

# **2023 Counseling Programs Evaluation Outcomes Report**

Kansas State University

College of Education

Department of Special Education,  
Counseling, & Student Affairs

## Introduction

The purpose of this report is to present the results of the annual program evaluation meeting for the counseling programs at Kansas State University (KSU). Each year, the faculty members in the counseling programs at KSU meet to review data and evaluate the performance of their programs. During this meeting, faculty members discuss trends in the data, program strengths, areas for growth, and any necessary program modifications or substantive changes. This process ensures that program quality remains high and that the programs meet the accreditation standards set by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The counseling programs are evaluated annually using the following types of data:

1. Assessment of Key Performance Indicators (KPI)
2. Assessment of Key Professional Disposition Standards (i.e. COCATS assessment)
3. Demographics/characteristics of applicants, students, and graduates
4. Follow-up studies of graduates, site supervisors, and employers of graduates

Notes for 2023:

- Historically, KSU has offered two CACREP-accredited counseling programs: the MS in School Counseling and the PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision. Starting in the 2023-24 academic year, KSU stopped accepting students into the MS program and began accepting students in the newly approved EdS in School Counseling program. During that same academic year, both the EdS and the PhD programs began being offered in 100% online formats. Given the timing of these changes, some of the data that was reviewed during the program evaluation meeting reflected the outgoing programs (in-person MS and in-person PhD) while other data reflected the new programs (online EdS and online PhD).
- During the 2022-2023 academic year, the counseling program faculty adopted new program evaluation tools to comply with CACREP standards. The faculty approved 11 KPIs that measure school counseling students' performance in their programs. The faculty also approved 6 KPIs that measure PhD students' performance in their programs. KPI in both programs are measured three times throughout each student's program using assessments that are chosen by the faculty. Lastly, the faculty approved 6 key professional disposition standards that measure the professional dispositions of students in all counseling programs. These standards are measured annually for each student using the COCATS assessment. These new tools were introduced in the 2023-2024 academic year, and will be used for all new counseling students in the KSU programs moving forward. The KPI and COCATS standards are provided in this report.

## **New Program Evaluation Tools**

### Ed.S. in School Counseling Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

**KPI 1** - Student is able to differentiate the various theories and models of counseling

**KPI 2** - Student is able to establish and maintain an effective counseling relationship

**KPI 3** – Student is able to effectively design counseling groups.

**KPI 4** - Student is able to apply ethical and legal standards of counseling

**KPI 5** - Student is able to demonstrate knowledge of the components of a comprehensive school counseling program

**KPI 6** - Student is able to demonstrate knowledge of the impact of heritage, attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences on an individual's views of others

**KPI 7** - Student is able to conduct assessments of risk including suicide, danger to others, self-inflicted harm, and the presence of mental health disorders

**KPI 8** - Student is able to demonstrate knowledge of theories of individual and family development across the lifespan

**KPI 9** - Student is able to facilitate student skill development for career, educational, and life-work planning and management

**KPI 10** - Student is able to demonstrate knowledge of statistical concepts including scales of measurement, measures of central tendency, indices of variability, shapes and types of distributions, and correlations

**KPI 11** - Student is able to evaluate counseling interventions and programs

### Ph.D. in Counselor Education & Supervision Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

**KPI CES 1** - Student is able to demonstrate knowledge of evidence-based counseling practices

**KPI CES 2** - Student is able to demonstrate clinical supervision skills

**KPI CES 3** - Student is able to demonstrate knowledge of instructional and curriculum design, delivery, and evaluation methods relevant to counselor education

**KPI CES 4** - Student is able to demonstrate knowledge of research designs appropriate to quantitative and qualitative research methodologies

**KPI CES 5** - Student is able to prepare professional conference proposals

**KPI CES 6** - Student is able to demonstrate knowledge of leadership and leadership development in professional organizations and counselor education programs

Key Professional Disposition Standards (COCATS) Assessment Report  
(Ratings: 1 = Unacceptable, 2 = Acceptable, 3 = Exemplary)

**Commitment to Professionalism**

- Student demonstrates professional behavior and integrity with faculty, supervisors, peers, and clients.
- Student demonstrates respect and honesty with faculty, supervisors, peers, and clients.
- Student demonstrates effective and appropriate communication verbally, electronically, and in writing with faculty, supervisors, peers, and clients.

**Orientation to Multiculturalism & Social Justice Advocacy**

- Student demonstrates willingness to increase awareness of own culture.
- Student is able to respond to clients' needs without imposing personal values.
- Student demonstrates willingness to understand the cultural worldview of others.
- Student demonstrates willingness to engage in social justice.
- Student acknowledges the role of marginalization in society.

