

CURRICULUM COMPONENTS OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT TRAINING FOR SCHOOL
COUNSELORS: A DELPHI STUDY

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To my husband, Ted, for your love, support and encouragement

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CURRICULUM COMPONENTS OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT
TRAINING FOR SCHOOL COUNSELORS: A DELPHI STUDY

By

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Chair: Larry C. Loesch
Major: School Counseling and Guidance

A Delphi study was conducted to determine the curriculum components recommended to train school counselors in classroom management necessary to conduct classroom guidance in schools. Nationally certified school counselor practitioners and prominent school counselor educators were the two respondent groups included. Eighty-nine initial curriculum items were identified, both knowledge and skill items were included. After three rounds of the survey, the 40 items remaining were the final recommendations of the expert panel. In further analyses, no statistically significant differences were found when examining responses by expert group, gender, years of experience, or educational level. These recommendations have the potential to make a significant contribution to the school counseling profession.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Continuing a trend that began in the United States in the 1970s, ever increasing numbers of education professionals not previously credentialed or experienced as classroom teachers are achieving state-level certification as school counselors. In concert with this trend, most states have eliminated or are now eliminating policies that required prospective school counselors to have teaching experience before they enter school counseling preparation programs (Sweeney, 1995). One part of the rationale for this trend is that school counselor preparation is provided at the post-baccalaureate level only, and therefore, that any valid baccalaureate degree is sufficient regardless of the student's academic major. Supporting and in line with this trend, the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), which is the primary national program accreditation agency for school counselor preparation programs, has accredited approximately 170 school counselor preparation programs at 169 institutions of higher education in the United States and/or its territorial possessions (CACREP, retrieved January 20, 2006).

Among the CACREP (2001) *specialty* standards of preparation for school counseling programs is the requirement that program graduates be able to provide effective delivery of the guidance curriculum, specifically including use of classroom (i.e., large-group) guidance activities (hereafter classroom guidance). Similar mandate for effective (as well as frequent) classroom guidance activities by school counselors comes from the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). The ASCA requirements for effective school counseling programs are delineated in *The ASCA National Model: A framework for school counseling programs* (2005). In particular, it is recommended that classroom guidance be a central component of the school

counselor's duties and activities, and be allocated as much as 45% of school counselors' professional work time (ASCA, 2005).

The emphasis on school counselors being competent in classroom guidance activities derives from the widely-held belief that classroom guidance is the most efficient delivery mode for school counseling services because it allows school counselors to provide services for the greatest numbers of students with the most efficient use of their time (Dahir, 2004). Yet while school counselor classroom guidance activities are widely and strongly advocated, neither applicable school counselor preparation program standards (e.g., the *CACREP Standards of Preparation*) nor professionally endorsed models of school counselor functioning (e.g., the *ASCA National Model*) delineate *specific* skills, abilities, or associated preparation experiences that school counselors should have or have had to deliver classroom guidance activities effectively and successfully. Presumably, credentialed and/or experienced teachers have had specific, focused preparation in working with entire classrooms of children. Given that most school counselors are now achieving state certification without having a teaching credential and/or experience, of concern is how should school counselors be prepared to deliver classroom guidance activities? Specifically, unknown are the professionally endorsed preparation activities and modalities intended to enable school counselors to be proficient and competent in delivery of classroom guidance activities.

Scope

In the 2003–2004 academic year, more than 48.5 million students were enrolled in public schools in the United States and approximately 99,395 school counselors were employed in public schools (United States Department of Education, 2003–2004). The number of school counselors in public schools is expected to increase. For example, the United States Department of Labor projects that school counselor positions will increase by 18–26% within the next decade

as student enrollments increase and more states adopt requirements for school counselors in elementary schools (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006–07).

Professional school counselors have evolved from being “vocational guides” to a select few students in schools at the beginning of the twentieth century to being essential members of a school’s “educational team” at the beginning of the twenty-first century (Myrick, 2003). As such, they are charged to support and enhance the academic achievement of all students. To contribute to a school’s primary academic mission, school counselors are expected to address the academic, career and personal/social development of all students in the school through provision of a comprehensive school counseling (guidance) program. A comprehensive and presumably effective school counseling program should include at least six student service delivery methods: individual counseling, small group counseling, large-group/classroom instruction, consultation and collaboration with parents and school personnel, crisis intervention, and student appraisal (ASCA, 2005). Per assigned duties, school counselors also may coordinate testing programs, student placement procedures, and other student matriculation procedures. In general, school counselors have many responsibilities beyond those endorsed by professional organizations and are expected to serve all students as needed.

With increasing numbers of students in schools and the concomitant need for school counselor activities to be both as effective and efficient as possible, school counselor preparation programs must provide education and training that allow program graduates to develop skills commensurate with current and future job demands. In particular, because classroom guidance activities serve the greatest number of students in the least amount of time (i.e., are efficient use of the school counselor’s time), it is essential that future school counselors have well-developed skills to provide classroom guidance activities successfully and effectively.

