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A SURVEY OF SELECTED SCHOOL-COUNSELOR TRAINING PROGRAMS IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

ABSTRACT: A questionnaire was sent to various Canadian counselor educators and educational ministerial officials regarding the nature of training opportunities in counselor education in Canada. From the results of the questionnaire, 14 universities were identified as offering a master's degree in counseling. These training programs were compared on such variables as the requirements of the program, the structure and format of the training experiences, and the opportunities for counseling experience via practicum placements. Recommendations for improvements and development in counselor education training programs were discussed. Only Anglophone universities were included in the survey.

One of the key issues facing the profession of secondary-school counseling in Canada today is the question of the scope and effectiveness of professional counselor preparation programs in Canada. This indeed is a very pertinent issue since even ten years ago, professional training opportunities in counseling in Canada were for the most part nonexistent. Due to this situation, most school counselors received little or no professional training. Great numbers of the school counselors received their training from on-the-job experiences. Some supplemented their on-the-job training with optional guidance courses offered through a ministry of education or a teacher-training institute. However, almost all these training experiences in counselling were not offered in a professional training sequence or by professional counselor educators.

Today, however, the situation has changed. Departments of counselor education have been established in university faculties throughout the Canadian provinces. Professional training programs in counseling leading to a master's degree and/or diploma certificates have been developed, making it now possible for all interested persons to obtain professional training in counseling.

Since most training programs in counselor education are still in the formative stages, it would appear that the present time is an appropriate period in which to examine and evaluate the status of these programs. The purpose of this paper is to report on the results of a questionnaire circulated in early 1971 concerning the status of graduate programs in counselor education.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

A questionnaire investigating the function of a school counselor and the status of professional training opportunities in counseling was developed and sent to representative counselor educators and educational ministry officials of the various provinces. From a total of 48 questionnaires, 25 questionnaires were completed and returned. The completed returns were representative of all provinces in Canada. It should be noted that only Anglophone universities received the questionnaire. This paper reports on the data describing the differential requirements of certification laws in each province, the different professional training opportunities in counselor education in selected Canadian universities, and the author's recommendations for changes in the formats of counselor education programs.

Certification Requirements for School Counselors

In regard to a query on the question of provincial certification requirements for secondary school counselors, there is a general agreement among the respondents that there are no formal recognized requirements for certification as a school counselor in Canada. Most provinces do recognize course work leading to a master's degree or diploma certificate in counseling; however, these credentials are not formally required to function as a school counselor. Instead, teaching certification and teaching experience are almost exclusively required as the entrance cards to the school counseling profession, except in Francophone and some districts in Anglophone Québec. Recent efforts to develop separate identities for the teaching and counseling professions have not met with much success.

One province, Quebec, however, never had the teaching certificate as an entrée except in some Anglophone school districts. Instead, the Province formally recognizes the Corporation of Guidance Counselors as the representative professional body in counselling. The Province's Department of Education has no certification criteria for counselors; however, the title "guidance counselor" and its variants in both languages can be used, according to Provincial law, only by members of the Corporation, which requires a Master's degree in counseling, or its equivalent in a diploma, for admission. Most of the school counselors in Canada however, have come and continue to come from the teaching ranks. Since there are few stringent certification laws for school counselors, many teachers continue to work jointly as counselors and teachers. Consequently, these practices make it very difficult to establish any definite certification requirements which differentiate between the professions of teaching and counseling.

Professional Training Programs in Counselor Education

From the results of this questionnaire, 14 different training programs in counselor education were identified. A brief outline of the basic requirements of the training programs are outlined in Table 1.

TABLE 1
 Selected Counselor Education
 Programs in Canadian Anglophone Universities
 As Reported in 1971

Institution	Types of Programs	Course Requirements	Practicum Requirements	Thesis Required	Part or Full-Time Study
Dalhousie University	1 Yr. Master's & Diploma	8 to 10 half courses	Yes	Yes	Both
Memorial University	1 Yr. Master's & Diploma	10 to 12 half courses	Yes, Contact-Hour Requirement	Yes	Both
Acadia University	1 Yr. Master's	10 to 12 half courses	Yes	Yes	Both
St. Francis Xavier U.	1 Yr. Master's & Diploma	12 half courses	Yes, 1 day per week per term	Yes	Full-time for Master's
McGill University	2 Yr. Master's & Ed.D.	12 half courses	Yes, & 1-Year Full-time Internship	No	Both, except Internship Year is Full-time
O.I.S.E.	1 Yr. Master's & Ph. D. & Ed. D.	8 to 10 half courses	Yes, 1 day per week per term	No	Both
Ottawa University	1 Yr. Master's	N.S.	Yes	No	Both
University of Manitoba	1 Yr. Master's	10 to 12 half courses	Yes	No	Both
University of Saskatchewan (Regina)	2 Yr. Master's	12 half courses	Yes, 40 client contact hours	Yes	Both 1 semester required Full-time
University of Saskatchewan (Saskatoon)	1 Yr. Master's	10 to 12 half courses	Yes, 1 day per week per term	Yes	Both
University of Alberta (Calgary)	2 Yr. Master's & Ph. D.	12 half courses	Yes	Yes	Both 1 Yr. Full-time Residency
University of Alberta (Edmonton)	2 Yr. Master's & Ph. D.	12 half courses	Yes	N.S.	Both

