

Comprehensive Examination Preparation Guide



Southern Connecticut State University

Counseling and School Psychology

School Counseling

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Comprehensive Examination Preparation Guide

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Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide School Counseling students information to prepare for their Comprehensive Examination. We understand that preparing for this exam can be incredibly difficult and anxiety-provoking. Know that we, as faculty, have the utmost confidence in you and your abilities. We hope that this guide is helpful and welcome your feedback.

Preparing for the Exam

The best way to prepare for the Comprehensive Exam is to do the following:

1. Remember to practice positive self-care.
2. Read all of your assigned materials in all of your classes.
3. Take all of your assignments seriously.
4. Keep all of your notes from classes.
5. Read this guide thoroughly.
6. Ask questions as you progress through your program.
7. Join a study group.
8. Use the information that you receive in this manual to create study materials.
9. CONTROL your test anxiety.
10. Reinforce your positive study behaviors.

Checklist

Date Completed	Task
	Complete all core courses and two-thirds of all courses on required program.
	Attend Mandatory Comprehensive Examination Preparation Meeting the semester that you will take the Comps.
	Sign up for your Oral Exam.
	Form study groups.
	Study, study, study!
	Take the Comprehensive Exams
	Celebrate!

Practicing Positive Self Care

As you try to fit studying for this exam into your already hectic schedule which balances your personal life, course work, and field experiences, you may find yourself forgetting to take care of yourself. Success on these exams (as well as in your future profession) depends on your ability to balance your many roles, while still making your work of significant import. Consider the following areas and tailor the information to best aid you in caring for yourself.

Physical:

Although every individual is different, good nutrition, adequate rest and moderate exercise are important for your physical and mental health. With a busy schedule, you may find yourself forgetting to eat, eating on the run and generally not paying attention to your body's needs. This is not self care. You must continually remind yourself to pay attention to your body's needs, including when and what you need to eat.

You are likely to experience high levels of stress when studying for this exam. These levels of stress will impact you physically. Stress can cause a variety of physical responses, including headaches, stomachaches, difficulty sleeping and increased blood pressure. In order to manage the stress that you will face, it is imperative that you find healthy coping skills. You will be very tempted to use quick and possibly unhealthy ways to deal with your stress. However, the best way to manage your stress level is to be proactive. By learning relaxation skills, cognitive self-talk, and other strategies that meet your needs (e.g., yoga, meditation, light exercise) you will find that you will not need to use more unhealthy methods of stress management.

Social:

Social support, including your friends and family, are crucial to your success. It is important to create a wide social support system; this will include your peers from your program and your sites. This not only creates a network of future opportunities, it allows you to have positive peer relations which may directly aid in your stress management and success in your program. Graduate students often forget how important their social lives really are. You may find yourself cancelling engagements with friends and family in order to work or to just vegetate on your couch. However tempting cancelling these social activities may be, you need to remind yourself that your social life is as important as your academic life. Balancing your social needs with the rest of your life is an important life skill.

Emotional:

High levels of stress not only impact you physically, it will have impacts on you psychologically and emotionally. The above-mentioned stress management techniques will improve your emotional functioning as well. In addition, another proven method of stress management can be utilized to improve your overall quality of life. Using humor and laughter have been shown to yield positive outcomes for individual's physical and mental health. Remember to see the lighter side of things and not take yourself too seriously.

Spiritual:

Nurturing your spirit is a positive way to care for your needs. This can be done in a variety of ways, including using your faith, religious beliefs, spirituality or inner self. Regardless of your specific beliefs, research supports the role of spirit in physical and emotional wellness.

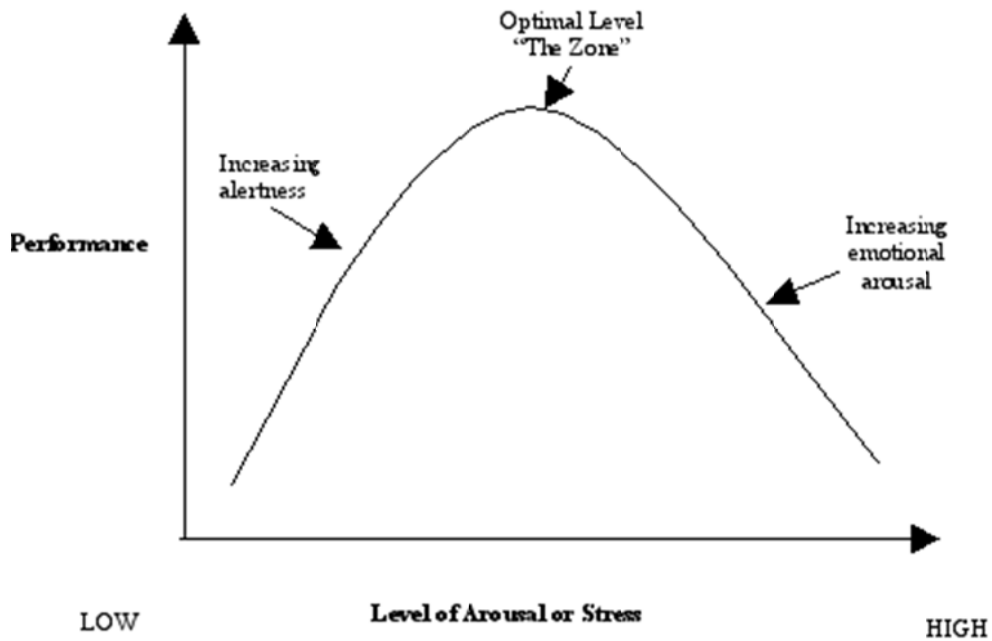
Recreational:

Playing and having fun is not just for children. It is an important aspect of a complete life for individuals at any developmental stage. Remember to allow yourself the time to relax and enjoy life's simple pleasures.