Need for the Study

Achievement of knowledge of the requisite and desirable components of school counselor preparation to engage in classroom guidance activities effectively and efficiently has implications for school counselor professional preparation and practice, and also for associated future research and theory development. For example, if school counselors are to be proficient and effective in delivering classroom guidance activities, then concentrated and specific attention to knowledge and skills requisite to such service delivery in school counselor preparation programs is essential. Knowing what school counselors should know and be able to do in regard to classroom guidance activities also will allow determination of what should, and concomitantly should not, be incorporated into school counselor preparation.

The effective practice of school counseling requires extensive knowledge and a comprehensive skill set. The primary means through which school counselors obtain (at least minimum) professional knowledge and skills is through completion of a school counselor preparation program. The *potential* value of “on-the-job training” and “continuing education” in any profession, including school counseling, is undeniable. However, such learning and skill development is achieved unsystematically among members of a profession and is contingent upon local circumstances, opportunities, and resources and personal motivations. Thus, if the school counseling profession as a whole is to be enhanced and improved, the basis for advancements must begin in school counselor preparation programs.

A wide variety of theories of education and learning have been used in school counselor preparation programs and are manifest in an even larger number of educational activities in school counselor education curricula. Unfortunately, investigation and/or thoughtful consideration of the applicability and/or suitability of any theory as applied within school counselor preparation is rare. Such evaluation necessarily must be tied to what is being taught,

and indeed can only be made effectively if the theory-content association is well founded and understood. Therefore, knowledge of the important components of school counselor preparation has implications for theory evaluation and development.

Evaluation of and research on school counselor preparation and/or practice also is necessarily and integrally linked to what is to be known and what is to be done (i.e., which skills are to be applied) (Carey & Dimmitt, 2006). Therefore, better understanding of the knowledge and skills that school counselors should have for the effective delivery of classroom guidance services will provide focus and direction for future research, including research focused upon school counselor education and practice applications.

Theoretical Framework

A “profession,” by definition, requires specialized education and training, i.e., educational preparation and/or training that is intensive and specific to the practice of a particular occupation or vocation. Without exception, true professional preparation necessitates a comprehensive preparatory curriculum. A wide and diverse variety of curriculum development and implementation models and resources for professional preparation programs are available. Among them, however, Tyler’s (1949) model (originally presented in *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction*) is one of the most widely respected resources (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998; Wiles & Bondi, 1998; Wiles, 2005).

Tyler’s approach to curriculum development is centered on addressing four fundamental questions effectively:

1. What educational purposes should the school (educational institution) seek to attain?
2. What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?
3. How can these educational experiences be effectively organized?
4. How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained? (Tyler, 1949, p.1)

Application of Tyler's model requires identification of curriculum components through examination of specific (eventual learner/practitioner) needs *and* the learning experiences necessary to fulfill those needs. Input from practicing professionals (as subject matter specialists) is crucial to effective needs identification. After needs have been established and appropriate learning (educational) experiences identified, the implied curriculum is organized into a set of (presumably well-organized) experiences for learners.

The last question posed by Tyler refers to evaluation of a curriculum. After the first three criteria are achieved, the educational experiences must be evaluated to verify that learners have acquired the requisite knowledge and skills from their curricular experiences. Because this criterion can be evaluated post curriculum development and implementation only, it is not addressed in this study. Rather, only the first three elements of Tyler's curriculum development model will be incorporated.

Purpose of the Study

There are many resources for education professionals, including school counselors, that present activities that can be used with classrooms of students. There also are an extremely large number of resources specifically advocated for use by school counselors for classroom guidance activities. However, lacking is congruence of opinion about how school counselors should be prepared to use selections from this multitude of resources or to develop and use their own classroom guidance activities. Therefore, the primary purpose of this study is to determine the components of school counselor preparation in regard to classroom management for large-group guidance activities that are endorsed with a relatively high degree of congruence by school counseling professionals. Also to be determined are variations in professional preparation component endorsements based on selected characteristics of the responding school counseling professionals. The data from which these determinations will be made will be obtained through

use of the Delphi technique with carefully selected school counseling professionals, nationally certified school counselors, and school counselor educators..

Research Questions

The following research questions are addressed in this study:

1. What are school counseling professionals' respective endorsement levels of various counselor preparation curriculum components for classroom management for large-group guidance activities?
2. What is the order of endorsement priorities among school counselor preparation program curriculum components for classroom management for large-group guidance activities?
3. What are the differences in endorsements of school counselor preparation program curriculum components for classroom management for large-group guidance activities based on selected characteristics of the responding school counseling professionals?

Definition of Terms

Following are definitions of selected terms as they are used in this study.

