



SPRCC

School Psychology Research
Collaboration Conference

SPRCC Application Cover Page

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Personal Research Agenda

Kelly Graydon, Ph.D.

- **Efficacy of School-Based Interventions**

- *Overview.* I would like to expand the extant research regarding the efficacy of school-based interventions, particularly counseling as a designated instructional service. I am interested in collecting data on current practices (i.e., what practitioners are currently doing in terms of methods/orientations, goals setting and progress monitoring), as well as specific practices (i.e., monitoring efficacy of counseling interventions provided by graduate students in a particular program).
- *Previous Efforts.* My colleagues and I have been collecting GAS data for both counseling and academic interventions conducted by our graduate students. We are currently working on an article from our data, and have also used this data to establish the positive impact our students make for NASP accreditation.
- *Questions.* I have several potential questions under this topic:
 - *How are counseling interventions monitored by practicing school psychologists?*
 - *What counseling coursework or preparation at the training level is related to efficacy-based counseling practices in the field?*
 - *Are school-based counseling interventions effective?*
- *Implications for Practice.* My goals are to help training programs provide more effective counseling training for practitioners, and evaluate the current practices regarding counseling in the field of school psychology.

- **International Practice of School Psychology**

- *Overview.* I would like to continue the data collection efforts related to the roles, practices, and concerns of school psychologists worldwide.

- *Previous Efforts.* I have collaborated with my doctoral advisor in gathering and publishing data from 13 countries to date. My current colleagues have potential connections for data collection in Mexico and Peru, which are very exciting to me.
- *Questions.* I have several:
 - *What does the field of school psychology look like worldwide?*
 - *Could information regarding the state of psychological and special education services in countries such as Mexico, help school psychologists to better work with immigrant students and families?*
- *Implications for Practice.* Potential implications include the identification of topics for international collaborative research, and the provision of cultural information that might assist practitioners working with immigrant students and families.
- **Alternative Education**
 - *Overview.* I would like to research best practices for working with youth in alternative, continuation, court, and community schools.
 - *Previous Efforts.* My dissertation study involved factors associated with decreased risk of recidivism in Latino juvenile offenders (many of whom attended court schools), and my school psychology practice has involved these unique settings.
 - *Questions.* What are the best practices for working in alternative, court, community, and continuation schools?
 - *Implications for Practice.* Potential implications include the identification of best practices for work in these settings, and potentially an improvement in the services delivered to students in alternative educational settings.

Abstract

There is scant extant literature describing the counseling practices of current school psychologists. In spite of the fact that counseling continues to be one of the primary professional responsibilities in this field, little information is currently known about the models and theoretical frameworks utilized, how goals are established and monitored, or how effective the average counseling intervention is for children and adolescents. This study proposes to examine current counseling practices in order to describe the current state of the profession in terms of counseling. Additionally, training models that emphasize ongoing progress monitoring and evaluation will be explored.

SPRCC Proposal

Background

The majority of practicing school psychologists engage in counseling interventions with school-aged children. Although there is variation in practices at the State, district, and school site level, most practitioners are involved in at least some form of counseling. In a survey of NASP members, it was estimated that the average school psychology spends approximately 15 percent of his or her time engaged in counseling (Jimerson, Graydon, Curtis & Staskal, 2007). In this same study, respondents noted an average monthly caseload of 6 individual counseling cases and 4 counseling groups. These data suggest that counseling is one of the primary roles of a school psychologist.

In recent years, there has been a tremendous movement within the profession of school psychology for the use of evidence-based practices and accountability evaluation of utilized interventions. Unfortunately, this surge has primarily focused on assessment and academic and behavioral interventions. In fact, there is very limited extant research describing the actual counseling practices of school psychologists in general, let alone describing its efficacy. Specifically, data describing what strategies or theories are utilized, and how goals are set and monitored is largely missing from the current research in this field. One potential method for determining efficacy of counseling practices is Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS; Roach & Elliott, 2005).

Goals

My primary goals for this thread of research are: (1) to gather data regarding the counseling practices of school psychologists (e.g., orientation or theoretical model used, goal selection and formulation, treatment integrity, progress monitoring, and outcomes), and (2) to determine, best practices for training programs to implement to better train future practitioners in this area (e.g., evaluate models of training counseling skills, identify systematic procedures to establish progress monitoring and treatment efficacy data).

Context and Participants

As this topic may encompass several studies, it is difficult to narrow down specific participants that would be required. At least one State-wide or Nation-wide online survey of current psychology practitioners would be an ideal population to best determine the nature of current counseling practices in the field. Additionally, in order to pilot training models that emphasize goal-driven, efficacy-monitored practice, samples of graduate students and recent graduates would be necessary. A broad estimate for the number of participants required would be 500 for the extant practices survey, and about three training sites (including my own).

Budget

The goals of this proposed study should be reasonable inexpensive to accomplish. As a very broad estimate, it might cost about \$500 for the creation of an online survey of this magnitude, and \$500-\$1000 for materials needed to gather counseling efficacy data from training programs and fieldwork students.

Multi-Site Research

This study would be best conducted at across multiple settings for a variety of reasons. First, as different States, regions, and training programs have diverse standards and practices regarding school-based counseling services, multiple perspectives would be vital in the development of a survey addressing this topic. Additionally, in order to examine the training component of this study, multiple and dissimilar training sites would be necessary. Although diversity in practices would be an important topic for exploration in this study, it could also be viewed as a limitation in including multi-site research teams. If practices are too discrepant, data will not be representative.

References

- Jimerson, S., Graydon, K., Curtis, M., & Staskal, R. (2006). The international school psychology survey: insights from school psychologists around the world. In Jimerson, S., Oakland, T., & Farrell, P. (Eds.) *International School Psychology Handbook*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Roach, A.T., & Elliott, S.N. (2005). Goal attainment scaling: An efficient and effective approach to monitoring student progress. *Exceptional Children*, 37, 8-17.