding will continue to attract the most capable students.
- New Program. The Counseling program will be initiating a bachelor's degree in Human Services in 2019. This will help fulfill a need in the community and potentially serve as a pipeline to the master's programs.
- Tenure Mentors. The department's tenure mentors program is commendable. An external research mentor and an internal mentor provide valuable support for tenure-track faculty. Faculty members also receive funding for professional development.

## Areas of Concern

- Tenure, Promotion, and Merit Standards. The department is currently revising tenure, promotion and merit standards to bring them in line with new standards at the college level. However, the current standards and those under consideration may still not be sufficiently clear and concrete for pre-tenure faculty to gauge their progress toward tenure and promotion to associate professor and for associate faculty to gauge their progress toward promotion to full professor. Although some of these issues are likely addressed through the excellent formal mentoring program available through the college as well as informal mentoring and collegial relationships, criteria that are more

explicit would be extremely helpful for faculty in navigating tenure, promotion, and merit processes.

- Teaching/Service Loads. Another area of concern stems from the relatively small size of the faculty and the amount of administrative service needed to maintain the various graduate programs. Mentoring graduate students through master's and doctoral level work and administering and coordinating these programs create a large service workload for a relatively small faculty. It is important for the department to find ways to account for the work that faculty do in mentoring graduate students, and to acknowledge the difficulties that may arise when untenured faculty are coordinating graduate programs and complex scheduling among their colleagues.
- Course Scheduling. Although graduate students across all the programs lauded the accessibility, flexibility, and responsiveness of faculty, many cited class scheduling issues and concerns. Different groups of graduate students noted that the class schedule was frequently changed and sometimes changed quite close to the start of the next term. This made it difficult to schedule classes around practicums, internship hours, graduate assistant work, or employment hours, especially for students commuting to their campus classes. One group reported that a class scheduled for 14 meetings met just 5 times. That is unacceptable. Others expressed a desire for more long-range planning, especially related to elective courses. Some noted that courses were sometimes offered out-of-sequence.

## **Recommendations**

- Explicit Criteria. The review committee recommends continuing the process to make tenure, promotion, and merit criteria more explicit. We think that the department's enhanced tenure and promotion review process (third year review) is an excellent step in this direction. Through its promotion and tenure committee, we encourage the department to provide specific feedback to candidates about their developing records across research, teaching and service as well as recommendations about how to expand or enhance their efforts in any area as needed.
- Workload Policies. Department leadership indicated that the department is considering faculty workload policies with an eye toward recognizing graduate student mentorship as teaching. We encourage the department to pursue this option and find ways to recognize this extremely important unscheduled faculty teaching.
- Program Coordination. The size of the faculty and the number of different graduate programs appear to make assigning only tenured faculty to direct and coordinate such programs problematic; however, this could create difficulties for untenured faculty program coordinators or directors. For example, untenured program leaders may find it difficult to advocate for teaching assignments or schedules that fit students' needs but conflict with tenured faculty members' preferences. Senior faculty leaders in the department or the department chair may need to intervene in such instances.

- Faculty Vacancies. There were two departures of faculty during the summer of 2018. It will be important to fill these vacancies to serve student needs and ease the load of existing faculty.
- Student Feedback. Students offered a variety of seemingly reasonable suggestions that would improve their experience (e.g., course registration, advising). The committee recommends developing systems to solicit student feedback and to implement suggestions as appropriate.

## **Program Review Report**

### **Overall Program**

- a. Is the current number and distribution of faculty sufficient to carry out the broad overall mission of the Department (Teaching; Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity; Service).*

The faculty is currently able to carry out the overall mission of the department, but relatively small size of the faculty does present a challenge in the amount and level of administrative service needed to maintain the various graduate programs. Mentoring graduate students through master's and doctoral level work is a labor-intensive process that occurs in addition to scheduled teaching. Current metrics of teaching and service do not effectively capture faculty effort in this area. The department is working to reassess faculty workload policies account for this important dimension of faculty work. We encourage the department to make these revisions to better document faculty efforts in this area and ultimately find a way to redistribute workload to acknowledge this work.

Similarly, the size and composition of the faculty make it necessary to assign pre-tenure faculty to coordinate or administer specific graduate programs. This increased service may create challenges for pre-tenure faculty. The obvious issue is that pre-tenure faculty faced with larger service demands may find it more difficult to meet tenure and promotion standards for research but also possibly for teaching or service. If such labor-intensive service assignments are only assigned to some pre-tenure faculty, it may create inequities among pre-tenure faculty members. One partial solution might be encouraging such pre-tenure faculty who are excelling in teaching and research who take on such assignments to consider early tenure and promotion in recognition of their advanced accomplishments in research, teaching, and service. A more difficult problem may also occur when pre-tenure faculty serving as program coordinators or directors may feel pressure when advising for students against the interests of more senior colleagues. For example, this tension could arise in assuring that particular courses are taught or in scheduling courses. While the open and collegial relationships may mitigate these tensions, pre-tenure faculty may still perceive these pressures especially when tenure, promotion, and merit standards are unclear.