Test Anxiety

Why do we have test anxiety? Most research points to an evolutionary purpose. When you are encountered by a threatening stimuli, you will physiological respond with fight/ flight / or freeze. Unfortunately, these responses do not necessarily hold useful in today's world. Most certainly, they will not help you when you are preparing for you exams.

Some anxiety about tests is normal and even beneficial (inverted "U" curve). A mild to moderate amount of anxiety before and even during a test can help keep you alert, focused, motivated and on your toes! It only becomes a problem when it begins to feel overwhelming and unmanageable.



In understanding your test anxiety, it will be most helpful to know the Cognitive Model of Test Anxiety. The test anxiety functions on the following:

- BELIEFS about how you will perform
- FEELINGS (like anxiety)
- PHYSICAL REACTIONS (like headaches or nausea)
- BEHAVIORS (like “blacking out,” avoiding studying)

The following are some not helpful anxiety-provoking thoughts about tests.

1. If I don't do well on this test/paper, I will certainly flunk the class.
2. If I don't do well on this test/paper, people (family, friends, the professor) will think less of me.
3. If I don't do well on this test/paper, I will feel extremely miserable.
4. If I don't do well on this test/paper, it means I am “dumb & stupid”.
5. Other people are doing much better than I am. No one else is having trouble. I am alone.
6. If I don't do well on this test/paper, I won't do well on future tests/papers.
7. Because I've done well in the past, I have to do well.
8. Because I am interested in this material, I have to do well.
9. Because lots of people expect me to do well, I have to do well.
10. I must know all the material in order to get an “A”.
11. Success is defined by my grades.
12. In order to feel worthwhile, I need to be competent, intelligent and successful.
13. In order to be liked or loved, I need to be competent, intelligent and successful.
14. If I can't answer the first question, I will probably fail the test.
15. If I can't concentrate well as I study, I will probably fail the test.

Follow this four-step model to reducing your test anxiety:

Step One: Identify

Identify your typical thought patterns that may be feeding into your anxiety. Write them down. Later, when you notice yourself feeling anxious, write down what thoughts you are having.

Step Two: Evaluate

Are the thoughts correct? Examine each one objectively.

Step Three: Respond

For each thought, what would be a better (more useful) thought about an exam or studying? For example:

- I've done well before on tests. I can do well on this one, too.
- I'll put in a good effort.
- All I can do is try my best.

Write down your responses to each thought you identified before.

Step Four: Relax

Because our bodies physically feel the stress of our initial unhelpful thoughts, we can directly change this by using various techniques to relax.

- Take slow deep breaths from your abdomen. Four seconds in. Hold for four. Six seconds out. Pause briefly. Think of breathing in relaxation and say "relax" to yourself. Say "calm" as you exhale.
- Tense and relax muscles. Tense various muscle groups for five seconds. Then relax. Do this throughout your body.
- Investigate other ways to relax, such as learning and practicing meditation, buying a relaxation tape, playing soothing music, etc.

Last Notes

One final point: this may seem obvious, but it is important to make sure that your anxiety is not due to poor preparation for tests. If you do not understand the course material, or have not been studying enough or going to class and have not been adequately learning the information all along, your anxiety may be due to the fact that you are unprepared. If that is the case, the anxiety is alerting you that something is wrong, so rather than simply attempting to manage or calm the anxiety, you may benefit from learning more effective time management or study skills, or from tutoring or extra help.

What Students Need to Know About the School Counseling Comprehensive Exam

When and Where?

The School Counseling Comprehensive Exam will be given on Friday, November 19th, 2010 in Davis Hall, Room 118. The exam will be given in two parts. The written exam will begin at 9:00 a.m. and will end at 1:00 p.m. Students will be asked to sign up for a specific time slot to meet with one of the School Counseling Faculty the week before the written exam. The oral exam will take approximately 45 minutes.

What is the Exam?

You will be asked to answer three questions during the written portion of the exam. The questions will integrate information from your studies including: multicultural issues, group process, counseling theory, the comprehensive school counseling program model, program evaluation, research and ethical issues. **It is expected that you will be able to cite major references from your studies to substantiate and document your ideas as you write the exam. You will lose credit for failure to cite references.**

The oral exam will require the application of these topic areas to a specific case scenario with a focus on counseling theory, intervention techniques and assessment. A part of the oral exam will be a role play of the counseling scenario with a faculty member so that the faculty member can assess the theoretical foundations of the session, as well as observe and assess the application of theory in practice.

What Should You Bring?

Bring yourself! All other materials (pens, paper, computer disks) will be provided. Also, please bring drinks and lunch/snacks as there will be no food provided. This is important as you will be at the University for most of the day and will need to keep your energy up.

What Should You Do Now?

The CSP faculty strongly recommend that you form study groups to prepare for this exam. The exam tests material that you have learned and reviewed many times in numerous courses throughout your program of study. It is not new or surprising information. Still, consistent review with student colleagues in discussion, written and role play format will greatly add to your success.

Sample Comprehensive Written Examination Instructions

Welcome to the School Counseling Comprehensive Examination. The following are a few instructions and details for the exam.