**Capacity for Personal & Professional Growth**

- Student demonstrates active engagement in learning process.
- Student completes assignments in a timely manner and meets class expectations
- Student demonstrates ability to receive and integrate feedback.
- Student demonstrates openness to new ideas and concepts.
- Student demonstrates willingness to adapt and respond to changing environments or unexpected circumstances.

**Attention to Ethical and Legal Considerations**

- Student adheres to relevant ethical guidelines and legal mandates.
- Student seeks supervision when experiencing an ethical or legal concern.
- Student appropriately manages professional boundaries.
- Student maintains client confidentiality.
- Student does not endanger the safety or wellbeing of others.

**Teamwork, Collaboration & Interpersonal Relationships**

- Student demonstrates ability to cooperate and collaborate with others.
- Student is willing to compromise when necessary for team goals.
- Student demonstrates ability to contribute equally to group projects
- Student demonstrates ability to establish and maintain relationships with peers, faculty, supervisors, and clients.

**Self-Awareness**

- Student demonstrates ability and willingness to self-reflect honestly and objectively on their own values, needs, biases, and belief systems.
- Student is able to recognize one's own limitations and is able to accept personal responsibility.
- Student demonstrates insight into how one's words and actions can positively and negatively affect the people around them.
- Student actively pursues learning about how one's words and actions are affecting others and the incorporation of feedback to create positive change.

## **Program Evaluation Outcomes**

### Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

- The faculty recognized that the KPI evaluation system was in its first use and may need to be slightly modified as more data is collected and evaluated.
- In spite of its novelty, the new KPI system demonstrated strength for providing a “snapshot” of the programs’ health.
- Overall, students in the EdS program are performing at a high level, with average scores in KPI at 90% or higher in nearly all KPI.
  - KPI 6, which is related to multicultural counseling, showed slightly lower performance (85.4%). Progress in the KPI will be monitored carefully over the next year.
- The PhD students are performing above 90% in all KPI.
- The faculty discussed the need to continue to select meaningful assessments that will measure progress in each KPI appropriately.
- No program modifications or substantive changes related to KPI are needed at this time

### Key Professional Dispositions (COCATS)

- The faculty recognized that the COCATS assessment was in its first use. The faculty agreed that the assessment itself was a strong tool, but the rating process may need to be modified in future use. For example, how does one determine that a student performs at an “exemplary” level in categories such as “Attention to Ethical and Legal Considerations”?
  - The faculty agreed to review and revisit the rating process throughout 2024.
- Students in both the EdS and PhD programs successfully demonstrated each of the 6 professional dispositions in 2023.
  - Ratings in “Orientation to Multiculturalism” and “Attention to Ethics” were slightly lower than the other four dispositions. This result was likely due to the rating process discussed above. Program faculty will continue to monitor these dispositions in 2024.
- No program modifications or substantive changes related to professional dispositions are needed at this time.

### Demographics/Characteristics of Programs

- The school counseling program demonstrated low racial, ethnic, and gender diversity among applicants, students, and graduates
  - Faculty discussed three strategies to recruit and retain more diverse students for the EdS in School Counseling program
    - Utilize the newly established Chi Sigma Iota chapter to provide leadership opportunities to diverse students
    - Identify graduates who can serve as mentors to diverse students
    - Utilize KSU’s “Call Me Mister” program to increase enrollment among male students
  - These strategies will be explored and implemented in 2024.

- Program faculty discussed previous limitations of the in-person programs and program demographics reflecting the demographics of the state of Kansas. As more students are accepted into the online programs, this will no longer be a limitation of the program.

#### Systematic Follow-up Studies of Graduates, Supervisors, and Employers

- Overall, the school counseling program was highly rated by graduates and employers. Members of the advisory committee for the school counseling program also commented on strengths such as strong relationships with faculty, connection with other KSU alumni, and outstanding preparation for job of school counselor.
- Given the recent transition from in-person MS program to online EdS program, no further program modifications or substantive changes are needed at this time.
- Follow-up studies revealed three potential changes needed for the PhD in Counselor Education & Supervision
  - More emphasis on understanding and conducting counseling research
    - The faculty suggested two changes: 1.) adding a course or experience that emphasizes scholarly writing focused in counseling, 2.) revising the PhD program objective related to research to see if a more achievable program objective is needed
    - These changes will be discussed further by the program faculty, and at least one of the two changes will be implemented in 2024.
  - Adding an interview process for potential candidates for the PhD program
    - This change was already approved by the faculty in 2023 and will be implemented in 2024
  - Stronger advising is needed from major professors in the PhD program
    - Several strategies are already in place to make this change
      - More emphasis on student-faculty collaboration in counseling programs
      - More emphasis on regular meetings with PhD students who are writing dissertations
      - Changes to EDCEP 999 and goal-setting procedures for students in dissertation phase of program