

## SELF STUDY

Counseling and Personal Growth Center  
Moorhead State University  
Moorhead, Minnesota

October, 1985

### MISSION

The purpose of the programs and services offered through the Counseling and Personal Growth Center is to enable students to obtain the maximum personal benefit from their educational experience at Moorhead State University. Further, through services provided by the Center, it is anticipated that students will be helped to grow into whole, self-responsible persons.

Specific Center programs are designed to assist students in developing skills so that they will be able to 1) make meaningful career and life decisions, 2) develop interpersonal communication skills, 3) form meaningful, satisfying relationships, and 4) develop strong academic skills. Programs and services are drawn from the following broad goal statements.

1. To promote the growth and development of the student in areas of his/her life (academic, emotional, vocational, personal/social).
2. To offer prevention and remediation services in both academic and personal/social areas.
3. To be aware of and offer support to special sub-populations (e.g., women, racial and ethnic minorities, disabled, chemically dependent persons, and older-than-average students).
4. To function as a resource and consultant to non-student members of the campus community and to the Fargo-Moorhead area.
5. To provide avenues for counseling center staff development, - both personal and professional.

### OBJECTIVES

Within the broad framework of the mission and scope statement, the staff members of the Counseling and Personal Growth Center have established the following operational objectives:

- I. In order for students to learn life coping skills, Counseling Center will provide:

- a. One-to-one counseling (career, educational and personal)
- b. A weekend on-call roster for mental health emergencies.
- c. Evening hours two nights a week.
- d. At least three "Life-Coping Skills" courses per quarter (Ed. 101-108) during the academic year.

and as a result, students will demonstrate their learning of of these skills by:

- a. Identifying and implementing goals as established in one-to-one counseling.
- b. Completing all assignments given in appropriate "Life-Coping Skills courses."

Evaluation of what students learn about their life coping skills will be conducted as follows:

- a. Counselor evaluation forms will be completed at the end of each quarter.
- b. "Coping Skills" assignment and tests will be evaluated.
- c. Withdrawal forms will be examined to determine attrition rate and reasons for withdrawing.
- d. An evaluation of counseling services will be conducted by asking each student who uses services to complete an evaluation questionnaire at termination time.

II. In order for RA's to learn human relations and communication skills, the Counseling Center will:

- a. Provide a fall pre-service workshop on communication and crisis intervention skills.
- b. Offer at least one in-service program for residence hall staff per quarter-subject areas to be determined by their need.

as a result, RA's will demonstrate their learning of these skills by:

- a. Conducting floor programs which encompass concepts dealt with in workshops.
- b. Being effective communicators in one-to-one relationships.

Evaluation of what RA's learn about crisis intervention and communication skills will be conducted as follows:

- a. The number of referrals and consultations involving resident assistants will be logged by the Counseling Center.
- b. As part of any inservice workshop format, RA's will be required to demonstrate targeted skill areas.

III. In order for students to learn skills associated with career decision making, the Counseling Center will:

- a. Continue to revise and offer Ed. 103 Career/Life Planning each quarter.
- b. Provide appropriate educational, personality, and aptitude testing services.
- c. Continue to update the Career Library with current resource materials. This updating process will include taking an inventory of all materials on a yearly basis.
- d. Provide a resource facilitator/monitor to both assist students with the use of the Career Library and oversee materials and the facility.
- e. Co-sponsor a Tri-College "Equal Opportunity Employment Fair" (minority, handicapped, women) to be held in January.
- f. Incorporate the use of the micro-computer in teaching career decision making skills.

and as a result, students will demonstrate their learning of career decision making skills by:

- a. Completing all course requirements for Ed. 103.
- b. Selecting majors using learned skills through testing, Ed. 103, and/or individual counseling.
- c. Selecting majors using learned skills through the use of the micro-computer.

Evaluation of what students learned will be conducted as follows:

- a. Grades earned in Ed. 103 will be examined.
- b. The number of students using the Career Library, taking career-oriented tests, and seeking individual career counseling will be tabulated and acquired career decision making skills will be examined through counseling summary sheets and test interpretation.
- c. The number of students using the micro-computer will be tabulated and related worksheets will be evaluated by a counselor.