1. Breathe and relax. You have all the information you need to pass the exam. Take a deep breath, think about your answer, outline it and answer all parts of the question.
2. The examination will begin at 9:00 a.m. and will conclude at 1:00 p.m. At 1:00 p.m., when time is called you must stop typing and cease any software tools (i.e., spell check) on the computer. At that time you will print your final responses.
3. Accompanying these instructions is a formatted computer disk for your use in saving your examination responses. **DO NOT USE A DISK OF YOUR OWN.** Please **SAVE OFTEN** to avoid losing any material should the computer system fail.
4. You have been provided a packet of **two exam questions**; and you must answer both. They are designated as the comprehensive school counseling question and the group question. Be sure to answer all parts of the question. **You will write for no longer than 2 hours on each question.**
5. On the outside of your packet is an identification number. **Please make a header on your file which includes your ID number and page numbers** in case pages become separated. **Do not include your name anywhere** as the questions will be blind reviewed.
6. Please **label and start each question on a new page** so that no two questions are on the same page when printed. Please separate the questions like this: Part I and II of Question 1, Question 2, and Question 3. Again, you will have three separations in your document.
7. You may use spelling or grammar check during the exam. However, do not access any other files or software (including the internet) on the computer. Failure to comply with these instructions may result in confiscation of your exam and a failing grade.
8. When time is called, print your responses and put the pages, the disk and any scrap paper into your ID envelope. Give this envelope to the faculty member proctoring the exam.
9. You WILL be successful; we have faith in you, in your knowledge and in your abilities. Now breathe, smile and begin...

Highlights

- Come at 8:30 a.m.
- Sign in sheet and number packets
- Two written exam questions
- Set up computer with Headers
- Label and start each on a new page; Question 1 (sections I & II), Question 2, Question 3
- Spell check and grammar check is allowed
- End at 1 p.m.

Tips

- Answer the question asked – resist the urge to tell us everything you know about the topic
- Answer all parts of the exam
- Label each section of the exam and each part within that section
- Be sure to cite your sources often & correctly
- Save often – in case of computer failure do not turn off computer – call the lab assistant immediately
- You have 4 hours to complete the exam
- Plan to use 2 hours for each question
- Stick to this schedule
- Writing more than this amount is not necessary

Sample Comprehensive Oral Examination Instructions

Welcome to the School Counseling Oral Comprehensive Examination. The following are a few instructions and details for the exam.

1. Breathe and relax. You have all the information you need to pass the exam. Take a deep breath, think about your answer, outline it and answer all parts of the question.
2. The oral examination will take 45 minutes to complete.
3. You have been provided with a case scenario of a student in elementary, middle or high school. There are a number of questions at the end of the scenario that you will need to address. Please read the case carefully. Outline your responses to the question at the end of the case using the white board and the markers provided. You will have 15 minutes for this section of the exam.
4. After the 15 minutes, the faculty will role play this case scenario with you. The faculty will play the role of the client and you will be the school counselor working with this student in the school setting described. This section of the examination will take 15 minutes.
5. When you have completed the role play, you will debrief the faculty member about the case using the outline provided on the white board. This will take 15 minutes.
6. When you have completed the Oral section of the exam please return to the computer lab and continue with the written section of the exam.
7. You WILL be successful; we have faith in you, in your knowledge and in your abilities. Now breath, smile and begin...

Highlights

- Come in for individual appointments
- You will be handed a scenario
- You will be given 15 minutes to outline your theoretical orientation and case conceptualization
- Faculty will rejoin you and you will hold a mock counseling session
- Faculty will eventually stop the mock session and ask you to explain what you have on the board

Written Questions

Question 1: Comprehensive Program

Please be sure to answer ALL parts of this question. Remember to cite your sources.

Part I:

1. Briefly discuss the philosophy of a Comprehensive School Counseling Program. Identify and explain the basic domains and components of such a program.
2. Choosing any one of the following populations, develop an outline of a Comprehensive School Counseling Program that addresses the problems exemplified by that population.

Population (there will only be one on the exam):

- Students with social skill deficits (identify school level)
- Student experiencing grief and loss (identify school level)
- Students of alcoholic parents (identify school level)
- Students who have bullying behavior (identify school level)

In your outline:

- A. Identify the specific presenting issues / needs of this population,
- B. Identifying the underlying issues specific to this population
- C. Identify direct and indirect strategies / interventions you will use including the domains and components in which they are embedded.

Part II:

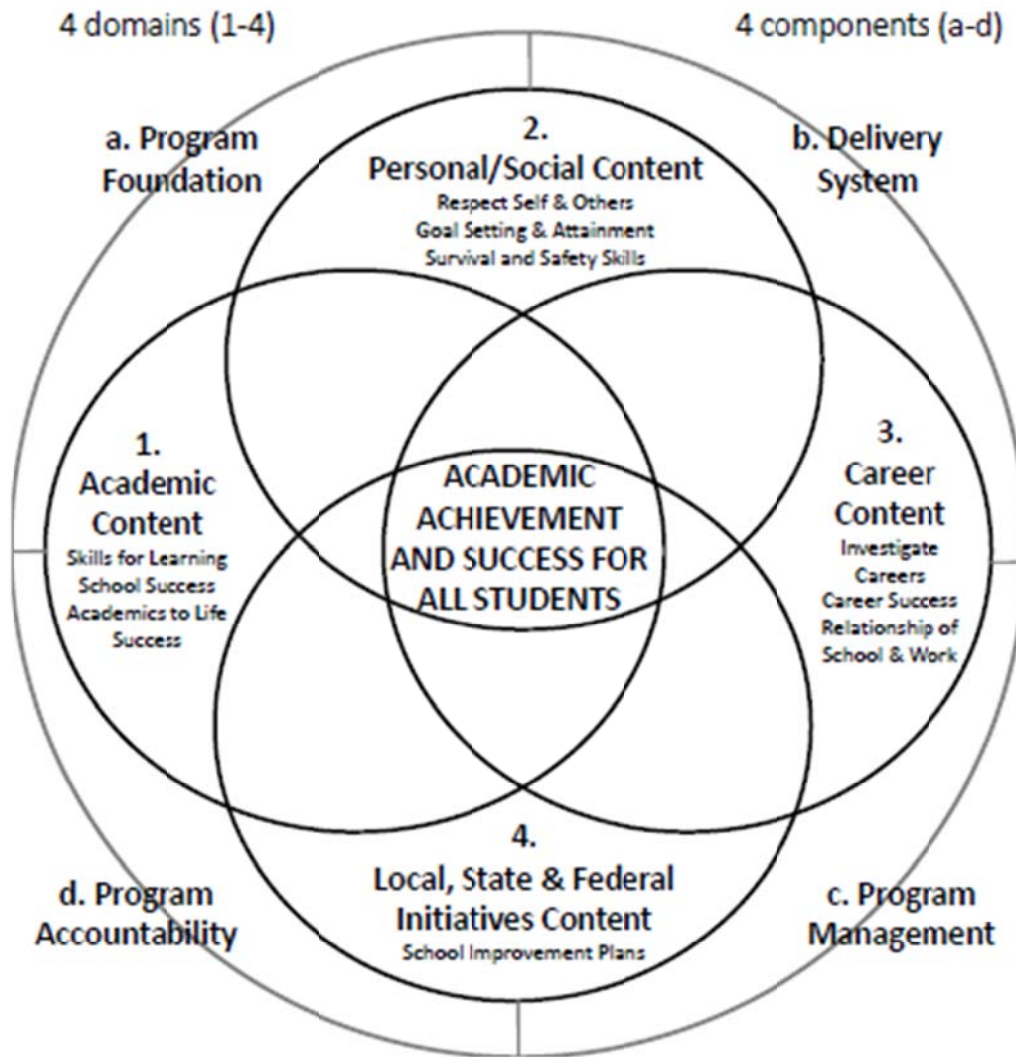
1. Anticipate and identify at least 2 legal and at least 2 ethical issues that may arise in providing services for this population. Briefly discuss guidelines and procedures that will be used in your program to address each of these identified issues.