- **CLASSROOM GUIDANCE.** “The systematic delivery of age-appropriate preventative guidance concepts to units or groups of students which usually contain more than 10 to 15 members.” (Cuthbert, 2000, p.123)
- **CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT.** The process of successfully directing student groups while imparting information (Cuthbert, 2000).
- **CURRICULUM.** An organized, usually highly structured set of instructional (learning) experiences that constitute academic preparation for future academic or vocational activities (Wiles & Bondi, 1998)
- **DELPHI TECHNIQUE / MODEL.** A research method in which a panel of experts is polled in an iterative process to gain consensus of group opinion about a specific topic (Dimitt, C., Carey, J.C., McGannon, W., Henningson, I., 2005; Linstone & Turtoff, 1975; Moore, 1986)
- **PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELOR.** a state-certified school (guidance) counselor
- **SCHOOL COUNSELOR PREPARATION CURRICULUM.** set of knowledge components and training experiences in a school counselor training program designed to prepare school counselors-in-training at the post-baccalaureate level

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Presented in this chapter is a review of the literature relevant to this study. This review includes attention to school counselors' professional competencies in general and classroom management skills in particular, a theoretical model for curriculum development, and the Delphi methodology.

School Counselors' Professional Competencies

School counseling as a profession had its beginnings in the early 1900s as education professionals sought to help students find appropriate and satisfying work. The activities of those education professionals were in effect rudimentary vocational guidance programs (Coy, 1999; Gysbers, 2001; Myrick, 2003). Emphasis on helping students with career and vocational concerns remained the focus of school "guidance" counselor activities for most of the first four decades of the twentieth century. However, in the 1950s, individual states began to develop and implement standards for "professional regulation" (i.e, certification and/or other forms of credentialing) of school guidance counselors (Coy, 1999). Such regulation was the beginning school counseling as a true and distinct profession.

The National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958, a federal response to the launch of the Sputnik satellite by the then Soviet Union, provided substantial funding to train guidance counselors (Myrick, 2003; Tang & Erford, 2004; Wittmer, 2000). The most immediate and obvious impact of this funding was a substantial increase in the number of guidance counselors in the United States. More importantly, however, the NDEA "gave credibility to the idea that a specialist in guidance and counseling was needed in schools" (Myrick, 2003, p. 8). Continuing the existing emphasis, the guidance counselor's primary role during the 1950s and 1960s was assumed to be to provide career/vocational counseling "directly" to students in middle and high

schools into careers. Existing guidance counselor training programs were focused on student career/vocational development and guidance. Although intensive, the NDEA training and preparation for guidance counselors was narrow in scope and brief in duration. Therefore, unfortunately, “school guidance counselors often were trained too quickly and in a sub-par fashion” during this period (Wittmer, 2000, p. 3).

The acceptance and reputation of the school counseling profession advanced substantially during the 1970s and early 1980s, primarily as a result of the placement of school counselors in elementary schools. Likely the most significant result of these placements was increased recognition that school counselors were more than just “(career) *guidance* counselors;” that is, that school counselors could and should do more than just help middle and high school students find jobs. Thus, it was during this period that the title “guidance counselor” was dropped (at least within the school counseling profession) in favor of the title “school counselor” and, more importantly, school counselors came to be viewed as integral members of the school’s educational team that was focused on all aspects of student’s lives as they affected academic performance. This latter change in particular necessitated that school counselors have a broad range of skills and abilities, with commensurate underlying knowledge.

This time period also was when “classroom (large-group) guidance” came to be viewed as an efficient method of delivery of school counseling services to students in schools (Myrick, 2003). Specifically, classroom guidance is the primary and most efficient means by which school counselors provide developmental, preventative services to students in schools (Dahir, 2004; Myrick, 2003; Wittmer, 2000); that is, to help students acquire skills to cope with life problems and issues *before* they encountered them. In large part, classroom guidance activities are instructional in nature and in fact approximate regular classroom teaching. Good instruction

requires good classroom management. That is, the instructor must be able to maintain students' attention, interest, and appropriate behavior during the classroom activity in order for the students to achieve intended gains from the activity (Geltner & Clark, 2005). Therefore, a school counselor must have effective classroom management skills in order to provide classroom guidance services successfully.

Counselor preparation in general and school counselor preparation in particular in the United States currently is guided primarily by the (counselor education) program accreditation standards of the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The CACREP *Standards* include minimum preparation criteria deemed necessary for all counselors as well as preparation criteria specific to school counselors. However, even in light of these *Standards*, it has been suggested that school counselor preparation curricula “varied considerably from one graduate school counseling program to another” (DeVoss, 2004, p.25). Further, even though the CACREP *Standards* for school counselor preparation are highly valued and widely accepted, they lack functional specificity. That is, although school counseling skill application statements are included in the CACREP school counselor preparation standards, they are too general in nature to indicate or even suggest the highly specific skills that need to be developed by school counseling program graduates. Thus, the CACREP school counselor preparation standards identify broad categories of necessary school counselor skill competencies, but how education and training for those competencies should be conducted is not evident in them. As Sears (1999) noted, “[school] counseling and training programs provide a core of counseling courses but (they) do not provide counselors with the specific knowledge and skills they need to be effective in schools” (p.49).