IV. In order for students to be prepared for entrance into professional/graduate schools, the Counseling Center will:

- a. Maintain an up-to-date set of graduate school catalogs.
- b. Maintain current graduate school and undergraduate test-preparation guides.
- c. Continue to serve as the testing center for the University (administering LSAT, GMAT, GRE, and MAT at regularly scheduled intervals).
- d. Provide one-to-one advising.

and as a result, students will demonstrate their preparation for graduate school by:

- a. Taking appropriate graduate tests.
- b. Selecting and applying to graduate schools.

Evaluation of what students learn about activities associated with applying to graduate school will be conducted as follows:

- a. Records will be kept regarding the numbers of students who take the various tests.
- b. The Counseling Center will work with the Placement Office to identify the number of students who actually enter graduate school.

V. In order for the minority student affairs program to continue, the Director of Counseling will:

- a. Prepare and monitor the Minority Student Affairs M&E and activities budgets.
- b. Have a staff person assist the minority student organization advisors with the planning of the cultural weeks.
- c. Have a staff person supervise the operation of the Cultural House.

and as a result of these efforts, minority and majority students will:

- a. Attend cultural activities.
- b. Utilize the Cultural House facilities.

Evaluation of Minority Student Services will be conducted by:

- a. Monitoring the number of students who use the cultural house.
- b. Determining the number of individuals attending minority programs.

VI. In order for older-than-average students to adjust to University life, the Counseling Center will:

- a. Continue to provide an advisor to SOTA.
- b. Incorporate more returning adult activities in orientation.
- c. Provide registration assistance for returning adult students in the Union.
- d. Present a "college survival" seminar for older students during fall orientation.

and as a result, older students will demonstrate their adjustment to MSU by:

- a. Participating in school organizations.
- b. Staying in college and making satisfactory/continuous progress towards a degree.

Evaluation of the returning adult student's adjustment in college will be conducted as follows:

- a. Questionnaires designed to assess school satisfaction will be distributed at the end of the academic year.
- b. Attrition rates will be examined by randomly contacting "drop-outs" and "stop-outs."

VII. In order for students to develop strong academic skills, the Counseling Center will:

- a. Provide at least one Science Learning Clinic for fall, winter and spring quarters.
- b. Continue to expand the academic support services and have the graduate assistants contact the entire faculty regarding specific academic support services.
- c. Expand the tutorial program to encompass all those academic departments wishing to participate.
- d. Continue to develop new study skills materials.
- e. Incorporate the use of the micro-computer in teaching study skills.

As a result of these activities, students will improve their study skills and, thus, perform better academically.

Evaluation of what students learn will be conducted by doing the following:

- a. Monitoring the number of students who withdraw or are suspended from school for academic reasons.
- b. Determine the number of students who use the tutoring program and study skills services.
- c. Send questionnaires to students each quarter to determine student satisfaction regarding tutoring program.
- d. Monitor the number of students who use the micro-computer for study skills development.

VIII. In order for students to learn about the University and establish purposeful goals early in their college careers, the Counseling Center will continue to play an active role in the orientation program and advising activities by:

- a. Participating in both orientation service delivery and planning.
- b. Helping develop the continuing orientation activities.
- c. Holding positions on both the orientation and advising committees.

As a result of this, students will learn about the University and establish both academic and extracurricular priorities and goals.

Evaluation of what students learn will be conducted by doing the following:

- a. Monitoring attendance of orientation activities.
- b. Using questionnaires for evaluative purposes.
- c. Examining attrition rate in terms of numbers and reasons.

IX. In order to insure the success of handicapped students at MSU, the Counseling Center will:

- a. Continue providing services to handicapped students on an individualized basis with the aim of enabling these students to function autonomously and successfully.
- b. Work with interested handicapped students to promote social and recreational opportunities. Possible alternatives include:
  1. Revive handicapped students organization.
  2. Facilitate formation of "special interest groups" (e.g. Multiple Sclerosis support group, sign language interest group, etc.)
- c. Work with 504 services coordinator at NDSU to share resources for handicapped students and develop cooperative programs, especially in area of social and recreational activities.

As a result of these services, handicapped students will establish educational plans, and succeed in their recreational and academic activities.

Evaluation of these activities will be conducted as follows:

- a. Personal contact and individual assessment by the Coordinator of Handicapped Services.

#### PROGRAM EMPHASES

To meet the general goals and operational objectives previously stated, there have been a series of major programs developed under the auspices of the Counseling and Personal Growth Center. Below is a brief description of each program area.