Comprehensive Exam Grading Rubric: Question 1

Requirements	Possible Points	Points Earned	Comments
<p style="text-align: center;">Part I: 56 points</p> <p>1. 20 points total</p> <p>Philosophy = (6 points) Being able to define the philosophy as developmental in nature and designed to meet the needs of all students. It is proactive and has both scope and sequence</p> <p>Curriculum = 2 points each (6 points) Personal/Social, Academic and Career</p> <p>Components = 2 points each (8 points) Structure and Operation of a Comprehensive Program: Program foundation, delivery system, program accountability, and program management</p> <p>ID presenting needs of population = 3 points each (9 points)</p> <p>Underlying needs = 3 points each (9 points)</p> <p>Strategies and Interventions = 4 points each (12 points)</p> <p>Delivery System and Strategies are embedded in 2 points each (6 points total)</p>	56		
<p style="text-align: center;">Part II: 14 points</p> <p>1. 8 points total</p> <p>Legal and ethical issues = (8 points total)</p> <p>2. 6 points total</p> <p>Procedures to address issues = (6 points total)</p>	14		
Citation of sources throughout answer = 4 points	4		
TOTAL	74		

Study Help for Question 1

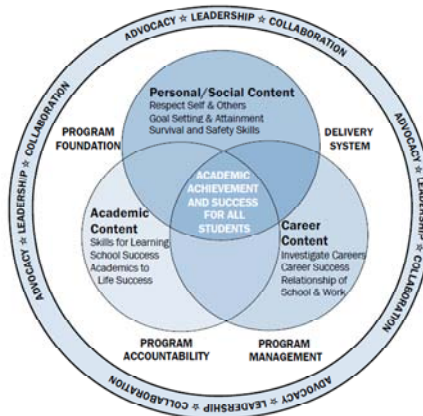
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE CONNECTICUT SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM



COMP QUESTION: COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL COUNSELING

- Dr. De Barbieri

CONNECTICUT MODEL COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM



CORE PHILOSOPHY OF A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM

Be able to identify and explain:

1. Program Foundation
2. Delivery System
3. Program Management
4. Program Accountability

1. PROGRAM FOUNDATION

- Philosophy and Mission Statement
- Goals: academic, career, and personal/social
- Policies and procedures
- Competencies
- Policies and procedures



2. DELIVERY SYSTEM

Further elaboration to follow:

- Curriculum
- Individual student planning
- Responsive services
- Collaboration within and outside the school community



3. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

- Program evaluation
- School counselor role and evaluation
- Supervision of the school counselor
- Time management
- Advisory committee
- Professional development
- Ethical standards
- Facilities/budget



4. PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY

- Accounting for the development and implementation of the schools comprehensive program, maintaining the program, assessing and addressing student needs, assessing client satisfaction, and connecting the school counseling program to school improvement plans
- NCLB



PROGRAM COMPONENTS (DELIVERY SYSTEM)

- The School Counseling Curriculum
- Individual Student Planning
- Responsive Services
- Collaboration Within and Outside the School Community



SCHOOL COUNSELING CURRICULUM


- Planned and personalized
- Ongoing and systematic
- Scope and sequence
- Outlines goals and competencies
- Methods and timeline

Domains to follow:




SCHOOL COUNSELING CURRICULUM

Academic Domain:

- School success
 - Academic performance
 - Attendance
 - Grading
 - Academic ability
 - Skills for learning
 - Academic to life success
- 


SCHOOL COUNSELING CURRICULUM

Career Domain:


- Career success
 - Investigation of careers
 - Post high school options & planning
 - Knowledge of personal interests & abilities
 - Interconnection of interests & abilities to the world of work
 - Relationship between school & career options
 - General knowledge of career options
- 

SCHOOL COUNSELING CURRICULUM


Personal / Social Domain:

- Respect for self & others
 - Social emotional skill development
 - Self esteem
 - Communication
 - Goal setting & attainment
 - Survival & safety skills
 - Relationship skills
- 


INDIVIDUAL STUDENT PLANNING

- Ongoing systematic activities and services to help all students in developing and monitoring and evaluating their own academic, personal and career goals.
 - Beginning in middle school and progressing through high school
 - Individual planning portfolio
- 

RESPONSIVE SERVICES

- Individual and group counseling
 - Prevention and intervention
 - Consultation
 - Collaboration
- 

COLLABORATION WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

- Collaboration with community
 - Work with teachers, administration, and parents
 - Professional development to staff
 - Leadership/ district wide initiatives
 - Publication/distribution of program
 - Comprehensive program as mean of connecting to community
- 

POPULATION

- Middle School Students: Difficulties with Academic Motivation, Study & Organizational Skill Development and in Danger of Failing or Repeating a Class or Grade




PRESENTING PROBLEM [NEEDS OF THESE STUDENTS]?


