PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOME (PLO) 4: USE OF RESEARCH
ANALYSIS AND REPORT (SCHOOL COUNSELING)
FALL, 2012-FALL, 2014

Program Learning Outcome (PLO) 4: Students in the master's degree programs (CMHC, RC, and SC) within the Department of Counseling and Human Services at the University of Scranton will: "formulate, conduct, and evaluate master's level research procedures and assessment processes."

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A systematic assessment of PLO 4 was conducted in January, 2015. Evaluation outcomes for three assignments from COUN 535: SC Research and Accountability were used to conduct the School Counseling Program component of the analysis for PLO 4. Three recent semesters of outcomes (F12, F13, F14) were included in this assessment cycle for analysis. Outcomes for all students ($N = 46$) in three semesters are included (F12 $n = 17$, F13 $n = 19$, F14 $n = 10$).

The "Needs Assessment" and "Evidence-Based Practice" assignments represent an integrated learning sequence with the first assignment informing and guiding the work completed on the second assignment. The overall project was developed using course content and the course textbook. Students learn to execute all of the components of each assignment using course materials. Instructor consultation time is encouraged for completion of these assignments. Comprehensive assignment descriptions, outlines, and scoring sheets are included in the course syllabus (Appendix A). Assignment descriptions, outlines, and scoring sheets have been revised and updated during the 3-year cycle under consideration for this PLO assessment sequence. Students elect to work on

students exceeding or falling below a final score of 84% on each assignment, however, provides a slightly different picture.

Eighty-four percent represents a "minimum" level of overall performance for graduate students. In other words, those whose overall G.P.A. dips below a 3.0 average, or "B" (represented by a grade average 84%), are typically placed on academic probation. Students whose grade dips below this point in a particular course typically receive a letter of warning from the CGCE Dean indicating that sustained performance at this level may result in the student being placed on probation. Thus, 84% was used as a previously "established performance bar" to evaluate student outcomes on each of the assessments. Overall, 76.1% of students ($n = 35$) surpassed the 84% level on the "Needs Assessment" assignment; 84.8% ($n = 39$) surpassed this level on the "Evidence-Based Practice" assignment; and 71.7% ($n = 33$) surpassed this level on the "Performance Assessment." Recommendations for the future might include a focus on additional analyses to examine where students are struggling on these assignments as well as instructional approaches that might increase the numbers of students exceeding this performance level the next time this PLO is evaluated.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Discuss the merits of establishing *baseline performance* expectations for each assignment and subsequently, if deemed appropriate, develop appropriate mechanisms to insure that students are meeting these minimum expectations in order to earn credit for the course.

2. Discuss the merits of establishing a

4.   RECOMMENDATION #5 COMPLETED (8/18/15)- Language introduced into syllabus (beginning F15) requiring all project groups to schedule AT LEAST one Out-of-Class Instructor Consultation prior to submitting each completed comprehensive course assignment. This expectation was also added to each project's scoring sheet.

5.   RECOMMENDATION #3 COMPLETED (8/18/15)-

Appendix A
COUN 535: SC Research and Accountability Syllabus

8. Skills and Practices (Standard J.) [A.3, C.2, G.3, H.2, K.3, O.3, P.1,]
   a. Applies relevant research findings to inform the practice of school counseling (Standard J.1.). [H.2, J.1, O.3, P.1]
   b. Develops measurable outcomes for school counseling programs, activities, interventions, and experiences (Standard J.2.). [H.2, J.2, O.3, P.1]
   c. Analyzes and uses date to enhance school counseling programs (Standard J.3.). [H.2, J.3, O.3, P.1]

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLO's) and RELATED ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES:

SLO 1: Students will demonstrate their abilities to incorporate the three-stage Evidence-Based Practice Model presented in the Dimmit, Carey, and Hatch text into their school counseling practice.

RELATED ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES:
1) Comprehensive Project
   a. Needs Assessment/Program Evaluation: Research and Development Project
   b. Evidence-Based Practice: Research and Development Project

SLO 2: Students will be able to conduct action research and analyze school-based data using the EZAnalyze software plug-in for Excel.