University of British Columbia	2 Yr. Master's & Ed. D.	12 half courses	Yes	N.S.	Full-time
University of Victoria	1 Yr. Master's	18 units	Yes, 1 day per week per term	Yes	Both

Note: When respondents specified particulars, these are included.

As Table 1 reveals, the following institutions were identified by the respondents as offering counselor training programs leading to a master's degree: Dalhousie, Memorial, St. Francis Xavier, Acadia, McGill, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Ottawa, Manitoba, Saskatchewan (Regina), Saskatchewan (Saskatoon), Alberta (Edmonton), Alberta (Calgary), British Columbia, and Victoria. This list is not an all-inclusive list of either master's degree or diploma granting institutions in Canada. Moreover, the data on these universities is descriptive and subject to any change the programs have introduced since the date of this survey.

From the 14 programs sampled in this questionnaire, 5 programs were described as two-year degree programs and the remaining 9 programs were described as one-year degree programs which could be completed either during one year of residency or in some cases several summers of study. In addition, several universities offered diploma certification as well as master's degree programs.

On the question of course requirements, there was substantial agreement among those selected programs about the number of courses required to complete the master's degree. The notable exception to this fact existed between one- and two-year degree programs. Among the 9 one-year programs, most universities required a minimum of 10 to 12 half-courses or 30 to 36 academic hours. Most of the two-year programs, such as the McGill University program, required 12 half-courses and one year of full-time internship work. In regard to other requirements, 7 programs required students to submit a thesis, while 4 programs did not require a thesis; 3 programs did not specify. All 14 programs reported requiring a counseling practicum of some kind. Only one program reported requiring a one-year full-time internship experience for the master's degree.

Nature and Scope of the Training Programs

From the descriptions of the counselor preparation programs, it is difficult to compare the structures of the training programs. However, it appears that most of the training programs have taken their present formats from traditional guidance training programs offered through a ministry of education or teacher-training institutes. These master's degree counselor programs have been formulated from a structure which utilizes individual course units such as Principles of Guidance and Counseling, Techniques of Guidance, Theories of Counseling,

Group Work in Guidance, Theories of Vocational Development, Organization and Administration of Guidance Services, and other optional courses such as Theories of Personality, Individual Testing, Adolescent Development, and the Use of Psychological Tests. The predominant training format of these programs has been based on the accumulation of credits rather than demonstration of counseling skills. On this latter subject, it appears from the data that no counselor training program has yet evolved a training program that is based on counselor performance curriculum or behavioral systems such as those outlined by such diverse theorists as Krumboltz, Carkhuff, or Ivey. Some respondents, however, indicated that their training programs were in transition and that they were examining the feasibility of adopting these new approaches for use in their training programs.

Another similar feature of the counselor training programs is the fact that most of the graduate programs offer training on a full- or part-time basis. It seems to the author that this feature has its advantages and disadvantages. To its advantage, part-time study offers training opportunities to all interested students; however, to its disadvantage, part-time study often does not allow the student sufficient time to develop and diversify his counseling skills.

Requirements of the Practicum Programs

As previously noted, all counselor training programs required a student to complete a counseling practicum. However, in examining the format of various counseling practicum opportunities, there seemed to be a wide discrepancy among the various training programs on such issues as length and scope of the practicum experience, the role performance requirements of a practicum counselor, and the availability and scope of the counseling supervision.

On the question of the scope of the practicum experience, there was again great variance in the time counselor trainees were required to be present in their practicum settings. Some programs required a student to be present daily for a term, other programs required a student to be present from one to two days a week for approximately 14 weeks. Still other programs placed emphasis on actual client contact hours, rather than days spent in a placement setting. In these situations, student counselors were required to engage in counseling activities ranging from 15 to 30 client contact hours.