- Poor study habits
- Disorganization
- Procrastination/avoids completion of tasks
- Gives up easily
- Difficulty paying attention or focusing




UNDERLYING ISSUES [RATIONALE]

- Difference between ability & performance
 - Low self esteem
 - Family instability
 - Value system does not place high priority on academic performance
 - Learning disabilities/ difficulties
- 


STRATEGIES & INTERVENTIONS

- Information gathering
 - Collaboration with other school personnel
 - Parent support group
 - Group counseling [homework club, study group, stress management group, self esteem enhancement group.
- 

STRATEGIES, CONT.

- Behavior plan
 - Individual counseling for support
 - Functional analysis to define learning & behavior patterns & analyze probable causes for underachievement
 - Positive asset search
 - Referral to PPT or 504 planned intervention
- 

STRATEGIES, CONT.

- Tutoring [mentoring, buddy system]
 - Study planner & organizer
 - Remediation for deficient skill development
 - Parent monitoring for homework assignments
 - Developmental Guidance lessons on: relaxation techniques; study skills; test taking strategies; learning styles etc.
- 

DOMAINS & COMPONENTS FOR INTERVENTIONS

Intervention	Domain	Component
Developmental Guidance Lessons on: test taking strategies & learning styles	Academic [Skills for learning & school success]	Delivery Systems: Curriculum – developmental lessons
weekly group counseling for academic support	Academic [Skills for learning & school success]	Delivery Systems: Responsive Services - Group Counseling
Individual Counseling for enhancement of self esteem	Personal / Social [Respect for self & others]	Delivery Systems: Individual Counseling
Bibliotherapy focused on academic/career link	Career [Relationship between school & work]	Delivery Systems: Individual Planning

Question 2: Research

1. How will you evaluate the effectiveness of the program you listed in your answer to Question 1?
 - A. Discuss what type of research design you will use to test the effectiveness of the interventions you choose.
 - B. Be specific in discussing how you will identify and assign participants for the study.
 - C. Be sure to discuss what measures, procedures and analyses you will use to evaluate effectiveness.
 - D. What possible problems would you anticipate in regards to reliability and validity threats using the research design you identified and how could you try to minimize these threats?
 - E. How would you distribute the results of your program evaluation?

Comprehensive Exam Grading Rubric: Question 2

Requirements	Possible Points	Points Earned	Comments
Question 2: 24 points			
<p>1. 2 points total</p> <p>Identifying Research Design = 1 point</p> <p>Accurately Describing Design = 1 point</p> <p>2. 2 points total</p> <p>Describing how participants will be identified specific to design = 1 point</p> <p>Describing how participants will be assigned to groups, specific to design = 1 point</p> <p>3. 10 points total</p> <p>Describing appropriate measures (face validity, appropriateness, norming, reliability and validity) = 5 points</p> <p>Describing procedure in detail = 5 points</p> <p>4. 5 points total</p> <p>Identifying threats by name and describing adequately = 3 points</p> <p>Minimizing threats = 1 point</p> <p>5. 5 points total</p> <p>How to distribute information and results (MEASURE) = 5 points</p>	24		
Citation of sources throughout answer = 6 points	6		
TOTAL	100		

Study Help for Question 2

COMP QUESTION: RESEARCH & PROGRAM EVALUATION

- Dr. Ginicola



No Freaking Out

WHY DO PROGRAM EVALUATION?

- To help you understand what is working and what doesn't
- To be accountable
- As a way to support your programs
- To help make effective change
- To help 'unblock' your way from making positive changes in your schools

FIRST STEP: IDENTIFY THE GOAL OF THE RESEARCH

- Ask yourself:
 - What is your intervention designed to do?
 - Increase Academics
 - Increase Social Skills
 - Decrease Problem Behaviors



SECOND STEP: IDENTIFY THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE

- What you are measuring
 - Grades
 - Social Competence
 - Problem Behaviors
- Identify a good measure
 - Survey
 - Mental Measures Yearbook
 - Reliability & Validity



THIRD STEP: IDENTIFY THE DESIGN & IV

- Program Evaluation
 - Pre-Test / Post-test
 - IV: Timing of Measure
 - Before Intervention
 - After Intervention
 - Comparison Design
 - IV: Intervention
 - Received Intervention
 - Did not Receive Intervention



LET'S REVIEW!!

- Question: How will you evaluate a group counseling intervention for shy children?
- Answer 1: Pre-test / Post-test design
 - IV – timing of intervention
 - 2 Levels: Before, After
 - DV – social skills measure
- Answer 2: Comparison Design
 - IV – intervention
 - 2 Levels: Intervention, No Intervention
 - DV – social skills measure



FOURTH STEP: IDENTIFY PROCEDURE

- From beginning to end, describe how you would do this research:
 - Example – Pre-test / Post-test
 - Obtain informed consent
 - Gather all pre-intervention data and give all children the social skills measure
 - Provide 12 weeks of group
 - Collect all post-intervention data and give all children the social skills measure again



FIFTH STEP: RUN STATISTICAL TEST

- For Pre-test/Post-test:
Related t-test
- For Comparison Group:
Independent t-test



SIXTH STEP: IDENTIFY POSSIBLE RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY PROBLEMS

- Specific to Your Study
 - Measure Reliability Issues
 - Mortality
 - Location
 - Researcher Bias
 - Attitude (Hawthorne)



STEP SIX CONTINUED...

