



UNIVERSITY of ALASKA
ANCHORAGE

College of Education

Department of Counseling & Special Education



**Counselor Education Program Comprehensive Examination Guide
(Spring 2007)**

Purpose of the Examination

The comprehensive examination for the counselor education program serves as an evaluation tool to measure the mastery of integrated knowledge that should have been attained as a result of completing core coursework in the curriculum. The aggregated results of the examination are also used as an evaluation measure of the success of the counselor education program in preparing graduates for the field. Successful completion of the examination assures the regional and professional communities that our graduates possess the necessary knowledge to be effective leaders in the counseling field in Alaska and beyond.

The comprehensive examination tests for mastery of competencies gained in the counseling core curriculum. These courses are the ones required for all candidates, regardless of program track. Therefore, candidates for the Master of Education in Counselor Education degree should not attempt the examination until the following courses have been completed:

- EDCN A610 Foundations in Counseling**
- EDCN A614 Counseling Diverse Populations**
- EDCN A616 Counseling Theories**
- EDCN A623 Counseling Skills**
- EDCN A624 Group Counseling**
- EDCN A632 Career Development**

Procedures for the Examination

Eligibility to sit for the comprehensive examination includes admission to the program and completion of the coursework that will appear on the examination. Candidates must apply to take the comprehensive examination by completing a written application, securing the signature of the advisor, and submitting it to the CASE office by the appropriate deadline. There is no cost for the test. The application deadlines, applications, and copies of this guide can be found on the department website:

<http://coe.uaa.alaska.edu/programs/counseling/forms/index.cfm>.

Candidates will receive confirmation in the mail that their application has been approved and they will also receive information regarding the administration of the examination. Typically, the examination will be administered in the computer laboratory in the Professional Studies Building. Candidates will be given a confidential number to use for their examination. Whenever possible, the response readers will be the members on the candidates' graduate committees and the evaluators will not know the identity of the authors of the answers. Candidates will have four hours to complete the examination.

Accommodations

It is the policy of the University of Alaska Anchorage CASE department to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with documented disabilities. This program will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as regards to affording equal education opportunity. It is the candidate's responsibility to contact the Disability Support Services (786-4530). The Coordinator of Disability Support Services will assist candidates and staff in arranging appropriate accommodations. This is in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Format of the Examination

Beginning spring 2007, the format for the comprehensive examination will be case study analysis. The case study approach bridges the gap between theory and practice. Case studies are interactive and allow for an integration of counseling area knowledge. The nature of the case study method allows for a variety of "correct" answers. Thus, this method allows candidates to demonstrate their individualized applied knowledge base to a practical situation in counselor education.

Candidates will select one of two case studies to analyze and will convey their understanding of the client situation through answering essay-style questions. There will be four essay questions and candidates will select three questions to answer. Candidates will have four hours to accurately analyze a case study and to answer the three questions about the client situation.

Example of Questions on the Examination

There will be two case studies on the examination. Candidates are to select one case study and then select three of the four questions to answer with regards to the selected case study. Most questions will call for an integration of information from the counseling core curriculum rather than information from one particular class.

The case studies will contain information that is needed to answer the essay questions; however, not all information presented in the case may be relevant for each question. Candidates are allowed to logically extrapolate on the information presented in the case study in order to answer the question. Thus, there is not one correct answer for the case study but there are pertinent points that should be discussed in the response.

An abbreviated example of a case study is as follows:

Wanda is an 11-year-old Native American female. She has six siblings. Wanda lived alone with her grandmother for the first ten years of her life as a result of having been “chosen” by her grandmother to her to live with her. Last year, her grandmother became very ill and Wanda returned to live with her parents and siblings. Wanda’s grandmother instilled a joy of religion, art, and music. She also likes to be meditative and to consider “world problems” by herself. She receives resource services at school for a learning disability (dyslexia). She does not like doing work on her own and gets nervous when her work is done poorly. Her mind wanders often to important questions such as, “Is there a God?” rather than concentrating on her school work.

Answer three of the following four questions. Begin your response by indicating the letter of the question you are answering (i.e., A, B, C, D)

Question A: Considering Wanda’s ethnic identity, describe how you would initially approach a counseling relationship with her. Include in your answer your knowledge of Native America culture and the generic and specific counseling skills that would most likely enhance a counseling relationship.

Question B: You are contemplating starting a counseling group for young girls who have experienced a trauma in their home relationships. Would you include Wanda in this group? Explain your answer. Also, describe how you would envision such a group (with or without Wanda). What would be the group process and what would be some activities you would perform in the group.

