



COUNSELOR EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

UNLV

**GRADUATE STUDENT WRITTEN COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION
2009**

Congratulations!

You have reached the stage in your education where you are ready to prepare for your final comprehensive examination. This may seem like a daunting task but it is really a chance to compile and synthesize all that you have already learned as you prepare to enter your career as a professional counselor. This is your capstone event! It is time for you to shine and show what you have learned and how you intend to put your graduate degree into practice.

The CED written comprehensive examination is actually done in portfolio format, your course of study as well as CACREP standards are supported by student responses, both written and by supplying supporting documents. All materials are submitted electronically. Students have about 6 weeks to complete portfolios. The portfolio examination will be posted on the CED website 2/4/2009.

Portfolios are due by March 15th, 2009, and then once the students turn in the portfolios, the faculty members will spend two weeks reviewing the materials and then assign rankings.

Students are ranked in four categories, these include:

1. Pass with distinction
2. Pass with average
3. Revise and resubmit
4. Does not pass

Final results are communicated in letter format through a student's official university email account.

This exam is developed and will be presented and deposited into a special CED portal for review by your Master's committee. In addition, students are

encouraged to deposit digital copies of their supporting professional artifacts and submit these electronically. Students are also requested to deposit curriculum, programs and materials that they have developed in their counseling internships or as independent research projects.

1. Step 1, preparing your 'mindset' or attitude. You know a lot. You have learned a lot. Breathe deep and be calm yet a bit excited. This is a big moment in your life and you deserve a great experience. Seize it!
2. Step 2. Create an account. You will need to log in and create an account, on the CED website, the portal and *url* will be sent in a memo e-advisory on February 20th, 2009.
3. Step 3. Once you have logged in and you have completed the log in account and relevant student information, you will start entering and compiling your portfolio document. *We suggest that you save all of your work on a word document and add the material once it has been edited and proofed.*
4. Step 4. Complete your portfolio, submit materials and fill in your narrative. There are several sections that will need to be addressed when you are compiling your portfolio. Students should keep in mind that the written comprehensive exam is not a collection of parts, but more of a synthesized effort on the part of the student to demonstrate that the student is ready to enter professional practice as a counselor.
5. Step 5. Proof and complete your document and click the submission button, relax and enjoy all the free time that you are going to have now that you are no longer in graduate school. It may be time to start planning your graduation party or celebration.



COUNSELOR EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

UNLV

**GRADUATE STUDENT WRITTEN COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION
2009**

(This section will be electronically posted on the CED Website)

The first step to compiling a portfolio is to develop a title page; this should include student name, student UNLV identification number, committee members and degree.

Student Name: _____

Student ID Number: _____

Program of Study in Counselor Education (check all that apply)

- Professional School Counseling (M.Ed.)
- Community Mental Health Counseling (M.S.)
- Addictions and Chemical Dependency Certificate
- Other – Please specify: _____

Name of Program of Study and Committee Chairperson

- Larry Ashley
- Randall Atramovich
- Jesse Brinson
- William Cross Jr.
- Wendy Hoskins
- Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson
- Shannon Smith

Name of Committee Members (check all who apply)

- Larry Ashley
- Randall Atramovich
- Jesse Brinson
- William Cross Jr.
- Wendy Hoskins
- Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson
- Shannon Smith

Name of Outside/Graduate Committee Member

--

STUDENT ATTESTATION

STUDENT ATTESTATION STATEMENT OF HONESTY AND ETHICAL CONDUCT RELATED TO STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN THE MASTERS COMPREHENSIVE WRITTEN EXAMINATION (PORTFOLIO). I AGREE TO NOT DISCUSS QUESTIONS, CONTENT AND MY INDIVIDUAL ANSWERS OR THE ANSWERS OF OTHER STUDENTS UNTIL AFTER I RECEIVE MY EXAM SCORE FROM THE UNLV DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELOR EDUCATION FACULTY.

- Yes, I agree to take this exam in an ethical manner and adhere to the guidelines listed above.
- I do not agree
- I agree but have concerns, my concerns are listed below:

COMPREHENSIVE WRITTEN EXAMINATION (PORTFOLIO) IS BASED ON THE CACREP STANDARDS AND CORE KNOWLEDGE THAT IS CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL TO ENTER PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AS A COUNSELOR. EACH RESPONSE REQUIRES 500 TO 1000 WORDS; THERE IS A LIMIT AT 1000 WORDS.