Leadership in defining the appropriate roles and functions of school counselors comes from the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). ASCA released its *National Standards for School Counseling Programs* in 1997 (Campbell & Dahir, 1997). This resource gave school counselor education program faculty further guidance in structuring school counselor education programs (Perusse, 2001). However, similar to the CACREP *Standards*, this resource lacks presentation of specific competencies to be held and used by school counselors. Thus it too does not identify or suggest specifically how school counselors are to be prepared to fulfill their various roles and functions.

Subsequently, ASCA created the *National Model for School Counseling Programs* to suggest how school counseling programs should be structured and implemented (ASCA, 2003; 2005). The ASCA *National Model* presents school counselor performance standards, but again does not provide specific guidance about how school counselors are to be prepared to perform their various functions effectively.

Dahir, Sheldon and Valiga (1998) and Campbell and Dahir (1997), among others, established school counselor competencies such that school counselors would be able to aid students' academic, personal/social and career developments effectively. However, again, there is no direct connection presented as to how these sets of competencies are to be developed during school counselor preparation. Thus, although ASCA and a variety of school counseling authorities have made important contributions to the nature of the school counseling profession in regard to school counselor functioning (Murphy, 2004; Schwallie-Giddis, ter Maat, & Pak, 2003), counselor education programs continue to be disparate in their approaches to school counselor preparation for lack of specific direction of how school counselors should be educated and/or trained.

Professional credentialing practices also have done little to clarify the specific nature of effective school counselor preparation. The most common (and necessary) credential for professional school counselors is state-level certification, and all states have school counselor certification academic and process requirements. Course content for individual counselor education programs are of course influenced by the respective and applicable state requirements. However, “there is still wide variability across all [school counselor preparation] programs” in regard to program foci, content, and methods (Perusse, Goodnough & Noel, 2001, p.261). Snow and Jackson (2004) presented an overview of disparities in state-level school counselor certification requirements:

An overview of state certification requirements in school counseling as of 2000 can be summarized as follows (ACA, 2000); all states required graduate education in guidance and counseling with 39 requiring a master’s degree in guidance and counseling; 12 states required supplemental graduate education in addition to counseling; 28 states required completion of a school based practicum or internship; 21 states required previous teaching or related experience; 23 states utilized standardized examination as part of the certification process; and 35 states required a criminal background check. (p. 66)

Again, given these disparities across states, state-level school counselor certification requirements provide little specific direction as to how school counselors should be prepared to fulfill their functions effectively.

At the national level, the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) provides the National Certified School Counselor (NCSC) credential (Paisley & Borders, 1995) while the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) “certifies” that school counselors credentialed by them exhibit “accomplished practice” (Glathar, 2005). The NBCC and NBPTS goals seem similar but in practice are not. The lack of unified perspective in national credentialing processes thus continues to make it difficult to create a set of agreed upon

competencies for school counselors, and therefore to determine how best to prepare school counselors.

Of particular interest here is the extent to which school counselors are prepared effectively for classroom management skills. Again, classroom guidance activities are for the most part instructional (i.e., “teaching”) activities. Therefore, part of the school counselor competence debate is whether school counselors should have prior teaching experience (Baker, 2000; Snow & Jackson, 2004). Although some states require prior teaching experience for certification as a school counselor (Myrick, 2003), most counselor educators (i.e., faculty of school counselor preparation programs) believe such experience is unnecessary (Baker, 1994, 2001; Smith, 2001). Similarly, some school counseling authorities have suggested that professional school counselors need to be provided (only) “classroom management” skills as opposed to the full set of teaching skills (Baker, 2000; Henington & Doggett, 2004; Myrick, 2003; Wittmer, 2000). Unfortunately, neither a required teaching credential nor generalized training in classroom management skills is sufficient to enable school counselors to be proficient and effective in delivery of classroom guidance activities. More importantly here, neither allows determination of appropriate and specific school counselor preparation program curricular experiences that will enable school counselors to be successful at classroom management. To be effective in the classroom, school counselors need skills in classroom management specifically designed for delivery of large-group guidance activities.

Theoretical Framework

Writing in regard to the effectiveness of service delivery by members of a profession, Gartner (1976) asserted “that the training and education of practitioners is the predominant factor

influencing the nature of the service” provided (p.27). He noted that the central issue in professional education and training is “how to make that preparation most effective” (p. 28). In turn, Gartner (1976) asserted that the primary factors influencing professional preparation effectiveness include (a) curricular content, (b) faculty expertise and pedagogical skill, (c) teaching methods employed, (d) relationship of curriculum to both theory and practice, (e) location of training, and (f) how the training is related to professional practice as well as the larger societal developments. It follows that integration of Gartner’s recommendations necessitates highly focused curriculum components, ones based on widely endorsed training content and practices for the various skill sets to be developed by preparation program participants.

Presumably, effective and appropriate attention to the preparation factors identified by Gartner requires uniform training of aspiring professionals. Unfortunately, there is clearly lack of uniformity in the professional preparation of school counselors in regard to classroom management despite national counselor preparation standards, national organization practice recommendations, and state certification requirements. Certainly it is difficult in any profession to achieve large-scale agreement on training practices. However, just as certainly, greater degree of consensus about training practices than usually exists can be achieved. In particular, greater agreement can be reached about how school counselors should be trained in regard to development of classroom management skills. However, such concurrence of opinion must be considered in view of sound curriculum development theory and practices.