The department may also mitigate some of these concerns on the part of pre-tenure faculty by providing greater specificity in their promotion, tenure, and merit standards. For example, in terms of research criteria, many departments specify a number of publications or particular outlets or examples of appropriate service assignments for faculty by rank. Others keep more qualitative assessments of research productivity or service expectations but provide greater feedback about each individual candidate's progress toward meeting tenure standards of research or specific examples of how a specific candidate could improve their service to the department or college. The department's current efforts to align their standards with those of the college and the department's new enhanced tenure and promotion review process (third year review) are significant advancements in this area. We encourage the department to continue this process and to provide concrete feedback to candidates about their developing records as well as specific recommendations about how to improve their efforts in any area as needed.

- b. Is the level of the Department's RSCA appropriate for the program given the size of the faculty and the resources available to the Department? Is the Department's level of external funding at an appropriate level?***

The department is able to meet its departmental service obligations and contributes through its service to the Patton College of Education and to Ohio University. The department also maintains an appropriate level of scholarship given its size and resources. However, several faculty noted that the Hill Center could be used to promote the department's research profile, engage in community research, and possibly generate revenue for the department to expand its research capacity.

- c. Is the level of service, outside of teaching, appropriate for the program given its size and the role that it plays in the University and broader communities it interacts with? Is the Department able to fulfill its service mission?***

Service contributions from the department to the university and broader communities are appropriate, and the department is able to fulfill its service mission. Faculty members in this department are engaged in typical service associated with College and University committees, and service to their professions. Service to the profession includes referee service, editorships of journals, the organization of conferences, involvement in governance of professional societies, and taking on roles in statewide and national committees.

Students in the College Student Personnel program receive assistantships from the department and serve in the Residence Life and Student Health Promotions programs at Ohio University. Many students who graduated from the Counselor Education Programs work in local, non-profit, and educational organizations in Athens and its nearby communities. Some faculty members have begun developing "community courses" to connect academic courses and community needs.

- d. Does the Department have an appropriate level of financial resources, staff, physical facilities, library resources, and technology to fulfill its mission?*

The department receives appropriate financial support for graduate assistantships and tuition waivers from their college and the university. The department is housed in a recently renovated McCracken Hall with adequate physical facilities. The department currently has a full-time administrative associate. Generally speaking, the department has appropriate resources to fulfill its mission. However, it has been challenging for the department, even when requests are submitted to the college's technology personnel, to maintain and update information on the department's OHIO website. Students also reported that the video recording system in the Hill Center within this college has not been functional for nearly two years. Many students had to bring their own recording devices to the Health Center, to complete their counseling and recording tasks. The college may consider expanding the web and technology supports for the department and fixing the recording system in the Health Center.

#### **Graduate Program - Counseling**

- a. Is the program attracting students likely to succeed in the program? Is the number of students appropriate for the program? Is the program attracting a diverse group of students?**

The demographic diversity, particularly racial diversity, of the students who attended meetings with reviewers was impressive. At times, it is difficult for universities in more rural areas to attract a diversity of students, so it was refreshing to see such diversity. This may be in part due to the diversity of the faculty; the CHE "Faculty Diversity Profile" table in their self-study shows the diversity of the faculty in terms of sex and ethnic origin. Having such a diverse faculty may help a variety of students to feel "safe" coming to Ohio University's CHE programs.

The diversity of the faculty, as well as the generous graduate assistantship support, likely attract highly capable students who have strong potential to succeed academically.

The number of students appears to be appropriate for the programs, assuming the two open positions (from departing faculty) are filled. See "d" below.

- b. Does the graduate curriculum provide an adequate background to pursue discipline-related careers following graduation?**

The counseling curriculum is adequate for both the master's programs and the Ph.D program. The curriculum includes both relevant content courses as well as

experiential courses (i.e., practica and internship). This is typical of counseling programs and expected by employers.

All counseling programs recently underwent an accreditation review by the Counseling for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). This was a rigorous review that included a lengthy self-study as well as a site visit by CACREP reviewers. This review resulted in all counseling programs receiving an 8 year accreditation, which is the best outcome (other outcomes are denial of accreditation or a 2 year accreditation, after which programs must show how they met previously unmet standards).

Students were not concerned about the curriculum itself, but were concerned about course scheduling. Students noted that course schedules sometimes change semester to semester, making it difficult to plan for courses, work, as so forth. They also noted that schedules sometime change not long before the beginning of the semester, again making it difficult to plan. Students also expressed concern that internship times overlapped with course schedules. Relatedly, students suggested it would be helpful for new students to receive information about scheduling several months before beginning a program.