Student Dedication Statement (this section is optional)

Students sometimes elect to dedicate their written comprehensive examination to those who have been supportive or meaningful to their process. This is not required, see example below:

Word Limit 500

Dedication

To my partner who has been my compass as I found my way into a new stage of my life. When I felt lost or off course, you helped me to re-center and find my heart again. You never gave up on me and pushed me to do my best. Your love has taught me so much. Thank you.

To my sisters whose love and support has meant so much to me. Thank you for your patience and encouragement and always believing in me. I love you.

To my Uncle Bob and Aunt Marney. You not only provided me with the nourishment I needed for my body, but my soul as well. You inspire me to always do better and never to forget my purpose. Thank you for your wisdom and compassion. I love you.

To Suzzette Snanza for your endless support and guidance as I found my fit in the counseling field. Your constant support and supervision provided me with amazing insight and an opportunity to grow.

To Fannita Tomasa for taking me under your wing as I entered into my first year as a school counselor. You are an amazing mentor and your support keeps me afloat.

To Dr. Willima, Dr. Broen, Dr. Dickers, Dr. Barney, Twinette Williams, Dr. Marvell and Adrian Gonzales for your wealth of knowledge and experience that has taught me so much. I will always carry your wisdom in my heart as I continue to grow as a counselor.

1. **Competency one** relates to the standard for **PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATION AND ETHICAL PRACTICE**. In this response students discuss their particular relevant professional organizations, including membership benefits, activities, services to members, and current issues; students discuss their involvement with professional organizations throughout their program of study, they should discuss the relevance of professional associations in counselor identity and practice and how these organizations inform their future professional practice as counselors.

Word Limit 1000

Ranking of the above question

- Pass with distinction
- Pass with average
- Revise and resubmit
- Does not pass



2. **Competency two** relates to counselor **SELF AWARENESS**, to the student's learning journey and professional and personal development during the student's program of study. Here students write a **Professional Growth Statement**, a narrative that describes their growth as students and professional counselors during their time in graduate school and plans for growth in their future career as professional counselors. This is written in a student's own

style and can be written in a creative or scholarly format or variations as long as it is inclusive of all the information needed to make a complete summation.

Word Limit 1000

Energy is the power that drives every human being. It is not lost by exertion but maintained by it. – Germaine Greer

My interest in the counseling profession is reflected in my understanding of the connection between people, their level of awareness, and their environment. My highest ambitions as a counselor are to empower people to facilitate change in others as they continue on their journey of development, and to educate others to pursue social change. My positive undergraduate career led me to my love for working in higher education. As an academic advisor I help undergraduates during their personal and educational transition through college. I work with students of different ages, cultural backgrounds, and academic pursuits. While academic advising is fulfilling, I have another passion, helping women survivors of abuse. This interest stems from a former colleague at Oregon State University, Carole Ann Crateau — feminist extraordinaire. Carole Ann became immersed in researching, a local woman, Barbara XXXXXX, who was murdered, buried alive, at the hands of her husband and son. I soon became engrossed in Barbara's story as well. I had already started volunteering at the Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence (CARDV) when XXXXXX was murdered; after the murder I became more involved. Through CARDV I worked overnight shelter shifts and co-facilitated support groups — another galvanizing force for me to pursue a counseling degree.

The journey I have followed through this program has been one that can only be described as pure joy and terror. Entering the program I felt primed for what lay before me. Certainly I struggled; I had self-doubt, but I persevered. I found an internal energy that had not been tapped into for years. I learned a great deal through classroom experience and of course, my most crucial learning took place at my internship site, Community Outreach, Inc. (COI).

Both my practicum and internship experiences took place at COI. The continuity of staying at the same location allowed me to have a clear picture of my skill and technical growth as a counselor. COI is the only homeless shelter in Benton County. COI services include: shelter, food box distribution, alcohol and drug treatment, mental health counseling, a medical clinic and childcare center, and more. I recall my first client, a woman diagnosed with bi-polar; she was patient with me. At our last session we acknowledged that we would miss one another. Since my time at COI, I have had the opportunity to work with a variety of age groups and mental health issues. Some of my clients included: a family of three males, survivors of domestic violence, those recovering from drugs and/or alcohol, individuals with bi-polar, depression, personality disorders, anxiety disorders, and the list goes on.

The individual counseling I have done has been precious. However, I have also worked with support groups. I have co-facilitated a number of groups at CARDV. I also co-facilitate the parenting in recovery group at COI. The Director of the childcare center runs the group and I am honored to work with her. I have learned a great deal

about parenting. I finally had the chance to facilitate a group all my own. The Women's Issues support group at COI has allowed me the freedom to work with a group I am dedicated to empowering. I choose topics and practice the group counseling skills I learned in the program.