Tyler’s curriculum development model, as originally described in *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction* (1949), is widely respected (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998; Wiles & Bondi, 1998; Wiles, 2005). Tyler’s approach begins with “identifying four fundamental

questions which must be answered in developing any curriculum and plan of instruction” (Tyler, 1949, p.1):

1. What educational purposes should the school [educational agency] seek to attain?
2. What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?
3. How can these educational experiences be effectively organized?
4. How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?

The first three of these questions can be readily applied to creation of the curriculum component of counselor education programs for training school counselors to have classroom management skills. The final question relates to evaluation of curriculum implementation and is beyond the scope of this study.

The first of Tyler’s curriculum development question relates to instructional objectives. If an educational program is to be planned and if efforts for continued improvement are to be made, it is very necessary to have some conception of the goals that are being aimed at. These educational objectives become the criteria by which materials are selected, content is outlined, instructional procedures are developed and tests and examinations are prepared . . . Hence, if we are to study an educational program systematically and intelligently, we must first be sure as to the educational objectives aimed at [sic] (Tyler, 1949, p.3).

Tyler believed that (previous and/or current) learners themselves should be a source of information for development of curricular objectives. Understanding of the “gap” between student-as-learner need and the norm for post-instruction, effective understanding helps to build the objectives.

Studies of the learner suggest educational objectives. . .when the information about the learner is compared with some desirable standards, some conception of acceptable norms, so that the difference between the present condition of the learner and the acceptable norm can be identified. This difference or gap is what is generally referred to as a need (Tyler, 1949, p. 6).

It is clear from extant professional standards and models that school counselors need to conduct developmental classroom guidance activities, and that they must have specific knowledge and skills (and especially classroom management skills) to conduct those activities effectively. Therefore, professional education should help “students [in school counselor education programs] acquire special competencies for. . .and taking appropriate action” (Hoberman & Mailick, eds., 1994). It follows that at least one source of information about the needed knowledge and skills can be obtained from those who already have it, i.e., well-qualified, practicing professional school counselors. However, an additional good resource is those educators who have been successful in delivering the information. For school counselors, that resource would be experienced and accomplished school counselor educators.

Tyler (1949) supported collecting data through scientific methods, such as using surveys to determine student needs. In particular, the use of survey methods decreases subjectivity in curriculum development. Tyler (1949) also emphasized that subject specialists are an important source for gathering data about student learning needs.

Subject specialists can...make an important contribution, because, presumably, they have a considerable knowledge of the specialized field and many of them have had opportunity to see what this subject has done for them and for those with whom they work. They ought to be able to suggest possible contributions, knowing the field as well as they do, that it might make to others in terms of its discipline, its content and the like. (Tyler, 1949, p. 26–27)

Ornstein and Hunkins (1998) noted that “personal philosophy” is an important starting point in curriculum development. For example, school counselor education subject matter specialists should approach curriculum development through their respective personal philosophies. These philosophies are inherent in their beliefs and evident in the experiences they present to students for learning. Similar to Tyler (1949), Ornstein and Hunkins (1998)

acknowledged that a personal philosophy reflects personal values and beliefs which, in turn, are reflected in curriculum and course content and teaching methods.

Tyler (1949) also wrote about the nature of learning. Curricular objectives, shaped for a primary learning experience, often result in secondary learning. Tyler (1949, p. 41) wrote that, “In practically every educational experience two or more kinds of educational outcomes may be expected” (i.e., primary, intended learning and secondary, unanticipated or unexpected learning). This duality suggests that using multiple methods of instruction is to the educator’s advantage because they can design integrated experiences intended to reinforce each other and create greater experiences for the learner. Tyler’s second question refers to this issue, how to attain the desired ends. Learning experiences are shaped by the teacher, but the student acquires knowledge and skills through active behavior.

Wiles and Bondi (1998) stressed the importance of teacher characteristics and behavior in teaching to achieve curricular objectives; the teacher is “the final filter in curriculum work” (p.109). Teachers plan the instructional framework and deliver the information. The teacher matches learning activities that will help the students attain the desired objectives and “selects techniques and plans activities believed to be effective for these purposes” (Wiles & Bondi, 1998). The education process may vary in experiences, but must specify unambiguous objectives.

The final question Tyler addressed was, “How can learning experiences be organized for effective instruction?” That is, how can possible learning experiences be best aligned and implemented to achieve desired educational goals? Tyler proposed that educational experiences be “clustered” to produce a cumulative effect. “In planning the curriculum for any school or any field, it is necessary to decide on the types of elements which most effectively serve as threads to

use in the organization” (Tyler, 1949, p.87). Again, inputs from experienced school counselor educators and school counseling practitioners are the best source for determining both elements of a classroom management training curriculum and important aspects of associated preparatory activities.