- Inherent to Your Design
 - For Pre-test/Post-test:
 - Maturation, Testing
 - For Comparison Group
 - History



STEP SEVEN: DISSEMINATE INFORMATION (MEASURE)

- Accountability
- School Staff
- Parents
- Conferences



Question 3: Group Process

Please be sure to answer ALL parts of this question. Remember to cite your sources.

It was determined by the Student Assistance Team (SAT) in a school (middle or high – choose one) that there was a need to form a counseling group to address a potentially troubling problem in the school. It was determined that many students were displaying signs of stress related to their inability to adjust to the social and academic demands of the school. In fact there appeared to be an increase in the incidents of verbal and physical confrontations among students and an escalation of threats to students' physical safety targeted at particular students who seem not to be fitting in to the peer group culture well and who at the same time were not doing well in school. The perpetrators of the threats seem also to be not doing well in school but are among the most popular students in the school. The school administration is concerned that this is a potentially dangerous situation that may have the makings of a Columbine-type violent eruption. As the school counselor, you are asked to design and start groups to help address this concern.


1. While you are provided with an array of presenting problems within this population, what do you as a counselor feel are the underlying issues among your identified children? (10 points)
2. What theoretical approach will you use and what is your rationale for choosing it? Explain how you will utilize this approach in your work within the school setting. (10 points)
3. As group leader, you are responsible for obtaining informed consent from group members. Please explain how you will do this. What disclosures must you make before and during the initial stages of the group process? (10 points)
4. Briefly define the expected stages of the group and describe indicators of each stage. (10 points)
5. What would the goals of this group be? What positive outcomes or changes would you as a leader like to see among group members? (10 points)
6. How would you choose the members of the group? What characteristics would you control for? What other school personnel would you include in this process? (10 points)
7. What are the logistics in planning this group? (10 points)
8. Name five specific group leadership skills that you will employ to facilitate the group process and the rationale for each. (10 points)
9. How will you evaluate the success of the group? (10 points)
10. What are the benefits and risks associated with school-based counseling groups? (10 points)

Study Help for Question 3

COMP QUESTION: GROUP QUESTION

- Dr. Generali
- 

POSSIBLE SCENARIOS


- Divorce
 - Anger management
 - Social skills training
 - Bullying
 - Social isolation
 - Identity Issues
 - Stress management
 - Bereavement
- 

QUESTION #1

You have been presented with an identified problem, what do you see as the underlying issues?

Example:

Parental Divorce


- Guilt
 - Anger
 - Fear
 - Loss
 - Confusion
 - Loneliness
- 

QUESTION #2

What theoretical approach will you use and what is your rationale for choosing it?
Explain how you will utilize this approach in your work within the school setting.

Example:

Cognitive Behavioral Approach

- Easily understood principles
 - Groups tend to be short term
 - Help members to deal with what they can't change and what they can
 - Empirically-validated techniques
- 

QUESTION #3

As group leader, you are responsible for obtaining informed consent from group members. Please explain how you will do this. What disclosures must you make before and during the initial stages of the group process?

- Some information before joining group:
Purpose of group, qualification of leader, risks involved, confidentiality and exceptions to confidentiality
- Some information during the group:
what is expected of them, any research within the group, opportunities to discuss feelings about group, exceptions to confidentiality



QUESTION #4

Briefly define the expected stages of the group and describe indicators of each stage.


- Stage 1: pre-group issues-formation of group
- Stage 2: initial stage-orientation and exploration
- Stage 3: transition stage-dealing with resistance
- Stage 4: working stage-cohesion and productivity
- Stage 5: final stage- consolidation and termination



QUESTION #5

What would the goals of this group be? What positive outcomes or changes would you as a leader like to see among group members?


Example:

- To increase self-awareness
 - To recognize the commonality of problems
 - To learn how to express emotions
 - To become aware of one's choices
 - To become more sensitive to the needs and feelings of others
- 

QUESTION #6


How will you choose members for your group? What characteristics would you control for? What other school personnel might you involve in this process?

Survey students, interview students, survey teachers...

- Interest and understanding of group
 - Needs and goals are compatible with other members
 - No risk of harm to other members
 - Those who are impaired, suicidal, sociopathic, in a state of crisis, or psychotic should not be included
- 

QUESTION #7

What are the logistics in planning this group?


- Meeting time and place
 - Open vs. closed group
 - Voluntary vs. involuntary membership
 - Homogeneous vs. heterogeneous membership
 - Group size
 - Frequency and duration of meetings
 - Short term or long term groups
- 

QUESTION #8

Name five specific group leadership skills that you will employ to facilitate the group process and the rationale for each.

Examples:

Active listening, restating, clarifying, summarizing, reflecting feeling, supporting, suggesting, protecting, linking, blocking



QUESTION #9

How will you evaluate the success of the group?

Rating scale-how they experienced group

Standardized instrument-individual changes in attitude and/or values

Reflective writing

Questionnaire-evaluate techniques, leader qualities, changes in self, the impact group had on them



QUESTION #10

What are the benefits and risks of school-based counseling groups?

Risk:

- Breach of confidentiality risk
- Risk of harm from other members: ganging up on a member, harsh criticism

Benefits:

- Recognize commonality of members' needs and problems and develop connectedness
- Learn alternative ways of dealing with normal issues



Comprehensive Exam Grading Rubric: Question 3

Requirements	Possible Points	Points Earned	Comments
1	10		
2	10		
3	10		
4	10		
5	10		
6	10		
7	10		
8	10		
9	10		
10	10		
TOTAL	100		

Oral Question

Oral Sample Question

Anna is a high school junior in an alcoholic family. She is trying to do well in school, but the chaos of her family life often makes completing her school assignments at home impossible. Anna is very anxious and afraid she will fail and “never amount to anything”. In spite of this intense fear, Anna manages to earn grades in the B to A range, but this doesn’t seem to comfort her, as she is still anxious that she will eventually fail.

