

MS: Counseling, Concentration in College Counseling & Student Services
Psychology Department
Program Review
5-26-10

The Psychology Department has offered a masters of science degree in Counseling with a concentration in College Counseling and Student Services (CCSS) since Fall, 2006. This program initially was founded as a MS in Counseling with a concentration in Higher Education in 1997. The CCSS program, with an emphasis on diversity/multiculturalism, was designed to familiarize students with the role and functions of student affairs work in higher education. Students were exposed to theory within the field of Student Development. Didactic and experiential program components were combined to provide a broad theoretical foundation for possible doctoral study and substantial experience for students electing to go straight into college counseling and student services careers.

Unfortunately, the CCSS program remained a small program and was determined to no longer be viable in January of 2010. Given these issues, the faculty of the Psychology Department voted to close the CCSS program, teaching out the program for students currently enrolled but admitting no additional students. This decision was forwarded to, and approved by, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and the Provost.

Data which, in part, led to this decision are presented below.

First, admissions of new students into the CCSS program while initially strong declined significantly over the years.

Fall 06	Sp 07	F 07	Sp 08	F 08	Sp 09	F09
10	3	10	4	2	4	5

As of the end of Fall 2009 semester, the program had 27 CCSS students enrolled. Three of these students had completed their degree requirements and graduate in February 2010, and 12 additional students are expected to graduate at the end of Spring 2010. By summer of 2010, only 10 students will be enrolled in the CCSS program. For Spring 2010 admissions, only one viable candidate applied to the CCSS program. Given concerns about program viability, this student was not admitted to the program. It is anticipated that no additional students will be admitted to the program from this point forward.

Second, approximately half of the students in the masters programs proceeded through their degrees on a half time basis. Given this, cohort sizes had to be large in order to meet minimal enrollment expectations per class ($n=10$). This was the case even though all CCSS specialization courses were offered only on a once per year basis.

As can be seen from the table below, class sizes were quite variable over time. In most academic semesters since Fall of 2006 courses falling below minimal enrollment expectations were nevertheless offered in order to support the program. Class sizes became consistently smaller in Fall 2009 and only one class met minimum enrollment requirements for Spring 2010.

With declining numbers of students moving through their programs, it was expected that classes would become even smaller over time resulting in the failure of classes to be maintained in regular format. Typically courses less than 7-10 in enrollment were changed to directed studies. This then would put students entering into the

program at risk of entering a degree where a significant portion, if not all, of their degree specific coursework would occur in a directed study format. This would not have been a good academic experience for students.

CCSS Course Enrollments

Semester	510	514	515	524/525	531	533	535	582/583
Sp 2010	4		5			9	2	11
F 2009		7		9	8			11
Sp 2009	10		10			10	16	8
F 2008		11		6	8			12
Sp 2008	14		15			6	7	3
F2007		5		15	15			4
Sp 2007	14		10			11		
F2006		5		5	10			6

As noted previously and shown in the table above, a number of CCSS specialization courses were offered for this degree (these courses were taken by only CCSS students; additional courses taken by CCSS students were courses shared with the MFT program – those courses will continue to support the MFT program even with the termination of the CCSS program). These CCSS courses were largely supported by adjunct faculty. In fact, only one of the 10 CCSS specialization courses was taught by a full-time La Verne faculty member. The remaining nine were taught by adjunct faculty. With the termination of the degree program, and the eventual elimination of these classes from the course offerings, the university will save approximately \$23,125.00 in adjunct faculty salary costs for the CCSS specialization courses per year. The number of sections of other shared MFT/CCSS programs may also be reduced over time as seats previously used by CCSS students are vacated (where 2 sections were offered, only 1 may be needed in the future, freeing up additional adjunct faculty salary).

CCSS Courses and Yearly Salary Commitments

Course	510	514	515	524 (3)	531	533	535	582 (3)	Total
(credit units)	(3)	(3)	(3)	/525 (1)	(3)	(1)	(3)	/583 (3)	
Associated									
Salary per				\$2675/				\$2550/	\$23125
year	\$2675	\$2550	\$2675*	\$1000	\$2675	\$1000	\$2775	\$2550	

*Course taught by a full-time faculty member on load; the faculty member’s teaching duty will likely switch to another required Psychology course in lieu of 515, freeing up adjunct salaries currently used to fund that class.

While the CCSS program did provide an academic experience that is not duplicated exactly by any other program at La Verne, it should be noted that the College of Education does offer a masters of science degree in Educational Counseling which will qualify candidates to serve as community college counselors. As the CCSS program is closed, students can be directed to the Educational Counseling program as an alternative.

Thus, given declining enrollment in the program, resource and academic quality issues related to small class sizes, and the availability of an alternative degree program within La Verne, the faculty of the Psychology Department believed the MS in Counseling with a concentration in College Counseling and Student Services should be terminated. Appropriate plans have been made to insure that current students are able to complete their degree programs. No additional students will be admitted to begin the program however.