#### Academic Support Services

The academic support services include a combination of services aimed at helping students succeed academically. Through the academic support services, students are helped to assess their learning problems and develop better skills in areas including study organization, time management, effective reading, note taking and test taking. In addition to being provided materials to assist them in developing better study habits and learning skills, students are able to take advantage of:

1. a free Centralized Peer Tutorial Program (departments select the tutors, and Counseling trains the tutors and

- administers the program);
2. individual and group academic counseling;
3. College survival workshops on notetaking, test-taking, study skills, and reading; and
4. computer-assisted, self-paced academic skills training.

### Career Development Services

The Counseling and Personal Growth Center offers a number of services and programs aimed at assisting students with their career search. The career development services include:

1. One-to-one counseling - students are encouraged to meet with a counselor to discuss ideas and evaluate interest tests.
2. Education 103 - Career Development and Career/Life Planning - Taught by the Counseling Center staff, this two-credit course is designed to help students evaluate their abilities, values, interests; examine the job market; develop career search skills; and explore the many academic programs at MSU. At least two sections of Education 103 are offered each quarter.
3. Career Resource Library - Located in the Counseling Center, this library is well-stocked with current information on most careers, training programs, MSU departmental information and professional and graduate schools. A trained assistant is available to help students find and use materials. In addition to printed materials, the Career Resource Library houses a micro-computer for student use. Software programs are available that focus on career development, self-exploration activities, and financial aid information. The software programs include: Discover, The Self-Exploration Series, The Work Activities Inventory, The Value Auction, Career Directions, Career Scan IV, The Micro Art of Interviewing, College Scan IV, and Scholarships Today.
4. Interest Personality and Aptitude Tests - The Counseling Center maintains a complete testing file to help students assess their abilities, interests, and values. Two of the most popular inventories are the Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory and the Career Occupational Preference System.

### Life Skill Classes

The "Life Skills" classes are designed to assist student with developmental activities associated with the maturation process and adult living. Students wishing to explore and develop those skills necessary to function as an independent individual in society may elect any number of the following two-credit courses:

- Ed. 101 - Assertiveness Training
- Ed. 102 - Advanced Assertiveness Training
- Ed. 103 - Career/Life Planning
- Ed. 104 - Personal Decision Making
- Ed. 105 - Marital/Premarital Enrichment

- Ed. 106 - Personal Growth Issues of Women and Men
- Ed. 107 - Topics in Personal Growth and Development
- Ed. 108 - Stress Management

### Centralized Testing Service

Tests of career interests, aptitudes, abilities, values and personality are offered free or at a minimal cost. The Counseling Center is also approved by the Educational Testing Service to administer graduate and professional school entry exams

### Special Student Services

The Counseling Center has established a number of programs aimed at providing support to special student populations. Specifically, services and unique programs are available for:

1. Disabled Student Services - A counselor is available to assist disabled students with their needs. Special arrangements that are frequently made include: obtaining readers for the visually impaired, identifying interpreters for hearing impaired students, changing the location of inaccessible classes for mobility impaired students and making special testing arrangements.
2. Minority Students - One of the staff counselors serves as a coordinator of minority cultural activities. The coordinator supervises the operation of the Minority Cultural House and assists minority organizations in planning special cultural-history weeks.
3. Returning Adult Students - The Counseling Center provides a variety of support academic and social activities aimed at assisting "older-than-average" students. One of the staff counselors serves as an advisor to the Student-Older-Than-Average Organization/Delta-Pi-Delta and through this organization a number of social, educational and academic support programs are planned.

### Psychological Counseling and Crisis Intervention Services

The Counseling Center provides a wide range of psychological support services including one-to-one counseling, group therapy in such areas as depression management, alcohol support and eating disorders. In addition to providing individual and group counseling, the staff of the Counseling Center maintains an active roster of referral sources and serves as the University's primary referral agents of students to local community, mental health agencies, social services programs, and psychiatric support programs.

Finally, the members of the Counseling Center provide inservice and preservice training for student paraprofessionals on campus,



e.g., R.A.'s, peer alcohol counselors, and student night watch workers.

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

The assessment and evaluation of programs are an integral and on-going process in the Counseling Center. A major component of the assessment/evaluation process is the examination of student outcomes. Most of the anticipated student outcomes and evaluative procedures were described in the objectives section. Programs are designed to impact on a student's academic, social, psychological, cultural life in some way, and evaluation, in part, focuses on examining the developmental qualities of each program/service. Finally, there is an on-going effort to devise new ways of evaluating existing programs, and establishing "first-time" assessment procedures for other on-going programs.