Anna doesn’t think anyone can help her and sees no way out of her situation. Her homeroom teacher referred her to you as the school counselor.

1. Outline and discuss in detail the issues involved in this case. Identify the issues and give the behavior or conditions, in other words the rationale, to support your concerns.
2. Discuss in detail your theoretic approach, rationale and goals in counseling this student.
3. List some of the strategies and techniques you would use in working with this student.
4. Discuss any cultural or ethical issues involved in counseling this student.

Oral Examination Rubric

Candidates are evaluated on a ten point scale with 10 being the highest score for each indicator and 1 being the lowest. A candidate may receive a total of 60 points. A passing score is 48 points; candidates must receive a passing score on each part to have successfully completed the Oral Examination.

General Counseling Knowledge and Competence

Candidate Demonstrates:

- | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Ability to analyze counseling situations well | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 2. Adequate understanding of content material and concepts | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 3. Ability to apply theories and concepts to situation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 4. Understanding of multicultural issues and culturally sensitive approaches | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 5. Ability to select effective intervention approaches | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 6. Understanding of ethical and legal principles | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

TOTAL

NOTE: 10 = A+; 9 = A; 8 = B; 7 = C; 6 = D; <6 = F

Study Help for Oral Exam

CONCEPTUALIZE

Using all you know about development, age, gender and culture, you must conceptualize a client in order to:

1. Understand how the client makes sense of the world
2. Identify the client's specific needs, presenting problems and underlying issues.
3. Identifying goals for client
4. Select a treatment which matches client and needs
5. Evaluating effectiveness of treatment
6. Help the client to achieve their goals and further their development in specific areas
7. Prepare client to prevent further problems / relapse

DESCRIBE COUNSELING THEORY OF YOUR CHOICE

Practice Questions

PRACTICE: Question 1: Comprehensive School Counseling

Please be sure to answer ALL parts of this question. Remember to cite your sources.

Part I:

1. Briefly discuss the philosophy of a Comprehensive School Counseling Program. Identify and explain the basic domains and components of such a program.
2. Choosing any one of the following populations, develop an outline of a Comprehensive School Counseling Program that addresses the problems exemplified by that population.

Population (there will only be one on the exam):

- Transfer students into your school (identify school level)
- Children experiencing divorce (identify school level)
- Children experiencing grief and loss because of a death of a classmate (identify school level)
- Children who have ADHD (identify school level)
- Homeless families (identify school level)
- Students new to your school who have immigrated from a variety of other countries and cultures (identify school level)
- Children who are depressed and anxious (identify school level)

In your outline:

- A. Identify the specific presenting issues / needs of this population,
- B. Identifying the underlying issues specific to this population
- C. Identify direct and indirect strategies / interventions you will use including the domains and components in which they are embedded.

Part II:

1. Anticipate and identify at least 2 legal and at least 2 ethical issues that may arise in providing services for this population. Briefly discuss guidelines and procedures that will be used in your program to address each of these identified issues.

PRACTICE: Question 2: Comprehensive School Counseling

1. How will you evaluate the effectiveness of the program you listed in your answer to Question 1?
 - A. Discuss what type of research design you will use to test the effectiveness of the interventions you choose.
 - B. Be specific in discussing how you will identify and assign participants for the study.
 - C. Be sure to discuss what measures, procedures and analyses you will use to evaluate effectiveness.
 - D. What possible problems would you anticipate in regards to reliability and validity threats using the research design you identified and how could you try to minimize these threats?
 - E. How would you distribute the results of your program evaluation?

PRACTICE: Question 3: Group Process

Please be sure to answer ALL parts of this question. Remember to cite your sources.

Some of the staff in your school has noticed that due to the incoming immigrant families, the culture of the school is starting to change. Unfortunately, they have noticed some less than tolerant behavior from the middle-class white students. She is asking you for advice on what to do to help create an atmosphere of tolerance. As the school counselor, you are asked to design and start groups to help address this concern.

1. While you are provided with an array of presenting problems within this population, what do you as a counselor feel are the underlying issues among your identified children? (10 points)
2. What theoretical approach will you use and what is your rationale for choosing it? Explain how you will utilize this approach in your work within the school setting. (10 points)
3. As group leader, you are responsible for obtaining informed consent from group members. Please explain how you will do this. What disclosures must you make before and during the initial stages of the group process? (10 points)
4. Briefly define the expected stages of the group and describe indicators of each stage. (10 points)
5. What would the goals of this group be? What positive outcomes or changes would you as a leader like to see among group members? (10 points)
6. How would you choose the members of the group? What characteristics would you control for? What other school personnel would you include in this process? (10 points)
7. What are the logistics in planning this group? (10 points)
8. Name five specific group leadership skills that you will employ to facilitate the group process and the rationale for each. (10 points)
9. How will you evaluate the success of the group? (10 points)
10. What are the benefits and risks associated with school-based counseling groups? (10 points)

PRACTICE: Oral Examination

Carl, an 8-year-old African-American boy, was sent to see you by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Williams, because of their concern that he is becoming more and more defiant. In school, he also has been known to refuse to sit in his seat in class, bully other students and talk back to his teachers. His mother is a local schoolteacher in your district and his father is a successful businessman in town. He was recently expelled from a private school because of these behavioral problems.

1. Outline and discuss in detail the issues involved in this case. Identify the issues and give the behavior or conditions, in other words the rationale, to support your concerns.
2. Discuss in detail your theoretic approach, rationale and goals in counseling this student.
3. List some of the strategies and techniques you would use in working with this student.
4. Discuss any cultural or ethical issues involved in counseling this student.

