

UMassAmherst

College of Education /  
Student Development

# School Counselor Education First Annual Program Report 2020-21

## Table of Contents

School Counselor Education Program Mission.....	3
School Counselor Education Program Objectives.....	4
Annual Report Executive Summary.....	5
Assessment Plan Process.....	5
Program Strengths.....	5
Areas of Improvement.....	5
Program Modifications.....	6
2021 Graduate Outcome Data.....	7
Response Rate.....	7
Program Completion Rate.....	7
Job Placement Rate.....	7
Qualitative Data on Strengths and Areas of Improvement.....	7
2020 Alumni Outcome Data.....	8
Program Completion Rate.....	8
Job Placement Rate.....	8
Ratings Regarding Role of School Counselor.....	8
Open Ended Suggestions for Improvement.....	9

## School Counselor Education Program Mission

School counselors promote the academic, career, and personal/social development of all PreK-12 students through data-informed school counseling programs. We believe that all school counselors must be multiculturally competent and committed to social justice and equity in education, ensuring that all students have equal access to resources and opportunities. We also believe that school counselors are most effective when they work collaboratively across the multiple contexts that shape children's development—at the individual level and the classroom, school, family, and community levels.

We teach an innovative model of school counseling that understands schools as complex institutions that require classroom-based, small group, and individual school counseling interventions and programs. A key aspect of school counseling is our role as school leaders and advocates for students, working to create safe and supportive learning environments. At UMass Amherst, our students develop an appreciation for the broad issues impacting the practice of school counseling, knowledge of current models and evidence-based interventions, and an understanding of the research base that supports practice. We also ensure that our graduates have thorough training in both mental health and the American School Counselor Association's National Model for School Counseling. Finally, our students have the opportunity to work with faculty in the UMass Amherst-based Ronald H. Fredrickson Center for School Counseling Outcome Research & Evaluation (CSCORE), a widely respected source for school counseling resources. CSCORE works with professionals across the country to disseminate relevant research and put knowledge into practice. CSCORE hosts an annual [national conference](#) for school counselors.

## School Counselor Education Program Objectives

1. To prepare counselors with the knowledge of school counseling history, ethics, theories, and current counseling models.
2. To train counselors in multicultural competencies and prepare them to be advocates for social justice and equity in education.
3. To train counselors who understand the foundation of human growth and development.
4. To prepare counselors to work collaboratively across the multiple contexts that shape a child's development at the individual level and the classroom, school, family and community levels.
5. To prepare counselors with the knowledge and skills to help students with career and life decisions.
6. To prepare counselors with the knowledge and skills to engage in the counseling and helping process across multi-tiered systems of support, providing individual, group, school, family, and community-based services and related referrals.
7. To prepare counselors to engage in and practice self-care throughout their professional and personal experiences.
8. To prepare counselors with the knowledge and skills to facilitate group counseling.
9. To prepare counselors with the knowledge and skills to assess, interpret, and present student and school-level data.
10. To educate counselors to identify, implement, and evaluate evidence-based practices in their settings.
11. To prepare counselors to be knowledgeable and skilled in reading and conducting research and program evaluation.
12. To train counselors to enter supervised practicum and internship experiences prepared to put theoretical knowledge into practice and immerse themselves in the professional role.

## Annual Report Executive Summary

### **Assessment Plan Process**

The School Counselor Education Program has recently started a systematic assessment process to obtain student and site supervisor feedback and data to assess our program objectives and make subsequent program modifications. For this report, the program surveyed current students and recent alumni to better inform program modifications. Data pulled from the graduating class is qualitative and reflects their responses to the program exit survey administered by the UMass College of Education licensing office. The data pulled from the alumni is culled from a survey that was sent one-year post graduation.

Starting with the class of 2022, the program will begin to systematically survey the graduating class, their site supervisors, the previous year's alumni and their current employers to gain information about how well the UMass School Counselor Education program is meeting its program objectives.

