


**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Dr. Don Pope-Davis  
Dean, College of Education

**FROM:** Dr. Gladys DeNecochea   
Interim Department Head

**DATE:** September 14, 2015

**SUBJECT:** CHANGE IN COUNSELING AND EDUCATION DEGREE NAME

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This memo is to request consideration to change the name of the master's degree offered by the Counseling & Educational Psychology. Currently the department offers the following degree:

**DEGREE:** MASTER OF ART

**MAJOR:** COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE

**CONCENTRATIONS:** COUNSELING  
EDUCATIONAL DIAGNOSTICS

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) accredits the counseling program. CACREP is concerned that the degree title does not reflect the specialty area and is requesting that the University change the name to Clinical Mental Health Counseling (additional information is attached) for accreditation purposes.

The request to change the concentration in Educational Diagnostics will more accurately reflect the curriculum offered and allow graduates to more easily apply for the license awarded by the New Mexico Public Education Department.

These changes make sense because the two programs are not equal in credit hour requirements. The counseling program requires a minimum of 60 credits to meet accreditation standards and the educational diagnostics program requires 30 credits to meet state of New Mexico licensure standards. Further the two concentrations are truly majors given that they are independent of each except for a few overlapping courses.

The College of Education requests that NMSU approve making the following changes to align with CACREP and state licensure requirements.





**DEGREE:** MASTER OF ART

**MAJOR:** CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

**MAJOR:** EDUCATIONAL DIAGNOSTICS

We would like to emphasize that the proposed name change does not affect the courses offered or the content of the existing program. Thank you for your consideration.

**Proposal to change degree name offered by the Counseling and Educational Psychology Department approved by:**

Committee/Administrator	Vote	Signature	Date
CEP Department Head	Approve		9/14/15
CEP Department Faculty	Vote to Approve = 9 Vote to Not Approve = 0 Abstained = 0		9/2/15
College Of Education Dean	APPROVE		9/14/15
Associate Dean's Advisory Council	APPROVE 14-1		9-15-2015
Academic Dean's Council			10/6/15
Faculty Senate			
Provost			
President			

Re: Request for new MA degree title.

The MA Counseling Program is housed in the Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology and has been nationally accredited in the area of Clinical Mental Health Counseling by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) since 1995. CACREP accreditation of the program helps graduates obtain licenses to provide counseling in New Mexico and other states. Graduates of the 60 credit hour program earn a Masters of Arts degree in Counseling and Guidance. The program faculty has recently completed an accreditation self-study and is in the final process of arranging a re-accreditation site visit that will occur in the Fall, 2015 semester. In their final response to our self-study CACREP reviewers raised concerns regarding the title of the degree students earn when they complete the Counseling Program. The stated concerns are based on CACREP's Accreditation Process Policy #4 which reads as follows:

*Use of Programs and Degree Titles. Titles may not be used that have the potential of misrepresentation with regard to CACREP accreditation. Therefore, when an institution decides to seek CACREP accreditation for one or more graduate degree programs (e.g., School Counseling, Marriage, Couple and Family Counseling), the institution must use titles that 1) clearly identify the programs and degrees as counseling programs and counseling degrees, and 2) accurately reflect the CACREP program area under which accreditation is being sought.*

Essentially, CACREP is concerned that the title of the degree that is awarded to our graduates does not specifically reflect the CACREP specialty area in which the program is accredited. CACREP reviewers are concerned that the degree title can potentially result in confusion and misunderstandings regarding our CACREP accreditation and the type of training that our graduates receive. Specifically, the CACREP reviewers wrote,

“The Clinical Mental Health Counseling program is simply indicated as a concentration in Counseling under a Counseling and Guidance degree. It appears that there are additional concentrations under this degree, including a concentration in Educational Diagnostics. The generic use of the program title Counseling in conjunction with a degree title aligned generally with School Counseling and the inclusion of required courses referencing other specialty areas (e.g., Organization and Administration of School Counseling) or other disciplines [e.g., Family Theory and Technique] complicate the clear designation and identification of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program as a Clinical Mental Health Counseling program.”

After considerable correspondence with reviewers, we believe that in order to be deemed in compliance with the CACREP Policy #4 we need to make changes in the title of the degree that is awarded to graduates of the counseling program. However the current degree is used for graduates of more than one program.

The current degree, Masters of Arts in Counseling and Guidance, is being used for graduates of the counseling program (concentration in counseling) and graduates of the Educational Diagnostics program (concentration in educational diagnostics). This degree could also potentially be used for graduates of future programs for guidance personnel. The CACREP reviewers take issue with the lack of specificity achieved by the generic title of the degree and want graduates of the program to obtain a degree titled Clinical Mental Health Counseling that does not have other non-related concentrations attached to it; they cite CACREP Policy # 4 as

their rationale. This concern is valid and does pose potential issues for graduates needing to verify that they have had appropriate training as a clinical mental health counselor, when the title of their degree suggests that their training was related more to school counseling than clinical mental health counseling.

In order to comply with the CACREP Policy # 4 and continue to provide degrees for graduates with an Educational Diagnostics concentration, we request a new degree title, Clinical Mental Health Counseling, to award solely to graduates of the MA Counseling Program. We also propose that the current degree, MA in Counseling and Guidance, remain and continue to be awarded to students completing coursework appropriate for that degree, i.e. state licensure for school counselors and educational diagnosticians. The addition of the new degree will require no changes in program curricula or credit hour requirements, and no additional resources. However, making this change would provide the distinction between graduates of clinical mental health counseling and other programs and would allow for the continuation of other counseling concentrations not approved by the CACREP; hence providing graduates with a degree that is appropriately titled.

**APPENDIX A**

**FULL TIME, THREE QUARTER TIME, AND HALF TIME PROGRAMS**

<b>M.A. -- FULL-TIME PROGRAM*</b>			
<i>Semester</i>	<i>Course Number</i>	<i>Course Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>
Sum. 1b	CEP 512	Human Development	3
	CEP 517	The Psychology of Multiculturalism	3
Fall 1	CEP 542	Appraisal Theory and Technique	3
	CEP 524	Professional Issues in Mental Health Counseling (or CEP 522)	3
	CEP 550	Counseling Theory and Technique	3
	CEP 551	Diagnosis and Treatment Planning	3
Spring 1	CEP 558	Child and Adolescent Counseling	3
	CEP 552	Career/Life Planning and Vocational Assessment	3
	CEP 566	Group Work Theory and Technique	3
	CEP 572	Counseling Practicum	3
Sum. 2a	CEP 562	Family Therapy Theory and Technique	3
	CEP 556	Addictions Counseling	3
Fall 2	CEP 532	Counseling Research	3
	CEP 522	Organization and Administration of School Counseling (or CEP 524)	3
	CEP 578	Advanced Counseling Practicum (OR 3 Credit Elective + 3 Credit Advanced Counseling Practicum)*	6
Spring 2	CEP 580	Counseling Internship (Comprehensive Exam)	12

**\* Note: See "Progress Through the Program Electives, Graduate Minor, and Master's Thesis"**