PRACTICE: Oral Examination

Marisa is 10 years of age. She emigrated from Puerto Rico last year when she was 9 years old with her mother and father. Recently, Marisa's father died in an automobile accident. As Marisa's counselor, you have been asked to see Marisa in counseling. The school staff is concerned that Marisa, who seemed to perform well and on grade level in Puerto Rico, has been failing all of her classes at her new school. The team reported that she seems distracted, disengaged and often appears to be 'depressed'. She has in fact, expressed to her teacher on more than one occasion that she feels very sad and wants to return to Puerto Rico. She has few friends and does not socialize much with anyone. Marisa's English is good. She studied English in Puerto Rico and received high grades in English at her previous school. Yet, she prefers to communicate in Spanish and does not seem comfortable writing or taking exams in English.

1. Outline and discuss in detail the issues involved in this case. Identify the issues and give the behavior or conditions, in other words the rationale, to support your concerns.
2. Discuss in detail your theoretic approach, rationale and goals in counseling this student.
3. List some of the strategies and techniques you would use in working with this student.
4. Discuss any cultural or ethical issues involved in counseling this student.

PRACTICE: Oral Examination

Natasha, age 13, is from Lithuania. Her mother was divorced from her biological father when Natasha was 7, after enduring years of domestic violence. Natasha came to the USA in the last year when her mother met and married an American man who brought them to the US. An older, 22 year old brother, from the mother's previous marriage, stayed in Lithuania. Natasha misses her brother and carries a picture of him with her. She has had no contact with her father in several years but says that she is scared that he will follow her to the US. Here in Connecticut, Natasha now lives with her mother, step-father and an older step-brother who does not pay any attention to her.

Natasha is of average height and is slightly overweight. Her straight hair is often stringy and greasy and she has dandruff. She tends to wear the same clothes everyday, usually a Christmas sweatshirt, dirty black jeans and black heavy boots. Students frequently complain to the school counselor about her body odor. Natasha had been in the US for 2 months when she entered 7th grade in this small, rural middle school with virtually no ethnic, racial or religious diversity. Natasha's English is severely limited. She has a fair grasp of written English, having studied it in Lithuania, but her receptive and spoken language is almost non-existent. Natasha's mother's English is even more limited.

1. Outline and discuss in detail the issues involved in this case. Identify the issues and give the behavior or conditions, in other words the rationale, to support your concerns.
2. Discuss in detail your theoretic approach, rationale and goals in counseling this student.
3. List some of the strategies and techniques you would use in working with this student.
4. Discuss any cultural or ethical issues involved in counseling this student.

PRACTICE: Oral Examination

Stanley, a 17-year-old gay male, is a senior in Middleville High School. His English Teacher, Mrs. Morgan, has referred him to you. Mrs. Morgan is concerned because Stanley seems listless in class, is absent often and seems 'painfully' thin. Mrs. Morgan has noticed that Stanley seems to have no friends and is a 'loner'. She has taken it upon herself to meet Stanley for lunch in the school cafeteria 'to discuss an assignment' and noticed that though Stanley ordered a turkey sandwich and a salad, he ate very little of it by the time he removed the bread crusts, examined and picked at the turkey, and removed the tomatoes and carrots from the salad.

Stanley has written about his body dissatisfaction and fears of 'getting fat' in a number of his class essays. Mrs. Morgan is very concerned about Stanley's health and has no idea what to do next other than make a referral to the school counselor.

1. Outline and discuss in detail the issues involved in this case. Identify the issues and give the behavior or conditions, in other words the rationale, to support your concerns.
2. Discuss in detail your theoretic approach, rationale and goals in counseling this student.
3. List some of the strategies and techniques you would use in working with this student.
4. Discuss any cultural or ethical issues involved in counseling this student.

Final Words...

With the correct preparation, we know that you will be prepared to do well on these exams. Paying close attention to your classes, your requirements in your program, all learning experiences and caring for yourself and your anxiety level will ensure that you have a satisfactory result on the Comprehensive Exam. We hope that this guide will help you in your journey. Please provide Dr. Ginicola (ginicolam2@southernct.edu) with any comments that you may have about this guide.



School Counseling Comprehensive Examination Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: Home: _____ Work: _____ Cel: _____

1. Please check off the courses you have completed to date and circle the courses you are currently taking.

- _____ CSP 540 – Understanding Psychological Testing and Evaluation
- _____ CSP 550 – Counseling Procedures
- _____ CSP 555 – Interpersonal Group Dynamics
- _____ CSP 568 – Counseling and Life Span Development
- _____ CSP 569 – Theories of Counseling
- _____ CSP 570 – Principles and Organization of School Counseling Services
- _____ CSP 572 – Psychology of Career Development
- _____ CSP 573 – Counseling Students for College & University Education
- _____ CSP 578 – Counseling and Assessment of Culturally Diverse Populations
- _____ CSP 605 – Introduction to Family Counseling
- _____ CSP 606 – Counseling Procedures with Children
- _____ CSP 656 – Group Counseling
- _____ CSP 691 – Research and Evaluation in Schools and Community Agencies
- _____ CSP 552 – Individual Practicum Supervision
- _____ CSP 553 – Counseling Practicum Seminar
- _____ CSP 675 – Counseling Internship I
- _____ CSP 676 – Counseling Internship II

2. Please print out an unofficial transcript and return this form a.s.a.p. to the Comprehensive Examination Coordinator.
3. As per the graduate catalogue, the Comprehensive Examination in the major field of study is set by the graduate program concerned and may be scheduled any time after at least two-thirds of the planned program has been completed and be in at least the first semester of internship. A candidate who fails the comprehensive examination may petition the graduate program advisor for a second examination if there are extenuating circumstances. If the petition is not granted, the student will be dismissed from the program and excluded from further candidacy (p.25-26).

_____ Applicant's Signature

_____ Comprehensive Examination Coordinator

_____ School Counseling Program Coordinator