Classroom Guidance and the Professional School Counselor

The focus of school counselor training programs for the past few decades has been on the developmental guidance model (e.g., Baker, 2000; Gysbers, 1997; Gysbers & Henderson, 1999; Myrick, 2003; Sink & MacDonald, 1998; Vernon, 2004; Wittmer, 2000). “In the developmental approach, students have an opportunity to learn more about themselves and others in advance of problem moments in their lives” (Wittmer, 2000, p.6). The school counselor is presumed to be the leader of a school counseling program that involves all school personnel, is available to all students, has an organized and planned curriculum, is sequential and flexible, and is an integrated part of the total educational process (Myrick, 2003; Wittmer, 2000). In addition, the developmental guidance model is concentrated on academic improvement to help students learn more effectively and efficiently (Myrick, 2003). The well-trained school counselor “provides specialized counseling services and interventions” within the total educational program (Myrick, 2003, p. 46). The direct services the school counselor provides include but are not limited to: individual counseling, small group counseling, and large group guidance (ASCA, 2005; Baker, 2000; Benschhoff, 1994; Campbell & Dahir, 1997; Dahir et al., 1998; Myrick, 2003; Vernon, 2004; Wittmer 2000). Through interventions such as these, the school counselor identifies problem areas and implements a comprehensive plan to assist all students to prevent or resolve them.

Classroom guidance, sometimes known as large-group guidance, is the most efficient intervention because it provides direct services to the largest numbers of students at one time (Baker, 2000; Myrick, 2003; Snyder, 2000; Wittmer, 2000). A large group is generally a

classroom size group of 25–30 students (Cuthbert, 2000). Classroom guidance as a school counseling intervention is becoming increasingly important as professional school counselors struggle to find time to address all students' needs. The recommended student-to-counselor ratio appropriate to implementing a comprehensive developmental program is one school counselor to every 250 students (ASCA, 2005). However, most school counselors operate under a much higher ratio (ASCA, 2005).

Gerler and Anderson (1986) noted that, “group guidance may positively influence children’s classroom behavior, attitudes toward school, and ultimately their academic success” (p. 78). For example, Brigman and Campbell (2003) studied the impact of small-group and classroom guidance to improve student achievement. It was found that the combined effects of the interventions were positively associated with improved student achievement and behavior. Similarly, Lapan, Gyspers and Petroski (2003) examined developmental guidance programs in middle schools. They found that implementation of comprehensive school counseling programs, including classroom guidance activities, were associated consistently with higher levels of student academic success. In general, there is considerable support for the observation that developmental guidance delivered in large groups is an effective means to teach students ideas and skills (Wittmer, Thompson, & Loesch, 1997).

Although there are numerous resources available for classroom guidance activities, there is little information available to assist school counselors to “manage” classroom size groups (i.e., regulate student behavior to maximize learning effectiveness). Baker (2000) asserted that “it is important to train them [school counselors] as competent *instructors*, as well as competent [school] counselors” [emphasis added] (p.153). Similarly, The ASCA *National Model* (2003) indicates that, “It is important for school counselors to receive training in student learning styles,

classroom behavior management (and) curriculum and instruction” (p. 16). *Thus, extensive classroom management knowledge and good skills, as important components of general teaching expertise, are needed in combination with counseling and group facilitation skills to impact large groups positively* (Henington & Doggett, 2004). Unfortunately, the exact classroom management knowledge and skills needed remain undetermined.

The Knowledge Base for Classroom Management

ASCA identifies small and large group counseling as integral parts of both school counselor training and professional responsibilities (ASCA, 2003; Campbell & Dahir, 1997; Dahir et al., 1998). “Group counseling is one of the professional school counselor’s most highly specialized skills” (Goodnough & Lee, 2004, p.173). Training in group processes and leadership allows school counselors to conduct group counseling differently from individual counseling. However, many of the skills used in small-group counseling also are applicable to large-group guidance activities (Myrick, 2003).

Small-group counseling training for school counselors typically includes exposure to principles of group dynamics, group process, group stage theories, group member roles and behaviors, therapeutic factors of group work, group leadership styles and approaches, theories and methods of group counseling, ethical and legal considerations for group work, and evaluation of group processes (CACREP, 2001). Presumably, some small-group knowledge and skills transfer and generalize to application in large-group guidance activities. For example, knowledge of group dynamics and interacting forces within a group is important for understanding interpersonal dynamics in the classroom guidance context. Each of these general information clusters can be subdivided further, and thus can be used to elaborate more specific, (potentially) appropriate elements or components of the knowledge base of effective classroom management. Shown below are some of the more specific knowledge components of various

(counseling-related) knowledge clusters. The elements shown are deemed specific to classroom management within the large-group guidance context and potentially necessary for school counselors in performing large-group guidance activities. Also presented are references for the elements cited. Note these elements are not presented in any particular order.

