

# **A Programmatic Research Agenda For The Counselor Education Program**

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## **A Research Agenda for Counselor Education Summary**

The Counselor Education Program Faculty propose a programmatic research agenda designed to facilitate our achievement of strategic plan - goal one related to conducting programs of excellence in research. Our mission is to improve the capacity of the counseling profession to maximize counseling outcomes. We are dedicated to improving the practice of School Counseling, Community Counseling, College Counseling, and Counselor Education/Supervision by developing and facilitating the utilization of a research base that enhances effective practice. Comprehensive and integrated programs of research, dissemination, education, and technical assistance will be implemented in the following priority focus areas:

- I. Counselor Development
- II. Measurement and Evaluation
- III. The Development and Demonstration of Mental Health and Career Development Interventions
- IV. The Development and Demonstration of Strategies that Promote Career Long Learning (transfer, generalization, and maintenance)

Within the priority focus areas, faculty research teams will conduct multiple research projects designed to generate new knowledge related to the counseling profession. A variety of dissemination activities will be carried out to distribute findings to a wide audience. Educational and technical assistance activities will be conducted to promote utilization and improve the counseling skills of the target audience. Collaborative partnerships and external funding will be sought to extend our resources.

Our activities are designed to achieve the following objectives: (1) Generate new knowledge related to the priority areas, (2) Assist counseling practitioners and educators to deliver high quality service to their profession, and (3) Serve as a state, regional, and national resource to the counseling profession. The expected outcomes are: (1) increased amount of, access to, and use of new knowledge, information, and ideas related to counseling, (2) more knowledgeable and skilled counselors and counselor educators, and (3) improved services to consumers of counseling services.

# **A Research Agenda for Counselor Education**

## **Mission**

Our mission is to improve the capacity of the counseling profession to maximize counseling outcomes. We are dedicated to improving the practice of School Counseling, Community Counseling, College Counseling, and Counselor Education/Supervision by developing a research base that facilitates effective practice and promoting its utilization. We are committed to the mission of the University, College, and Department and will strive to be a nationally competitive, student-centered research program serving Arkansas and the world.

## **Goals and Objectives**

Our goals and objectives are to:

1. Generate new knowledge, information, and ideas related to our research priority/focus areas.
2. Assist counseling practitioners and educators to deliver best practices.
3. Serve as a state, regional, and national information and technical assistance resource for the counseling profession.

## **Strategies and Methods to Achieve Goals and Objectives**

1. We will conduct a comprehensive and coordinated program of research consisting of our priority focus areas and multiple interrelated projects to produce new scientific knowledge and information about the counseling profession.
2. We will disseminate research findings utilizing a variety of dissemination strategies to diverse audiences.
3. We will provide educational and technical assistance activities to encourage research utilization.
4. We will develop and maintain a number of collaborative partnerships with university, state, regional, and national entities that will extend our capabilities and increase our effectiveness in achieving our mission and objectives.
5. Through the collaborative partnerships with our constituents, we will establish applied research labs that provide access to our research population.
6. We will seek out external funding opportunities and develop grants and contracts to increase the resources available for carrying out our research agenda.

## Plan of Operation

### Operational Process to Achieve Objectives: Responsible Parties, Action Steps, and Timeframes

Objective 1: Generate new knowledge, information, and ideas related to our priority focus areas.

1. Program faculty will develop research teams consisting of faculty, staff, graduate assistants, doctoral students, other interested students and program constituents. A principal investigator and a team consisting of interdisciplinary researchers will lead each research priority focus area.
2. Principal investigators and research project teams will implement and carry out research projects and studies in a timely fashion with projects implemented at varying times.
3. Principal investigators, and project research teams will develop and maintain a number of collaborative activities with university, local, state, regional, and national entities and will involve these constituents in our research agenda activities to create a Scholar-Practitioner Intervention Network (SPIN) that will extend our capacities to achieve objective one.
4. The Scholar-Practitioner Intervention Network (SPIN) will collaborate with research project teams in creating school and community applied research laboratories providing access to research participants throughout the project period as well as other resources for data collection.

Objective 2: Assist counseling practitioners and educators to deliver best practices.

1. Project team members will translate research findings into useable products such as manuscripts, papers, manuals, books, software, etc. as findings become available.
2. Project team members will publish research findings in a variety of outlets personalized for specific audiences as findings become available throughout the project period.
3. Project team members will present information and research findings utilizing a variety of channels (conferences, public media, electronic means, meetings, etc.) as information is generated.
4. Project team members will integrate findings into graduate classes to impact the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of counselors in training as findings become available.
5. Project team members will conduct seminars, workshops, and other training to impact the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of counselor educators throughout the project period.
6. Project team members will conduct in-service training programs to impact the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of counseling practitioners in the field throughout the project period.