My experiences at COI, CARDV, and the classroom have undoubtedly guided me along on my counseling journey to a place where I feel more comfortable with myself and the decisions I make. The new found energy I use every day does not drive me to exhaustion, but rather allows me the growth and development needed to be strong and flexible with myself, my clients, and my students. I have been able to arrive at this point through the contacts and collaboration I have made with people. Indeed, the interdependence with others and the environment must be recognized and acknowledged (659 words).

Ranking of the above question

- Pass with distinction
- Pass with average
- Revise and resubmit
- Does not pass



3. **Competency three relates to the counselors knowledge and skills related to Multicultural, Justice, Advocacy and Diversity Competent Counseling practice. In this essay, students demonstrate their understanding of counselors' roles in developing cultural self-awareness, promoting cultural social justice, advocacy and conflict resolution, and other culturally supported behaviors that promote optimal wellness and growth of the human spirit, mind, or body. Here students create an overview of what they do to support their current multicultural, diversity and social justice competence. Students should include a citation of critical learning incidents occurring during the time of their graduate studies. The incidents cited should have directly contributed to enhancing the student's multicultural knowledge, diversity awareness and social justice and social caring-advocating and counseling skills. In addition to incidents students can also discuss rules for their practice, guidelines they may have created for work with their future target population. Quotes and other creative or scholarly works may be cited.**

Word Limit 1000

Example of introductions to this competency...

To promote advocacy for students of all backgrounds, in my practice I have written this guiding premise that I display in my office... I draw from the ASCA model of ...

In my school office, as a part of informed consent I use the following document I created to work with teens around disclosure of sexual identity... from here I draw from the ACA multicultural competencies specifically....

Another approach might be...

I read about privilege, but I am a woman of color and did not think of myself as privileged until I read Courtland Lee's work and realized as an educated person...

And now when I counsel clients, I take into consideration that...

And therefore I counsel differently by...

Ranking of the above question

- Pass with distinction
- Pass with average
- Revise and resubmit
- Does not pass



4. **Competency four addresses the student's knowledge of and use of an ETHICAL DECISION MAKING and critical thinking. Here, students discuss real cases that they have analyzed using an ethical decision making model of their choice. Students discuss how they applied the key components of the model to a real case they experienced during their program of study.**

Word Limit 1000

Ranking of the above question

- Pass with distinction
- Pass with average
- Revise and resubmit
- Does not pass



5. Competency five relates to the standard for **HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT** and **ASSESSMENT** as these relate to competent counseling practice. Here students present a **CASE STUDY OF AN ACTUAL CLIENT** with whom they have worked during their program of study. The analysis must be comprehensive. Case conceptualization and synthesis also includes clinical, theoretical and application components regarding a specific case. The analysis should include relevant educational history or mental health history depending on the degree program major of students. Students should include their theories and models of individual, cultural, family, and community resilience; a general framework for understanding exceptional abilities and strategies for differentiated interventions; human behavior, including an understanding of developmental crises, disability, psychopathology, and situational and environmental factors that affect both normal and abnormal behavior; theories and etiology of addictions and addictive behaviors, including strategies for prevention, intervention, and treatment. DSM (GAF) or Educational Concern (IEP), Medication, and medical conditions, Case presentations outline should also include techniques, interventions, relevant background information about client , presenting issues, treatment/counseling history, intervention plan (goals), Theory utilized, Techniques/interventions that are theory appropriate used in this session, Proposed modification to the intervention plan (if needed), Areas of counselor strengths, prognosis or expected outcomes. Students present a case and protect their clients by using pseudonyms and disguise confidential information.

Word Limit 3000

Ranking of the above question

- Pass with distinction
- Pass with average
- Revise and resubmit
- Does not pass



- 6.** **Competency six relates to the standard for CAREER DEVELOPMENT** as this relates to competent counseling practice. Essentially, students discuss why it is that 'career matters', why is it important to counseling as a profession and to professionals. In this section students discuss career development as it relates to one or more critical issues. Students can relate career life factors, including pertinent career development theories and decision-making models; career, vocational, educational, occupational and labor market information resources, and career information systems; career development program planning, organization, implementation, administration, and evaluation; interrelationships among and between work, family, and other life roles and factors, including the role of multicultural issues in career development; career and educational planning, placement, follow-up, and evaluation; assessment instruments and techniques relevant to career planning and decision making; and career counseling processes, techniques, and resources, including those applicable to specific populations in a global economy.