For this current report, the analysis of the aggregated data suggests the following:

### **Program Strengths**

- Feedback/advising
- Cohort model
- Flexibility
- Preparing for the technical aspects of the role

### **Areas of Improvement**

- Special Education – IEPs and social emotional goal writing
- Using statistics to understand data
- More support for finding internship placements
- Increased focus on practical nature of the role

## Program Modifications

The School Counselor Education solicits feedback from student and supervisor stakeholders to identify areas of improvement to guide our program. The quantitative and qualitative data collected from our graduates and site partners has been used to inform the following program modifications:

<b>Area of Improvement</b>	<b>Program Modifications</b>
Special Education – 504s & IEPs	EDUC 701: Internship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Counselor Program Coordinator consulted with the adjunct professor teaching the Internship in School Counseling regarding the need for more 504 and IEP information from curriculum. Two course meetings now are dedicated 504 and IEP review, special education accommodation, and IEP goal writing. Students are required to work in groups to determine appropriate goals given presenting student needs.</li> </ul> EDUC 606: Consultation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addition of a guest lecture on 504 meetings and increased focus on 504 consultation with teachers and parents. Two full class meetings (5 hours) and related readings and assignments are now dedicated to increasing knowledge and skills related to supporting students with special needs and their families.</li> </ul>
Using statistics to understand data	EDUC 605: Evidence-based School Counseling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An additional class (2.5 hours) on using statistics to understand data, using excel, was added to this class.</li> </ul>
Support in Finding Field Placements	Practicum and Internship Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More time dedicated in fall practicum and spring internship meetings to review different site placements. Program coordinator reviews strongest site partners and meets with individual students to recommend placements to individual students.</li> </ul>
Practicality of Position	Adjunct professors Sarah Spence and Katie Gray hired to teach Practicum and Internship courses. Both lecturers have practical focus given their many years serving as school counselors.

## 2021 Graduate Outcome Data

### Graduate Outcome Data

Graduation Year	# Graduates	Program Completion Rate	Job Placement Rate
2021	6	100%	83%* *one student pursued a job in higher education as academic advisor rather than in school counseling

### Graduate Exit Survey Qualitative Themes:

#### Program Strengths:

##### Advising and Program/Unit Operations

- Faculty supportive, responsive and available when needed

##### Preparation for Your Profession

- Effective in preparing for technical aspects of the role and in counseling

##### Assessment and Evaluation

- Feedback was clear and constructive

##### Strongest Support Mechanisms for Completing the Program:

- Peers/cohort model
- Advisors/faculty members
- Flexibility
- Funding

#### Suggestions for Improvement

##### Advising and Program/Unit Operations

- More support needed in finding internship placements and employment

##### Preparation for Your Profession

- More focus on practical nature of the role and how school counselors work with parents and other agencies to support students
- More focus on refining clinical skills emphasized in the program
- More information on elementary education
- More information on special education, testing and FBAs

##### Unit and University Support Services

- Tk20 and licensing process was confusing –more regular and timely support from the Tk20 staff would be helpful

Which support system requires the most improvement from the faculty?

- More clarity on degree and licensure forms
- Increased faculty cohesion
- Increased support for students finding field placements

## Alumni Outcome Data - 2020

Graduation Year	# Graduates	Program Completion Rate	Job Placement Rate
2020	14	93%	64%* *two students continued their careers in special education as teachers; one student pursued a career in higher education as admissions officer; one student continued their education in an MSW program; two students pursued careers in elementary education as a teacher's aide and an administrator

**Response Rate:**  $6/14=43\%$

### Alumni Ratings Regarding Role of School Counselor

*“Please rate how well the UMass Amherst SCE prepared you:”*

*3=Exceeded Expectations 2=Met Expectations 1=Did not meet expectations*

Question	Recent Graduate Mean
With the knowledge of school counseling theories	2.5
With the knowledge of the role and function of a school counselor	3
With the foundational knowledge of child and adolescent development	2.67
To work effectively in diverse and multicultural settings	2.31
To recognize and advocate for social justice in education	2.5
To work collaboratively with families and caregivers	2.5
To work collaboratively with different stakeholders in the school system	2.41
To use differentiated approaches to address individual student needs	2.5
To provide students with opportunities to assess their abilities, interests, values, and other career-related factors	2.36
To engage in college counseling with student	2.5
To understand and use basic concepts of statistics when interpreting data as it is used in your school	1.67
To use data to inform your work as a school counselor	2

To use evidence-based intervention research to inform your work with your students	<b>2</b>
To provide individual counseling to students	<b>2.5</b>
To provide group counseling to students	<b>3</b>
To provide classroom counseling lessons to students	<b>2</b>
To consult with caregivers	<b>2.67</b>
To consult with teachers	<b>2.67</b>
To consult with administrators	<b>2.67</b>
To consult with community agencies	<b>2</b>
How prepared do you feel in comparison to your colleagues?	<b>2.5</b>

## **Open-Ended Survey Responses**

### Suggestions for Program Improvement – Qualitative Themes

- Increased focus on IEPs and special education
- Increased focus on working with students with disabilities