School counseling students request that there be more courses focused specifically on school counseling, rather than more generally on counseling.

**c. Does the program provide adequate mentoring and advising to students to prepare them for discipline-related careers?**

Students appreciate the availability of faculty and described faculty as personable, down-to-earth, and understanding. They noted that they are able to talk with faculty about their (students') concerns and said faculty are accepting of student ideas.

Students at both the Athens campus and regional campuses noted that faculty are accessible and often answer emails within 24 hours. Regional campus students noted how important it is for them to be notified well ahead of time of class cancellations. Should a class cancellation be unavoidable (e.g., weather impeding travel), clear plans ought to be in place to compensate for face-to-face meeting (e.g., online meeting at the scheduled course time).

Master's students noted that they appreciate consistent advising, such a regularly scheduled advising appointments once or twice a semester.

Doctoral students described their "strong" relationships with their advisors. They were particularly appreciative of faculty involving them in conference presentations and manuscript development; the list of "Student Publications and Presentations" nicely evidences the graduate students' involvement in these activities.

**d. Are the resources and the number of and distribution of faculty sufficient to support the graduate program?**

The number of CHE faculty is currently rather low, due to two recent faculty departures. It will be important for the department to hire faculty to fill these vacancies, in order to serve student needs, not overburden remaining faculty, and for the Counseling programs to retain CACREP accreditation.

The new Patton College of Education building contains useful facilities for students. There are numerous study spaces. The classrooms are outfitted with distance learning technology. It is an attractive, inviting space.

The Hill Center (within the college) is intended to provide a state-of-the-art recording space, but is not in working order. It was designed be used by students to conduct and record practice counseling sessions. Students and faculty are anxious for this wonderful resource to be up and running.

**e. Does the program offer appropriate financial support to graduate students?**

The program is allotted a generous number of graduate/teaching assistantships; all doctoral students receive three years of graduate assistantship funding and master's students often receive partial assistantships. This attracts talented students and supports them through much/all of their program. Hopefully this type of vital funding can continue.

**f. Is teaching adequately assessed?**

Students complete evaluations of their faculty at the end of a course. Peer teaching evaluations are encouraged but not required. The program may wish to strongly urge (or require) untenured faculty to obtain a yearly peer review of their teaching.

Students noted that faculty are open to feedback about courses.

**g. Are students able to move into to discipline-related careers?**

Graduates of the counseling master's programs obtain jobs as school counselors, college advisors, mental health counselors, and rehabilitation counselors. With the high need for mental health and addictions services in Ohio and beyond, the job prospects for graduates should remain strong.

Graduates of the counseling doctoral program often hope to secure faculty positions. The need for counselor educators remains high, evidenced by the number of position postings. This need is expected to continue, in light of the expected retirements of a large cohort of counselor education in the next 5-10 years and the continued need for mental health, school, and rehabilitation counselors.

The faculty acknowledged that it is difficult to obtain graduate placement data (a common problem across most counseling programs). They know of placements through graduate/faculty communication; there is not a formal system to obtain placement data. We recommend developing systems to better track students' initial placements.

### **Graduate Program – Higher Education**

- a. Is the program attracting students likely to succeed in the program? Is the number of students appropriate for the program? Is the program attracting a diverse group of students?**

The number of students in the M.Ed. and Ph.D. programs seems appropriate; those admitted should be capable of succeeding. The diversity of students is impressive, especially given the rural location of Athens – 18% of CSP students and 33% of Ph.D. students are students of color or foreign/non-resident aliens. Clear data on time to degree were not provided and reportedly difficult to obtain and assess with confidence. The college/university might work closely with programs to provide these data, important markers of success. Many executive Ph.D. students apply for readmission to the program when their 7-year clocks expire. It may be worth looking at this time limit on an institutional level and examining strategies to impose structure that may aid in timely completion. This issue is common in doctoral programs, particularly when students are not residential and enrolled full-time.

- b. Does the graduate curriculum provide an adequate background to pursue discipline-related careers following graduation?**

The curriculum provides an adequate background for careers in higher education and student affairs. The M.Ed. program meets guidelines established by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education Programs and Services. The Ph.D. curriculum is comparable to other notable programs.

The writing courses for the doctoral program are noteworthy and likely effective in helping students complete dissertations.

As noted above, students expressed concerns about the scheduling of courses. In particular, schedules are often released and then changed. This appears to stem from challenges in coordinating with research offerings. Additionally some students expressed serious concerns about the quality of the research sequence (not taught by CHE faculty) that should be addressed.