The issue of the role performance requirements of a counselor evoked the most discrepant answers. Most training programs, as noted previously, do not require trainees to demonstrate specific performance skills during their practicum experiences. Instead, emphasis is placed upon fitting into the practicum setting. Furthermore, most practicum placements are in secondary schools and consequently there is a wide divergence of activities that are stressed in guidance and counseling programs in the schools. Some secondary schools stress only vocational and educational counseling activities while other schools stress personal-social counseling as well as other educational functions. Therefore, in utilizing school settings as practicum settings, dif-

ferential training standards are established within a program, and more importantly the counselor trainee's experiences are dependent all too often on the outdated guidance model of many secondary schools.

In considering the subject of the nature of counseling supervision available in practicum settings, there was wide variance in the replies from the respondents within the training programs. All training programs offered some minimal supervision of at least a liaison-administrative nature. Other training programs, particularly full-time one-year and two-year programs, placed a great deal of emphasis on counseling supervision and required on-site supervision as well as faculty supervision. In contrast, programs which offered study through part-time work indicated that supervisory arrangements and high quality practicum placement settings were often difficult to arrange.

In addition, there were marked differences in the extensiveness of the counseling supervision in many of the training programs. Full-time programs in counselor education were more able to offer a systematic supervisory experience whereby trainees received individual supervision from qualified faculty members or advanced graduate students. On the other hand, programs with part-time study were often handicapped in that most students did not receive systematic individual counseling supervision. Furthermore, their supervision was often limited to on-site supervision where supervisors often had less formal training than the practicum counselors.

SUMMARY

In summary, the status of the development of counselor education programs in Canada, appears to consist of three different models: (1) a two-year program which is integrative in its approach to counseling theory and practice, (2) a one-year program (part- or full-time) which follows a course requirement outline, and (3) a diploma or certificate program which is very similar to guidance programs offered through ministries of education. For the most part, the one-year master's degree program seems to be the predominant model. In surveying the one-year programs, most of them are similar in the number of course requirements, the content of the courses, and the counseling activities offered through counseling practicum experiences.

For most of the training programs, the counseling practicum or internship is the main feature of the training program. In examining the different practicum courses offered in the various programs, it appears that there are vast differences in these courses on such variables as the scope and depth of the experiential activities in counseling, the expectations of the role performance skills of the counselor trainee, and the nature of the counseling supervision in the practicum experience.

On another related issue there does not appear to be complete agreement among the various professional training programs about what is the primary role function of the secondary school counselor.

Moreover, there is no agreement as to what should be the primary focus in counselor training programs among the various universities. Much of this lack of agreement is because among all the provinces in Canada, there are no formal recognized credentials for secondary school counselors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the results of the survey, it would appear that counselor education has been established as an important area of graduate training in education and psychology in Canada. Therefore, it is no longer necessary for the profession to cling to outdated models of counselor training such as certification or diploma programs or traditional master's degree programs which emphasize course credit rather than mastery of a counselor's skills. The profession should place its training emphasis on preparing counselors who are adept in dealing with the variety of the mental health and human relations needs of the community and school. To accomplish this goal, training programs need to integrate theory and practice and, above all, need to graduate counselors who are accountable for their professional skills and who can demonstrate their skills effectively in their professional settings.

In light of these proposed goals, counselor educators need to evaluate their training programs and focus on such key issues as (1) the structure and format of their programs, (2) the quality of their practicum programs, (3) the question of full-time study versus part-time study, and (4) the question of what new curricula should be added to the programs.

Today the literature on new developments in counselor training programs is profuse. Several new programs in counselor education have been advocated, utilizing such diverse approaches as a systems approach (Hosford, 1972), a microcounseling approach (Ivey, 1971) and a human resource development approach (Carkhuff, 1972). These programs, as well as other extensive writings in the field, offer models to examine and adopt for possible use in our training programs in Canadian universities. Certainly much of the curriculum in our present counselor education programs needs to be modified. Group counseling skills, group leadership skills, communication skills, behavior modification skills, as well as other human-relations training skills need to be introduced into the counseling curriculum. Our training programs in counseling should strive to meet the needs of the counselor of tomorrow. If our training programs are to produce the counselor of tomorrow, we must prepare counselor trainees to function not only as educational and therapeutic agents, but also as human-relations trainers who can perform a variety of human relations and counseling tasks in the community as well as the schools (Gazda, 1972).

RESUME: On a fait parvenir un questionnaire à des éducateurs et à des fonctionnaires canadiens s'occupant de la formation des conseillers. Ce questionnaire traite de la nature des opportunités de la formation en

counseling au Canada. A partir des résultats, on a identifié 14 universités offrant une maîtrise en counseling. On a comparé les programmes de formation en tenant compte des variables suivantes: les prérequis du programme, la structure et le contenu des expériences de formation et les possibilités de stages en counseling. L'auteur discute des améliorations susceptibles de favoriser le développement des programmes d'entraînement au counseling.

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