Word Limit 1000

Ranking of the above question

- Pass with distinction
- Pass with average
- Revise and resubmit
- Does not pass



- 7.** Competency seven relates to the standard for **HELPING RELATIONSHIPS** as these relate to competent counseling practice. Create an informed consent tool that specially addresses the mode of practice, client expectations, ethical matters, theoretical framework and relevant information that would be appropriate to a population and practice setting that the student ultimately selects. This question can contain information about an orientation to wellness and prevention as desired counseling goals; the counselor's own characteristics and behaviors that influence helping processes; models of counseling that are consistent with current professional research and practice in the field so they begin to develop a personal model of counseling; a general framework for understanding and practicing consultation; and creative treatment strategies.

Word Limit 1000

Ranking of the above question

- Pass with distinction
- Pass with average
- Revise and resubmit
- Does not pass

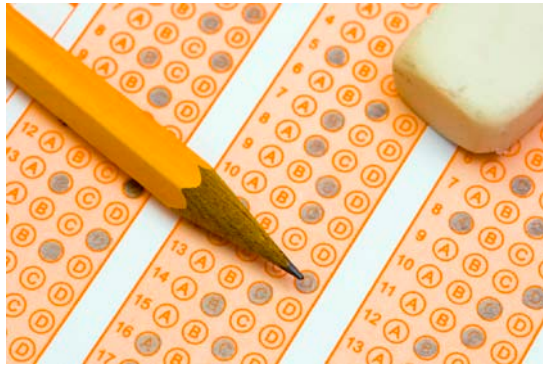


8. Competency eight relates to the standard for Addictions practice as it is critical for graduates to have knowledge of addictions today. Students can discuss how their knowledge relates to the history, philosophy, ethical considerations and trends in addiction counseling. Students can discuss the roles, functions, and settings of addiction counselors, as well as the relationship between addiction counselors and other mental health professionals. Students can choose to discuss the competencies and preparation standards. Further students may choose to discuss the behavioral, psychological, physical health, and social effects of psychoactive substances and addictive disorders on the user and significant others.

Word Limit 1000

Ranking of the above question

- Pass with distinction
- Pass with average
- Revise and resubmit
- Does not pass



9. Competency nine relates to **RESEARCH AND EVALUATION**. This standard is relates to a professional counselors ability to critically evaluate research relevant to their practice. Further a professional practice must understand evidence-based treatments and basic strategies for evaluating counseling outcomes in professional school counseling or clinical mental health counseling settings. Students must demonstrate that they can apply research findings to inform their practice and develop plans to assess that programs they have created are effective and enhance client/student wellbeing. To that end, describe a program that you will or have applied in your specialty setting, discuss the research in terms of its efficacy, and discuss your plan for program evaluation.

Word Limit 1000

Ranking of the above question

- Pass with distinction
- Pass with average
- Revise and resubmit
- Does not pass

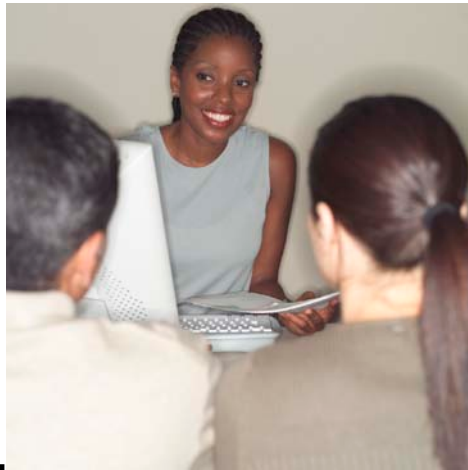


- 10.** Competency ten discusses the role of counselors related to both **LEADERSHIP** and **CONSULTATION**. Counselors are often the most well prepared, best educated and most clinically competent mental health providers. Discuss the qualities, principles, skills, and styles of effective leadership used by professional counselors and expound upon the strategies of leadership designed to enhance the counseling and related environments of schools or mental health systems/agencies. What are the responsibilities and roles of counselors as experts, leaders and consultants?

Word Limit 1000

Ranking of the above question

- Pass with distinction
- Pass with average
- Revise and resubmit
- Does not pass



11. Resume: In this section, students deposit/attach their professional resumes. The resume should address the preparation of students for their entry into practice as a professional counselor in their area of specialization. Some of the information included on the resume includes relevant education, certifications, volunteer and work experience, reference information and professional career goals.

No word limit

Ranking of the above question

- Pass with distinction
- Pass with average
- Revise and resubmit
- Does not pass



12 Professional Artifacts: In this final section students are asked to deposit supporting documents regarding their readiness to enter into their professional practices. Here students can attach documents, supporting materials that demonstrate their readiness for professional practice in their specialization. If students submit client recordings they must make sure they attach signed consent forms as well. Samples include pamphlets, program curriculum, clinical port-a-packs and related products.