Question C: Consider the interests that have been instilled in Wanda by her grandmother. Describe possible occupations that may be of interest to her. Also, describe career development assessments, activities, and resources that you would use to specifically address Wanda.

Question D: Reflect on your own personal orientation to counseling. Identify approximately three counseling theories that guide your practice. Describe how you would approach counseling with Wanda from your theoretical stance. Include in your answer a likely counseling problem that she would bring to you, possible counseling goals, and strategies you would use with her.

Academic Honesty

Candidates are expected to maintain academic integrity before, during, and after the examination. Candidates are prohibited from attempting to acquire test items prior to taking the examinations and likewise; are prohibited from disseminating knowledge of the test contents to others. During the examination administration, candidates will not be allowed to work with others. Test responses must be the candidates’ original and independent work.

Evaluation of the Examination

Candidates are expected to demonstrate mastery of the counseling core that all students must take in order to satisfy the basic degree requirements. The comprehensive examination will be scored using a rubric. Candidates must reach a minimum score to successfully “pass.” Candidates will be notified of the results and actions approximately one month after the administration of the examination.

Candidates not passing the examination on the first attempt may repeat the written examination at a later date or may be requested to complete an oral exam. Failure to pass the examination on the second attempt may render the candidate ineligible to continue the counselor education program.

The examination will be evaluated on five dimensions: clarity, organization, completeness, accuracy, and professionalism. Each dimension will be scored as being below standard, at standard, or above standard. The minimum total score needed to pass the exam is 300 (i.e., answers for all three questions average to be “at standard.”). The dimensions and scoring criteria are explained below:

Dimensions:

- **Clarity.** The written response is clearly communicated with few grammatical errors.
- **Organization.** The written response reads easily and is coherent and logical in its presentation.
- **Completeness.** The written response directly addresses all components of the question.
- **Accuracy.** The written response contains correct information that is widely accepted in the field.
- **Mastery.** The written response appropriately refers to recognized terms, theorists, and concepts in the counseling field and the response is written in the manner appropriate of a candidate for a graduate degree.

Scoring criteria:

10 = Below standard. The candidate did not demonstrate the knowledge expected of a graduate counseling program candidate.

20 = At standard. The candidate did demonstrate the knowledge expected of a graduate counseling program candidate.

30 = Above standard. The candidate clearly demonstrated multiple strengths in the knowledge expected of a graduate counseling program candidate.

Suggested Study Strategies for the Examination

Candidates should expect to spend a considerable amount of time studying for the examination, especially in the last few weeks leading up to the test. Some specific suggestions for studying for the examination include:

Gather the materials. Perhaps the best study materials for the examination are your text books and your class notes. It is sometimes helpful to read works by other authors on the same topic as writing styles tend to be different. A bibliography of readings is presented in the last section of this guide. It is not necessary to read/study each one of the readings to do well on the examination as the test items are not based on any one particular book or instructor.

Obtain the case studies. Three weeks prior to the administration of the examination, candidates will receive examples of case studies that will be similar to the ones that will be on the examination.

Anticipate the questions. Candidates should spend their study time reflecting on how the topic areas for the exam (i.e., foundations, diversity, theories, skills, career, group) relate to the specific case studies. It may be best to concentrate first on the general principles and then on how specific techniques/concepts may be applied to the case. For example, when considering how career development may relate to a case, first try to analyze the case from a theoretical point of view such as the developmental approach by Donald Super. Next, determine if other theories seem appropriate for the situation such as trait-factor approach as espoused by John Holland. The next logical step would be to determine what techniques/resources may work well with the client. For example, it may be appropriate to discuss how the *Self-Directed Search* instrument may be applied in the situation or how the AKCIS may be utilized to assist the client.

Find a friend. Candidates are encouraged to collaborate with one another when studying for the examination. Group study sessions due tend to enhance test performance. It is also possible to set up a distance study group through the Elluminate Live feature through Blackboard Learning System. Please see the Blackboard Learning System homepage for instructions or see the counselor education program coordinator if you are interested in setting up such a session.

Suggested Study Readings for the Examination

A primary source for study materials are course texts and readings as well as class notes. However, the examination questions are not based on one particular text and are not based on the teachings of any particular instructors. In addition to previously read course materials, candidates may wish to consult the following sources:

Career Development

Harris-Bowlsbey, J., Dikel, M.R., & Sampson, J.P. (2002). *The Internet: A tool for career planning*. Tulsa, OK: National Career Development Association.

