



Council for Standards in Human Service Education

Assuring best practices in Human Service Education through
evidence-based standards and a peer-review accreditation process

<https://cshse.org>

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February 28, 2021

Dr. Bill Garris, Human Services Program Coordinator
East Tennessee State University
Box 70701
Johnson City, TN 37614

Dear Dr. Garris,

The CSHSE Board reviewed the reader reports of the self-study for the Human Services baccalaureate degree at East Tennessee State University and voted to conditionally accredit the program because there were some concerns about Standard 16. This decision was based according to the CSHSE Policy for Board Accreditation/Reaccreditation Decisions found in Appendix I of the July 2020 CSHSE Membership Handbook:

Appendix I CSHSE Policy for Board Accreditation/Reaccreditation Decisions (pp 96-98)

The Board of Directors of the Council will take action on the initial accreditation, interim report and review, or reaccreditation at the appropriate Board Meeting (see schedule of deadlines in Member Handbook) based on: reader reports evaluating the Self-Study; Site Visitor reports; and policies and procedures of the Board. Programs under review will be informally notified of Board action via email, by the Vice President of Accreditation, within 10 days, and formally notified of Board action, by a letter from the Vice President of Accreditation, within 30 days. Board action will also be posted on the website within 30 days following the Board decision.

B. Conditional Accreditation:

1. The CSHSE places a program on Conditional Accreditation when the program is not in compliance with one or more of the CSHSE's Standards, and this noncompliance raises concerns about the following:

- a. the quality of the program and curriculum.*
- b. the program's capacity to make appropriate improvements in a timely fashion; and/or*
- c. the program's capacity to sustain itself in the long term.*

The program is required to submit a report describing actions taken to achieve compliance. Conditional Accreditation will not exceed one year.

The Board recognized the program's strengths in all the other program and curriculum standards. This decision is not a negative reflection of your program, but only a means for the Board to access missing information and to clarify compliance concerns.

The Readers did note many strengths of the program:

- Information about the program is readily available to students
- Clearly articulated expected professional behaviors of the students
- Students are exposed to various theoretical orientations.
- Reinforcement of human service skills over a number of classes
- The use of the teaching strategy of "observe, practice, initiate" provides sound theoretical base for educating students.

- A strong focus on diversity in the curriculum and training for faculty and staff.
- Good coordination between Admissions Office and the program
- The program uses norm-referenced qualitative data and validated instruments to find common program themes
- A diverse advisory board
- Well-articulated agreements with agencies
- Majority of faculty hold doctoral degrees, varied experience working with service populations and agencies.
- Faculty are actively published in peer reviewed journals and active at the regional and national levels of Human Service organizations.

The Board's concerns center around the verification of Standard 16c1 and 16c3. **The Board recognizes the program's ability to verify information or make appropriate improvements, and is requesting the following information by June 1, 2021 for review at the June CSHSE Board meeting:**

Client Interventions and Strategies

Context: Human service professionals' function as change agents and must therefore attain and develop a core of knowledge, theory, and skills to provide direct services and interventions to clients and client groups.

Standard 16: The curriculum shall provide knowledge and skills regarding appropriate interventions in service delivery.

c. Knowledge and skill development in:

- 1. Case management, a. Intake interviewing, b. Helping skills, c. Identification and use of appropriate resources and referrals.*
- 2. Group facilitation*

The Readers and Board members were concerned that there was limited narrative and supportive evidence for case management and group facilitation skills and a heavy reliance on only once counseling theory and therapeutic practice course to address all the skill development for case management and group facilitation. The program provided supporting evidence to demonstrate compliance of the knowledge and theory of group facilitation in Standard 12. The HDAL 2510 course syllabus and text provided the documented evidence needed for Standard 12 compliance. However, Standard 16 requires skill development for case management and client groups.

For Standard 16c1, the program submitted narrative and course outlines for HDAL 2510, HDAL 3110, HDAL 3610, and HDAL 4710. The narrative for 16c1 noted that students learn to "repeat what the other person will share" as an example of intake interviewing and submitted textbook evidence of reading a chapter entitled "Hindrances to Effective Listening". The Board felt there was not enough evidence of activities and assessments in any of the courses that demonstrated case management skill development as opposed to individual therapeutic counseling skills to verify compliance of this Standard and specification.

For Standard 16c2, the program submitted a narrative, a course outline, and syllabus for only one course, HDAL 3610 to demonstrate compliance. The narrative noted that the students "read supplementary material" and then practice therapeutic role play. Although there was one HDAL 3610 course learning objective related to group therapy, there was limited evidence to students learning the skills related to case management and group facilitation skills on the class schedule and no specific sample assignments and assessments were given. The course description on the syllabus was not congruent with the course outline and neither description indicated that the course would serve as both individual therapeutic skills and group facilitation skills. A copy of the table of contents for a supplemental text, *Helping Skills* by Dr. Clara Hill was provided; however, there was no evidence of case management or group facilitation skill development in this additional reading material. The CSHSE Board recognizes a difference between therapeutic counseling and group facilitation skills. There was no evidence of group facilitation skills for psychoeducational or task groups which are most often required for employment of baccalaureate degree students. The Board also felt that there is a difference in case management intake interviewing and therapeutic counseling. There was also a concern about using one course to cover all these helping skills and thus limiting student skill development.



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The CSHSE Board is requesting clarity of student skill development in case management and group facilitation skills. Please submit a narrative that clearly identifies how the student is practicing these skills and provide a sample of specific course activities, skill assessments, and skill learning outcomes for both case management interviewing skills and group facilitation skills in the courses submitted for the demonstration of compliance: HDAL 2510, HDAL 3110, HDAL 3610, HDAL 4710 .

The Human Services baccalaureate degree will be in a conditional accreditation status until the requested narrative and documented evidence for these Standards are submitted and reviewed. A truncated self-study template for these standards will be emailed to you. Your responses must be written in this template and supporting documents must accompany the templates. Since the Board members will be reviewing this requested information, all the requested information shall be submitted via email in a zipped folder to Winona Schappell, Vice President of Accreditation, who will disseminate the information to all the Board members.

The requested information must be received by June 1, 2021. If the information is not furnished by the given timelines, then the accreditation will be suspended or revoked, and the Program will need to reapply for accreditation as if it were an initial accreditation.

Please contact me if you have any questions or need for clarifications.

Sincerely,

Winona Schappell, M.Ed.
CSHSE Vice President of Accreditation

CC: Dr. Wilsie Bishop, Interim Provost, VPAA
Dr. Janna Scarborough, Interim Dean
Dr. Julia Bernard, Interim Chair, Department of Counseling and Human Services
Dr. Yvonne Chase, CSHSE President and serving as Board Member-at-Large consultant
Dr. Lynne Kellner, Lead Reader