Objective 3: Serve as a state, regional, and national information and technical assistance resource for the counseling profession.

1. Project teams will ensure that information and research findings are translated into useable material and products and are disseminated to a wide audience as findings become available.
2. Project team members will provide consultation and technical assistance to our target audience, as requested, to promote utilization of research findings.

### **Collaboration**

We will develop and maintain a number of collaborative efforts. Collaboration is an integral part of the success of our research agenda and is designed to extend our capabilities and increase the effectiveness of activities needed to achieve our mission and objectives. Collaboration will be sought with parties on the University campus as well as developing a network of local, state, and regional scholar-practitioners.

1. ***Campus Collaboration*** - We will establish collaborative efforts with the following campus entities: (a) Faculty from Rehabilitation Education, Psychology, and Social Work (b) University Career Development Center, (c) Center for Students With Disabilities, (d) Counseling And Psychological Services, (e) Student Personnel Services- Counselor-in-Residence Program, (f) Department of Men's Athletics, and other appropriate campus entities. Faculty and Staff from each of these entities will become affiliated with our research agenda and become research team members facilitating research activities conducted at their site.
2. ***Scholar-Practitioner Intervention Network (SPIN)*** - We will develop a network of scholar-practitioners located in schools and community agencies across the state and region to serve as associates or adjunct staff. We will establish this network at no cost to the Program or University. It is anticipated that the scholar-practitioner's willingness to join our network and assist faculty with research activities will be based on their desire to be involved in cutting-edge research, contribute to the counseling literature, and in many cases evaluate their own program and services. Each SPIN individual will be affiliated with a project team and will be the contact and coordinating person in establishing school and community applied research laboratories providing access to research participants as well as other resources for data collection.

## **External Funding**

Consistent with our strategic plan - goal three, we will seek out opportunities to generate private and public support and resources for our research agenda. Proposals will be developed to obtain supplemental resources for conducting activities in the research priority areas.

### **Projected Outcomes**

1. Increased amount of, access to, and use of new knowledge, information, and ideas related to counseling.
2. More knowledgeable and skilled counselors and counselor educators.
3. Improved services to consumers of counseling services.

## **Research Priority Focus Areas and Potential Projects**

### **Priority Focus Area I: Counselor Development**

- Supervisory working alliance
- Supervision self-efficacy of site supervisors
- The factors influencing counselor development
- Enhancing educational self-efficacy in rural community colleges
- Helping professionals in training attitudes toward gay men and lesbian women
- The contribution of relaxation to the performance of counseling skills
- A comparison of peer supervision (consultation) with traditional supervision approaches
- The effects of mediation training for first and second year doctoral students on anxiety reduction
- The role and function of the school counselor
- The role and function of the school-based mental health counselor

## **Priority Focus Area II: Measurement and Evaluation**

- Measuring stress-management self-efficacy
- Evaluation of social services programs in elementary schools
- Evaluation of mental health programs in elementary schools
- Enhancing educational self-efficacy in rural community colleges
- The impact of teacher in-service training on the rate of bullying in northwest Arkansas elementary, junior, middle and high schools
- The impact of psychosocial educational programming on peer relationships and self-perception in the elementary schools
- The impact of gender on the counseling and supervision process
- Development of accountability measures for school counselors
- Evaluating school counseling programs to promote academic success for all students

## **Priority Focus Area III: The Development and Demonstration of Mental Health and Career Development Interventions**

- School-based interventions for emotionally and behaviorally challenged children
- The impact of a career counseling intervention on high-school student career exploratory behavior
- The impact of a career counseling intervention on the career exploratory behavior of “high risk” students
- The differential effects of career counseling interventions
- Interventions that enhance the school to post-school transition process (school to work or school to post secondary education) particularly for students with disabilities and other under-represented groups
- The development and evaluation of a career counseling clinic
- Interventions that enhance the transition process from community college to a four-year academic institution
- Student athlete wellness study

- Relationship between educational self-efficacy and athletic identity of intercollegiate student-athletes
- An academic enhancement program to increase college student retention
- Assessment and intervention of peer victimization in elementary schools
- Assessment and intervention of childhood trauma
- The development of the "Office for the Study of the Student Athlete"

**Priority Focus Area IV: The Development and Demonstration of Strategies that Promote Career Long Learning (transfer, generalization, and maintenance)**

- A comparison of covert, role-play, and in-vivo practice on the development of basic counseling techniques
- Techniques and strategies that promote the generalization and maintenance of counseling skills
- The effects of imagery on classroom learning compared to traditional lecture and role-play
- The differential effects of counseling interventions on specific problems
- The impact of client empowerment strategies
- Imagery and client outcome