Liptak, J.J. (2001). *Treatment planning in career counseling*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thompson.

Niles, S.G., & Harris-Bowlsbey, J. (2005). *Career development interventions in the 21st century*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Sharf, R. S. (2006). *Applying career development theory to counseling (7th Ed.)*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Zunker, V. G., & Osburn, D. S. (2002). *Using assessment results for career development (6th Ed.)*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Counseling Skills

Carkhuff, R. R. (2000). *The art of helping (8th Ed.)*. Amherst, MA: Human Resource Development.

Carkhuff, R. R. (2000). *The student workbook for the art of helping (8th Ed.)*. Amherst, MA: Human Resource Development.

Egan, G. (2002). *The skilled helper (6th Ed.)*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Egan, G. (2002). *Exercises in helping skills (7th Ed.)*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Egan, G. (2002). *Skilled helping around the world*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Egan, G. (2002). *The skilled helper (7th Ed.)*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Herr, E., Cramer E., & Niles, S. (2004). *Career guidance and counseling through the lifespan: Systematic approaches (6th Ed.)*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Jongsma, A. E., Peterson, L.M., & McInnis, W.P. (2000). *The child psychotherapy treatment planner (2nd Ed.)*. NY: John Wiley & Sons.

Jongsma, A. E., Peterson, L.M., & McInnis, W.P. (2000). *The adolescent psychotherapy treatment planner (2nd Ed.)*. NY: John Wiley & Sons.

Travers, P. (2002). *The Counselor's Helpdesk*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Young, M. (2005). *Learning the art of helping (3rd Ed.)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Counseling Theories

General textbooks

Corey, G. (2005). *Theories and practices of counseling psychotherapy (7th Ed.)*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Gladding, S.T. (2005). *Counseling theories: Essential concepts and applications*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Seligman, L. (2006). *Theories of counseling and psychotherapy: Systems, strategies, and skills*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall.

Psychodynamic

Cash, R.O., & Snow, M.S.(2001).Adlerian treatment of sexually abused children. *Journal of Individual Psychology*, 57(1), 102-115.

LaFountain, R. M. (1996). Social interest: A key to solutions. *Journal of Adlerian Theory, Research & Practice*, 52(2), 150-157.

Mayers, H.A. (2005). Treatment of a traumatized adolescent mother and her two-year old son. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 33(4), 419-431.

Rosenblitt, D.L. (2005). Translating child analysis from the playroom to the classroom: Opportunities and choices. *Journal of the American Psychodynamic Association*, 53(1), 189-211.

Tyson, P. (2005). The child analyst at work. *Journal of the American Psychodynamic Association*, 53(1), 155-157.

Humanistic

Cepeda, L. M., Davenport, D. S. (2006). Person-Centered therapy and solution-focused brief therapy: An integration of present and future awareness. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training*, 43(1), 1-12.

Freire, E., Schmitt, K., Sílvia H., & Piason, A. (2005). Person-Centered therapy with impoverished, maltreated, and neglected children and adolescents in Brazil. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, 27(3), 225-237.

Lantz, J., Raiz, L. (2003). Play and art in existential trauma therapy with children and their parents. *Contemporary Family Therapy: An International Journal*, 25(2), 165-177.

Lester, D. (1994). Psychotherapy for suicidal clients. *Death Studies*, 18(4), 361-374.

Lampert, R. (2005). The playful path to healing. *International Gestalt Journal*, 28(1), 151-155.

Oaklander, V. (2001). Gestalt play therapy. *International Journal of Play Therapy*, 10(2), 45-55.

Cognitive/Behavioral

- Bernstein, G. A., Layne, A.E., & Egan, E. A. (2005). School-based interventions for anxious children. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 44*(11), 1118-1127.
- Greene, J.A. (2005). Cognitive-Behavioral therapy. *Psychiatric Services, 56*(9), 1161-1162.
- Spence, S.H., Holmes, J.M., & March, S. (2006). The feasibility and outcome of clinic plus internet delivery of cognitive-behavior therapy for childhood anxiety. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 74*(3), 614-621.
- Wood, J. (2006). Effect of anxiety reduction on children's school performance and social adjustment. *Developmental Psychology, 42*(2), 345-349.
- Wood, J. J., Piacentini, J. C., & Southam-Gerow, M. (2006). Family cognitive behavioral therapy for child anxiety disorders. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 45*(3), 314-321.
- Weisz, J.R., McCarty, C.A., & Valeri, S. M. (2006). Effects of psychotherapy for depression in children and adolescents: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin, 132*(1), 132-149.