For the past eight years, all of the major program emphases have seen dramatic increases in student use. Further, there has been significant evidence of client satisfaction in all areas. For ease of understanding, a brief description with supportive data will be presented for each program area described in the previous section.

Academic Support Services

A major component of the academic support services is the tutoring program. Since its establishment in 1977-78, student utilization has increased at a dramatic rate. Below is supporting data:

Centralized Peer Tutorial Program

	<u>FR</u>	<u>SO</u>	<u>JR</u>	<u>SR</u>	<u>GR/SP</u>	<u>Total</u>
1984-85	431	327	290	188	22	1,258
1983-84	346	347	246	182	18	1,139
1982-83	470	287	219	122	37	1,135
1981-82	352	287	155	75	17	886
1980-81	314	210	153	78	11	766
1979-80	215	132	73	29	6	455
1978-79	266	172	96	42	6	582
1977-78	155 total requests - not reported by year					

In addition to high student use, periodic studies have clearly indicated a high degree of satisfaction by both tutors and those receiving tutoring. In a tutee evaluation conducted in 1983-84,

students reported that tutoring made a difference in the grade they earned. Many reported that the tutoring program provided an avenue for additional help in certain aspects of a course. A high percentage indicated that the effect of receiving tutoring help was very high, the work with tutors helped clarify concepts and other aspects of a particular course. (See appendix A & B for evaluation instruments).

The college survival workshops averaged approximately 65 students in attendance and many follow up with individual help. Approximately 400 students receive individual study skills help each year and are introduced to printed materials available through the Counseling Center.

### Career Development Services

Education 103 Career/Life Planning is the focal point of the career development activities in the Counseling Center. Since 1977, 1,517 students have enrolled in this course. The University uses Education 103 for many undeclared freshmen, and the course is used as a means to get students involved in the career development process. In addition to Education 103, students actively participate in individual counseling and frequently use the career library. The career library contains current up-to-date printed career materials as well as a number of computer software programs. Student use of the career library is high, averaging about 25 students a day. Students are also asked to evaluate computer software materials and most indicate the computer assisted programs are very helpful. (See appendix C for evaluation sheet).

### Life Skills Classes

The success of the life skill classes is determined by enrollment data and outcomes are assessed through individual course evaluations. All of the "Life Skills" classes are filled each quarter and most have waiting lists of students wishing to take them.

### Psychological Counseling and Crisis Intervention Services

The last major area that evaluation occurs is the group and one-to-one counseling services. Since 1977, the number of individual counseling appointments have steadily increased regardless of overall enrollment. Total individual appointments for these years are as follows:

1977-78 = 1,497	1981-82 = 1,952
1978-79 = 1,525	1982-83 = 2,007
1979-80 = 1,622	1983-84 = 2,929
1980-81 = 1,695	1984-85 = 3,106

At termination time, counselors are asked to give each of their clients an evaluation questionnaire. This questionnaire provides students with an opportunity to evaluate their overall experience at

the center in addition to their particular counseling experience (see appendix D). Further, for a more detailed evaluation of their counseling experience, students are provided with a questionnaire that is specifically designed to assess the outcomes of a counselor/counselee relationship (see appendix E).

Over the years, the Counseling Center as well as individual counselors have, consistently received high evaluations in terms of both how students felt they were treated and how they grew through their counseling interactions.

#### PLAN OF OPERATION AND PROJECTED SERVICES

The Counseling Center will continue to offer a full range of services and programs aimed at assisting students with their academic, psycho-social, and career development. Those broad areas previously described will continue to exist with special emphasis on program refinement and development.

Since there is strong evidence of continued increases of student use of the Counseling Center, new efforts must be developed to respond to the expanding needs of the student body. With a relatively small staff, the use of graduate interns and practicum students must be a high priority. In addition to using part-time staff, programs and other special services must be developed to augment direct clinical services. Programs to be examined include: developing self-help packets for eating disorders, study skills, and stress management; expanding in-service training for "front-line" paraprofessional support staff, e.g., R.A.'s, student advisors, tutors, etc.; designing "self-help" clinics for depression and stress; developing a systematic research strategy to evaluate existing programs and determine new direction for potential programs; and initiating more short-term, non-credit support groups.