- **GROUP DYNAMICS.** Interacting forces within a group (Yalom, 1995).
- **GROUP CULTURE.** Shared perceptions of how the group interaction system is to be organized (Wheelan, 1994).
- **TASK/WORK GROUP.** Groups designed to improve program planning and evaluation within organizations (Corey, 2004).
- **EXPERIENTIAL CLASSROOM TRAINING GROUPS OR PROCESS GROUPS.** A group of individuals who meet to learn more about groups, group processes and interactions, and themselves (also known as T-, sensitivity-training, or encounter groups) (Yalom, 1995).
- **SELF-HELP GROUPS.** Groups constituted to enable people with a common problem or life predicament to create a support system and change their lives (Corey, 2004; Yalom, 1995).
- **GUIDANCE/PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL GROUP.** Groups structured by some central theme and generally used to impart information, address specific needs, and/or develop certain skills (Corey, 2004).
- **COUNSELING GROUP.** An interpersonal process to address group members' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that is problem-oriented and led by a counselor or psychotherapist (Corey, 2004; Yalom, 1995).
- **GROUP TIME ORIENTATION.** The time orientation for the purpose of the group, such as to address immediate concerns or to develop strategies to cope with potential problems in the future (Corey, 2004; Yalom, 1995).
- **HOMOGENEOUS VERSUS HETEROGENEOUS GROUP.** A homogeneous group is composed of people similar in age and gender, or based upon a common interest whereas a heterogeneous group is composed of members different for a specific category or trait (Corey, 2004).
- **INVOLUNTARY VERSUS VOLUNTARY MEMBERSHIP.** An involuntary group is composed of members forced to attend whereas a voluntary group is composed of people attending by choice (Corey, 2004).
- **SHORT-TERM VERSUS LONG-TERM GROUPS.** Duration of the group process dependent upon the topic (i.e., time needed to achieve group goal) (Corey, 2004).

- **GROUP FORMATION.** The process of constituting a group with attention to practical considerations related to composition, formation, structure, and duration of a group (Shechtman, 2004).
- **SOCIAL IDENTITY.** The social categorization of self and others. Categories define individuals in terms of their similarities with members of certain social categories in contrast to other social categories (Turner & Haslam, 2001).
- **SOCIAL COMPARISON.** The process in which an individual uses cues from others to understand appropriate behaviors, beliefs, and/or attitudes expected in the group environment (Tindale, Meisenhelder, Dykema-Engblade & Hogg, 2001).
- **GROUP DEVELOPMENT.** The natural maturing of a group over time (Schmuck & Schmuck, 1997).
- **SOCIAL LOAFING.** The tendency for group members to work below maximum abilities on a specified task (Wheeler, 1994).
- **GROUP PROCESS.** The group interaction statuses including conformity, deviation, cohesion, and conflict (Burlingame, Fuhrman & Johnson, 2004). Alternatively, four process components including structure, verbal interaction, therapeutic relationship, and therapeutic factors.
- **CONFORMITY.** The extent to which a group member's behaviors conform to group behavior norms (Corey, 2004).
- **DEVIATION.** The extent to which a group member's behavior differs from group behavior norms (Corey, 2004).
- **GROUP CONFLICT.** The extent to which group members are oppositional to one another (Corey, 2004).
- **GROUP IDENTIFICATION.** The degree to which an individual sees him/herself as part of a group (Kramer, Hanna, Su, & Wei, 2001).
- **GROUP COHESIVENESS.** The degree to which individuals socially identify with the group (Karau & Williams, 2001). Group cohesion involves a sense of belonging, inclusion, and solidarity. Cohesiveness is the result of all the forces acting on the members that make them want to remain in the group. (Corey, 2004; Yalom, 1995).
- **GROUP INITIAL STAGE.** The group process period of orientation and exploration that includes determining group structure, getting acquainted, exploring members' expectations, defining goals, clarifying expectations, and looking for a place in the group. (Corey, 2004).
- **GROUP TRANSITION STAGE.** The group process period of dealing with resistance, including when members experience anxiety, defensiveness, and conflict, and begin to learn how to work on the concerns that brought them to the group (Corey, 2004).