Diversity

- Baruth, L.G., & Manning, M.L. (2003). *Multicultural counseling and psychotherapy: A lifespan perspective (3rd Ed.)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Fukuyama, M.A. (1999). Personal narrative: Growing up biracial. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 77*(1), 12.
- Goins, R.T., & Spencer, M. (2005). Public health issues among older American Indians and Alaska Natives. *Generations, 29*(2), 30-35.
- Hazel, K.L., & Mohannt, G.V. (2001). Cultural and spiritual coping in sobriety: Informing substance abuse for Alaska Native communities. *Journal of Community Psychology, 29*(5), 541-562.
- Manson, S.M. (2000). Mental health services for American Indians and Alaska Natives: need, use, and barriers to effective care. *Canadian Journal of Psychology, 45*(7), 617.
- Sue, D. W. & Sue, D. (2003) *Counseling the Diverse: Theory and Practice (4th Ed.)* NY: J. Wiley and Sons.

Foundations

- Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. *Comprehensive Counseling Program for Alaska Public Schools*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/publications/CounselingManual-final.pdf>
- American Counseling Association (2005) *Code of Ethics*. [Online]. Available: www.counseling.org
- American Psychiatric Association (1994). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (4th Ed.)*. Washington, DC: Author.
- American School Counselor Association (1998) *Ethical Standards for School Counselors*. [Online]. Available: www.schoolcounselor.org.
- American School Counselor Association (2003). *The ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling programs*. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- Capuzzi, D., & Gross, D. R., (2005). *Introduction to the counseling profession. (4th Ed.)*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Corey, G., & Corey, M.S. (2003). *Issues and ethics in the helping professions. (6th Ed.)*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Hazler, R. J. & Kottler, J. A. (1994). *The emerging professional counselor: Student dreams to professional realities*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Remley, T.P., Jr., & Hermann, M. A., & Huey, W. C. (Eds.). (2003). *Ethical & legal issues in school counseling. (2nd Ed.)*. Alexandria, VA: American School Counselor Association.

Group Counseling

- Arman, J.F. (2002). A brief group counseling model to increase resiliency for students with mild disabilities. *Journal of Humanistic Counseling*, 41(2), 120-128.
- Bradley, C. (2001). A counseling group for African-American adolescent males. *Professional School Counseling*, 4, 370-373.
- Capuzzi, D., Gross, D.R., & Stauffer, M.D. (2006). *Introduction to group work (4th Ed.)*. Denver, CO: Love.
- Ciechalski, J.C., & Schmidt, M.W. (1995). The effects of social skills training on students with exceptionalities. *Elementary School Guidance & Counseling*, 29, 217-222.

- Cook, J.B., & Kaffenberger, C.J. (2003). Solution shop: A solution-focused counseling and study skills program for middle school. *Professional School Counseling, 7*, 116-123.
- Corey, G. (2004). *Theory and Practice of group counseling*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole-Thomson Learning.
- Gladding, S.T. (2003). *Group work: A counseling specialty*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Jacobs, M. H. (2002). *Group Counseling: Strategies and Skills*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Kraus, K.L. (2006). Leading career development (Psychoeducational) groups in schools. *Career Convergence* [Online]. Available: www.ncda.org
- Nelson, J.R., & Dykeman, C. (1996). The effects of a group counseling intervention on students with behavioral adjustment problems. *Elementary School Guidance & Counseling, 31*, 21-33.
- Page, R.C., & Chandler, J. (1994). Effects of group counseling on ninth grade at-risk students. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling, 16*(3), 340-351.
- Rainey, L.M., Hensley, F.A., & Crutchfield, L.B. (1997). Implementation of support groups in elementary and middle school student assistance programs. *Professional School Counseling, 1*, 36-40.
- Richardson, C.D., & Rosen, L.A. (1999). School-based interventions for children of divorce. *Professional School Counseling, 3*, 21-26.
- Ripley, V.V., & Goodnough, G.E. (2001). Planning and implementing group counseling in high school. *Professional School Counseling, 5*(1), 62-65.
- Utay, J.M., & Lampe, R.E. (1995). Use of a group counseling game to enhance social skills of children with learning disabilities. *Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 20*, 114-120.
- Webb, L.D., & Myrick, R.D. (2003). A group counseling intervention for children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. *Professional School Counseling, 7*, 108-115.
- Yalom, I. D. (1995). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy*. New York: Basic.