- c. Does the program provide adequate mentoring and advising to students to prepare them for discipline-related careers?**

Students complimented the accessibility of and support from core higher education faculty. From in-class and out-of-class interactions, they seem to receive strong

mentoring and advising that prepares them for good careers in the field. The number of joint student-faculty publications and presentations as well as students' professional achievements are good indicators that students are receiving strong mentoring and advising. CHE faculty members are involved in professional organizations and help students get involved in them as well. Others recommended greater consistency of advising expectations, perhaps requiring two meetings per semester.

**d. Are the resources and the number of and distribution of faculty sufficient to support the graduate program?**

The number of higher education faculty is comparable to other programs in the state and seems to be adequate to support the program. The newly renovated Patton College of Education building is an impressive space.

**e. Does the program offer appropriate financial support to graduate students?**

Full-time M.Ed. students get strong support that helps to attract and retain students in the program.

**f. Is teaching adequately assessed?**

As noted above, assessment of teaching seems to rest primarily on student course evaluations. A more robust process of assessment including mentoring, peer observations, and personal reflection may yield stronger information on which to assess and improve teaching effectiveness.

**g. Are students able to move into to discipline-related careers?**

As noted above, there is not a good system in place to track placement data. With assistance from the program graduate assistant and/or administrative assistant, this may be able to be rectified and we recommend doing so. These data are also helpful for program recruitment. Anecdotally, it does appear that students are successful placed into positions in the field. Those already working in the field should be able to advance with their degrees.



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February 15, 2019

Dr. John Cotton  
Chair UCC Program Review Committee  
Stocker Engineering Center 255  
Athens, OH 45701

Dear Dr. Cotton:

I am writing in response to the seven-year UCC review of the Department of Counseling and Higher Education. We were pleased by the committee's finding that both of our program areas were "viable" and "thriving." There were no surprises in respect to the Commendations or Areas of Concern. I will take this opportunity to address the concerns and reviewers' recommendations below.

#### Tenure, Promotion, and Merit Standards

The committee indicated that the promotion, tenure and merit standards were not sufficiently clear. The new standards have been drafted and discussed among the faculty. We are refining these draft standards, based on the reviewers recommendations, and expect to have these completed and confirmed by departmental faculty at our April department meeting. In respect to merit guidelines, I have asked Promotion, Tenure, and Salary (PT&S) Committee to create clearer criteria for evaluating progress. This will be a priority of the PT&S Committee in the 2019-20 academic year.

#### Teaching/Service Loads

As a graduate-only department, we serve a high number of doctoral students. We have tenured faculty members who carry doctoral student advising loads of up to 15 students. Despite this high workloads, the current college workload policy does not include consideration of dissertation advising as a criterion for workload. During the current year, a committee of departmental faculty have been working on a departmental workload policy proposal that will include consideration of dissertation load. We expect this policy proposal to be approved by the departmental faculty at our April meeting. This policy proposal will then be shared with Dean Middleton for consideration.

#### Course Scheduling

The faculty consider the concerns raised regarding course scheduling to be legitimate. These are being addressed through enhanced communication and clearer expectations from the department chair to the program coordinators who are charged with managing the course scheduling processes.

### Faculty Vacancies

Faculty vacancies have indeed been a point of stress this year, particularly in the Higher Education and Student Affairs (HESA) program. At the time of this writing, we have filled one of the two faculty positions that were vacated last year. While we believe that filling both vacancies in the HESA program would be optimal, we recognize the current budget realities. The Department is in the midst of developing and enhancing revenue-generating programs, and we believe that it is reasonable to reserve action on the second faculty opening until we have reaped the benefits of our program development activities.

### Student Feedback

As acknowledged in our self-study, a systematic assessment program for our student advising activities is an area of growth. During the 2019-20 academic year, a committee of faculty and students will be formed to address this concern.

In summary, the program review process has been helpful as we consider our continuous improvement in delivering quality education to students. If there are additional areas of question or concern, please feel free to contact me at [matherp@ohio.edu](mailto:matherp@ohio.edu) or 740.593.4454.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Peter C. Mather".

Peter C. Mather, Ph.D.  
Professor and Chair

cc. Dean Renee Middleton

## Cotton, John

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**From:** Middleton, Renee  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2019 7:00 PM  
**To:** Cotton, John; Mather, Peter  
**Cc:** Middleton, Renee  
**Subject:** RE: Counseling and Higher Education Review

Hello John,

I have reviewed the report. I find no need to respond to the report—On the whole, it appears to be accurate and I encourage the faculty to move forward with the recommendations relative to course scheduling and revision of the Promotion and Tenure guidelines.

瑞妮艾米德爾頓

(Signature in Mandarin)

Renée A. Middleton, Ph.D., Professor and Dean

*The Gladys W. and David H. Patton College of Education*

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The Graduate Council met on April 12, 2019 and considered the program review:

Counseling and Higher Education

This program is entirely a graduate program. Graduate Council carefully read the review and responses to it, has no additional comments and agrees with the recommendation of the review.