RELATED ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES:
1) Comprehensive Performance Evaluation

JESUIT IDENTITY AND MISSION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SCRANTON:

Many core beliefs and practices of Counseling and Human Services professionals complement Jesuit tradition and the Ignatian mission of the University of Scranton. An

ATTENDANCE:
Students are expected to attend all classes and to participate in the various in-class and out-of-class experiences related to this course. The course instructor reserves the right to reduce student grades for *unexcused absences* depending on the number of classes missed. Students are expected to consult with their peers regarding missed material in the event of any absence.

COMMON COURTESY IN THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:
Cell phone use, texting, and other non-class related behaviors are a distraction in the learning environment. Students are asked to refrain from ALL non-class related behaviors during class time. The instructor reserves the right to collect cell phones or other electronic items if students are unable to manage their use. Students who have a situation-specific need to access their cell phones during a particular class period should consult with the instructor prior to class and should expect to conduct any instructor approved communications during class outside of the classroom.

INSTRUCTOR ASSISTANCE AND OFFICE HOURS:
Students are **encouraged** to raise questions and issues **in class** for all course participants to consider. However, if your question is of a very personal nature, please feel free to schedule an appointment with the instructor. Unscheduled drop-

WRITING CENTER:

The Writing Center focuses on helping students become better writers. Consultants will work one-on-one with students to discuss students' work and provide feedback at any stage of the writing process. Scheduling appointments early in the writing process is encouraged.

To meet with a writing consultant, call (570) 941-6147 to schedule an appointment, or send an email with your available meeting times, the course for which you need assistance, and your phone number to: writing-center@scranton.edu. Online appointments are also available – connecting virtually using Google Docs and Google Talk

stretch themselves in order to develop these key school counselor competencies.
[CACREP A.1, A.2, A.5, B.1, B.2, C.2, C.5, E.3, F.2, F.3, O.3, O.4, P.1]

Comprehensive Project

Students will identify a case study school of their choice. The identified needs of each school will guide students in their project work throughout the semester. Target schools must be approved by the instructor.

Needs Assessment/Program Evaluation: Research and Development Project
(30% of final grade)
DUE: November 3

Students will utilize course tools (Excel, Survey Monkey, Zoomerang, Google Docs) to create an appropriate survey instrument to be used by school counselors. The survey should take into account the different language versions that may be needed for various stakeholder groups. It should be designed for use in an elementary, middle, or high school setting. A duplicate copy of your final survey should be translated into an appropriate language using Google translator. A written report describing the literature and resources that were considered for developing the survey along with the factors you took into account to insure the psychometric quality and utility of the instrument should accompany your report. Appendix A of the syllabus contains a detailed project description. Appendix B contains a detailed scoring rubric. Archived project samples are provided on D2L.

Evidence-Based Practice: Research and Development Project
(30% of final grade)
DUE: December 8

Students will conduct research based on their case study school's identified needs. This project should build on the work completed in the Needs Assessment/Program Evaluation assignment. ***Students wishing to deviate from this approach must secure permission from the course instructor.*** All projects must have the potential to positively impact student performance and outcomes.

This project consists of three elements:

should also include a "recommendations" section. A subsequent Intervention Evaluation Action Plan will be written to communicate understanding of the comprehensive evaluation process. Appropriate knowledge of research design and outcome evaluation must be demonstrated.

The elements of this assignment are explained in detail in Appendix C of the syllabus. Appendix D contains a detailed scoring rubric. Archived project samples are provided on D2L.

Project Group Work: A Collaborative Opportunity

Due to the comprehensive nature of the projects listed above, the instructor is making it possible for each assignment to be completed by small, collaborative work groups of 2-3 students. However, in contrast to group experiences in other courses, groups in this course can be dissolved throughout the semester should group members decide that they are unable or unwilling to continue working in their group. *Although past experience indicates that these projects can certainly be completed individually, it is definitely in the best interest of individuals to maintain their group affiliations and to develop positive working relationships within their assigned groups.* However, should any group elect to dissolve, the following principles will apply:

1) Groups electing to dissolve must meet *together* with the course instructor to secure final permission.
2) Triads can either disband completely (and become three individuals) or selectively (by dismissing a specific group member who is not contributing to the project work).
3) Individuals from dissolved groups assume **sole responsibility** for completion of *all elements* of the current project.
4) No group will be permitted to dissolve within two weeks of a project due date.
5) Members of dissolved groups *may not* form new work groups with individuals from other dissolved groups.
6) Individuals from a dissolved group *may* only be invited to join another group upon completion of the first project. At no other time will students from dissolved groups be permitted to join other work groups.
7) Two-person groups that have remained intact upon completion of the first project *may* elect to bring one additional member (from a dissolved group) onto their team for Project #2 (for a maximum group size of three students). The decision to adopt a student from a dissolved team rests solely upon the members of intact groups. Students who are not adopted by an intact group must complete the second project on their own.
8) Principles 1-6 apply to all groups for project #2.

EVALUATION SUMMARY:

Assignment	Due Date	% Value
Professionalism	ongoing	10%
Needs Assessment/Program Evaluation		
Research and Development Project	November 3	30%
Evidence-Based Practice		
Research and Development Project	December 8	30%
Overall Group Member Grade	11/3 and 12/8	10%
Comprehensive Performance Evaluation	December 12	20%
	Total	**100%**

**Students are expected to complete all work by the assigned due dates.

GRADING SCALE:

A	=	95%	Superior/Outstanding work
A-	=	90%	Excellent
B+	=	87%	Very Good
B	=	84%	Good
B-	=	80%	Fair
C+	=	76%	Passing Grade
C	=	70%	Minimum Passing Grade
F	=	69%	Failure

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Course Introduction

September 15   **TOPIC:** Skills and Competencies
[CACREP G.7.c, G.7.d, G.7.e, A.1, A.2, A.3, A.5, B.1, C.2, C.5, E.3, F.2, F.3, G.3, H.2, J.3, K.2, M.2, M.3, O.3, O.4, P.1]

        READ: Dimmitt, Carey, & Hatch- Chapter 2 & 3
            Isaccs (2003)

        HOMEWORK:
            Data Boot Camp Unit 4- *Charts or Graphs*
            Data Boot Camp Unit 5- *Copy, Print, and More*
            EZ Analyze- Tutorial 2 **(Located in the EZAnalyze Manual)**

        IN CLASS:
            Survey Monkey Course Feedback

Section 2: Needs Assessment/Problem Description

September 22   **TOPIC:** Assessing School Counselor Needs: *Process Data*
[CACREP G.1.i, G.2.d, G.8.a, G.8.d, A.1-3, A.5, B.1, C.2, C.5, E.3, F.2, F.3, G.3, H.2, H.5, I.2, I.4, J.3, K.2, M.2, M.3, O.3, O.4, P.1]

        READ: TimeTracker User Manual
            Kirchner & Setchfield (2005)
            Lieberman (2004)
            Perusse, Goodnough, Donegan, & Jones (2004)

September 29   **TOPIC:** Assessing School Community Needs: *Equity Audits, CAPE Network Universal Encouragement Program, PlanSmart, Data Teams*
[CACREP G.1.i, G.2.d, G.8.a, G.8.d, A.1-3, A.5, B.1, C.2, C.5, E.3, F.2, F.3, G.3, H.2, H.5, I.2, I.4, J.3, K.2, M.2, M.3, O.3, O.4, P.1]

        READ: No assigned reading this week
            Catch up on any missed reading
            Work on EXCEL competencies

        PROJECT WORK GROUPS ASSIGNED- IDENTIFY CASE STUDY

Section 3: Evidence-Based Practice and Choosing Interventions: Reading and Weighing Outcome Research

October 13   No Class- Fall Break

October 20   **TOPIC:** Statistics Review- Descriptive Statistics
                  [CACREP G.7.c, G.7.d, G.7.e, G.8.c, G.8.e, A.1-3, A.5, B.1, B.2, C.2, C.5, E.3, F.2, F.3, G.3, H.2, I.1, I.4, I.5, J.3, K.2, K.3, M.2, M.3, O.3, O.4, P.1]
                  READ: Dimmitt, Carey, & Hatch- Chapter 4
                          Bangert & Baumberger (2005)
                          Sink & Stroh (2003)
                  HOMEWORK:
                          Preview UMASS- Center for School Counseling Outcome

APPENDIX A
KNOWING THE PROBLEM
PROJECT GUIDELINES
NEEDS ASSESSMENT/PROGRAM EVALUATION:
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Project Description: Utilize course tools (Excel, Survey Monkey) to create an appropriate

Each item maps onto one construct or subconstruct
Each item contains only one idea

APPENDIX C
KNOWING WHAT WORKS AND
DETERMINING WHETHER OR NOT YOU'RE
MAKING A DIFFERENCE
PROJECT GUIDELINES
EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE: RESEARCH AND
DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Students will conduct research based on their case study school's identified needs. This project should build on the work completed in the Needs Assessment/Program Evaluation assignment. ***Students wishing to deviate from this approach must secure permission from the course instructor.*** All projects must have the potential to positively impact student performance and outcomes.

This project consists of three elements: *1) Developing Research Briefs; 2) Recommending Interventions to the School Community; and 3) Developing an Intervention Evaluation Action Plan.*

Individual students or student teams will review the literature to identify existing evidence-based practice approaches related to their identified school needs in order to develop three research briefs. Briefs must represent the most promising empirically supported practices identified within the literature. Based on findings, students or student teams will recommend their interventions to the school community by developing a Pp presentation designed to educate stakeholders about the identified problem. Pp's should also include a "recommendations" section. A subsequent Intervention Evaluation Action Plan will be written to communicate understanding of the comprehensive evaluation process. Appropriate knowledge of research design and outcome evaluation must be demonstrated.

Each element is explained in greater detail below.

> **Developing Research Briefs (3):**
>
> Students will conduct research on their identified topic and evaluate existing studies using the National Panel for Evidence-Based School Counseling rubric (http://www.umass.edu/schoolcounseling/uploads/EBP_rubric.pdf or pp.59-61 of the course text). Students will select the three most viable intervention options for their identified problem and write three research briefs (***Students must use Brief 6.1**- Does a multimedia intervention reduce bullying and victimization in third grade urban schools **as the template for this component of the project):***
>
> > http://www.umass.edu/schoolcounseling/uploads/ResearchBrief6.1.pdf
>
> Submitted Research Briefs ***must represent interventions or programs that have been implemented and evaluated using acceptable RESEARCH designs.*** As in

Brief 6.1, the seven domains of the Evidence-Based Practice Rubric *must be included* in the "Critical Perspective" section of each Research Brief. Students MUST judge each study across each of the seven rubric domains as "Strong," "Promising," or "Less than Promising." **Copies of each article must accompany each Research Brief.**

Recommending Interventions to the School Community

Based on the research briefs above, students will develop a Pp presentation that could be used to provide an overview of the most promising evidence-based practices in existence for dealing with their identified school problem. This could mean selecting one specific program or synthesizing promising elements from all of the research briefs. The Pp should mimic the steps followed by Research-Based Practice teams (pp. 68-71 of the course text) and include the following:

- o Defining the problem
- o Providing an overview of the appropriate and promising research-based Interventions and Approaches (from selected Research Briefs)
- o Providing recommendations
- o Discussing implementation fidelity- how your recommended interventions fit within your specific setting
- o Outlining resources and primary support needed
- o Presenting implementation roles, responsibilities, and expectations for those who will be involved (tentative plans for who will do what)

** Students must include discussion points in the **Notes Section** of each Pp slide for instructor evaluation.

Developing an Intervention Evaluation Action Plan

An Intervention Evaluation Action Plan (pp. 94-96 of the course text) should be developed that outlines the data gathering process. Each of the following steps of the action plan must be articulated:

Outcome map
Outcome measures
- o Immediate (Perception data instruments must be included)
- o Proximal (appropriate instruments or collection plans must be included)
- o Distal
Monitoring implementation
Evaluation Design
Data collection
Statistical Analysis
Expected Results

Data Collection Process	2 points	_____
Statistical Analysis Procedures	2 points	_____
Expected Results	1 points	_____

TOTAL   **100**