- **GROUP WORKING STAGE.** The group process period of cohesion and productivity, including more in-depth exploration of significant problems and effective action to bring about desired behaviors. (Corey, 2004).
- **GROUP FINAL STAGE.** The group process period of consolidation and termination, including time for summarizing, pulling together loose ends, and integrating and interpreting the group experience (Corey, 2004).
- **POST-GROUP ISSUES.** The evaluation and follow-up process in which the group leader evaluates outcomes of the group (Yalom, 1995).
- **GROUP MEMBER ROLES.** The organization of members to perform different tasks within the group, including a set of expectations shared by members about behavior of an individual who occupies a given position in the group (Wheelan, 1994).
- **GROUP TASKS.** The work that a group must do to accomplish its goal (Wheelan, 1994).
- **GROUP LEADERSHIP STYLE.** The group leader's personal approach to facilitating groups based on theoretical orientation, values, beliefs, and personal characteristics (Corey, 2004).
- **INSTILLATION OF HOPE.** Increasing patients' belief and confidence in the efficacy of the group mode (Yalom, 1995).
- **UNIVERSALITY.** The disconfirmation of a patient's feeling of uniqueness (Yalom, 1995).
- **DIDACTIC INSTRUCTION.** The formal instruction or psycho-educational component of a group (Yalom, 1995).
- **DIRECT ADVICE.** The suggestions from group members to another group member (Yalom, 1995).
- **ALTRUISM.** An increase in perceived self-efficacy resulting from helping other group members (Yalom, 1995).
- **SOCIALIZING TECHNIQUES.** Methods of achieving socially acceptable behaviors through social learning (Yalom, 1995), including addressing factors that promote change in groups (Forsyth, 2001).
- **VICARIOUS LEARNING.** Social skills developed through observation and interaction with others (Yalom, 1995).
- **INTERPERSONAL LEARNING.** Social skills developed from interactions with others (Yalom, 1995).
- **GROUP MEMBER GUIDANCE.** The acceptance of advice and suggestions from other group members (Yalom, 1995).
- **GROUP COHESION.** The experience of group members feeling accepted by others in the group (Yalom, 1995).

- SELF-DISCLOSURE. The revelation of personal information to others (Yalom, 1995).
- CATHARSIS. The release of pent-up emotions (Yalom, 1995).
- INSIGHT. The attainment of a deeper understanding of oneself (Yalom, 1995).
- THEORIES OF GROUP COUNSELING. The theoretical bases for understanding and/or guiding group processes (Yalom, 1995).
- ETHICAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR GROUP WORK. The legal and philosophical boundaries for group processes and interactions (Yalom, 1995).
- EVALUATION OF GROUP PROCESSES. Measurement used to determine the effectiveness of the group (Corey, 2004).
- MULTICULTURAL DIVERSITY. The cultural-based differences among individuals (Corey, 2004).
- HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. The natural process of human physical and mental change (Myrick, 2003).
- RESOURCES. The human, physical, or other sources of assistance for group processes (Wittmer, 2000).
- MEMBER SELECTION. The procedures used to choose members of a group (Corey, 2004).
- EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING. The achievement of knowledge through physical behavior (Corey, 2004).

The Skills Set for Classroom Management

Skills related to group leadership in general and for school counseling applications in particular have been presented by Corey (2004), Geltner and Clark (2005), Hennington and Doggett (2004), Myrick (2003), and Riva, Watchel and Lasky (2004), among others. “An essential component related to the effectiveness of therapeutic groups is the leadership” (Riva et al., 2004, p.37). Indicated in group treatment research is that more favorable outcomes evolve from group leaders proficient in the use of positive group leadership skills (Morran et al., 2004).

Group leadership skills are used to guide and direct interactions between school counselors and classroom groups. The school counselor typically relies upon a self-created combination of counseling skills, classroom management strategies, and instructional methods to

impart important developmental information. Shown below are some of the specific *skills* potentially appropriate to effective classroom management in the context of large-group guidance. The reference source for each skill listed also is provided. Again, these elements are not presented in any particular order.

- **RULE SETTING.** Establishing and communicating clear guidelines and procedures for the group interaction (Henington & Doggett, 2004).
- **ACTIVE LISTENING.** Paying attention and interpreting both verbal and nonverbal messages in the communication (Corey, 2004).
- **RESTATING.** Verbal paraphrasing (Corey, 2004).
- **CLARIFYING.** Restating the group member's message in different words to evaluate meaning accuracy (Corey, 2004; Myrick, 2003).
- **SUMMARIZING.** Pulling together the important elements of a group interaction (Corey, 2004).
- **OPEN ENDED QUESTIONING.** Proposing questions that explore issues in greater depth for the group members (Corey, 2004).
- **INTERPRETING.** Group leader explaining of participant's thoughts, feelings or behaviors (Corey, 2004).
- **CONFRONTING.** Specifying differences between behavior and verbal or nonverbal messages (Corey, 2004).
- **REFLECTING FEELINGS.** Mirroring the verbal and nonverbal messages (Corey, 2004).
- **SUPPORTING.** Providing group members with encouragement and reinforcement (Corey, 2004).
- **EMPATHIZING.** Verbalizing sensitive feelings that grasp the subjective world of the participant (Corey, 2004).
- **FACILITATING.** Opening direct communication among the participants (Corey, 2004).
- **INITIATING.** Directing members to focus on doing meaningful work within the group (Corey, 2004).
- **GOAL SETTING.** Helping group members create and clarify productive goals (Corey, 2004).
- **EVALUATING.** Ongoing process of self-appraisal for group leader and members (Corey, 2004).

- **SIMPLE ACKNOWLEDGMENT.** The interpersonal acknowledgment of a group member (Myrick, 2003).
- **GIVING FEEDBACK.** The group leader process of giving specific information based on observation of behaviors within the group (Corey, 2004).
- **SUGGESTING.** Encouraging group members to look at a situation from a different perspective (Corey, 2004).
- **PROTECTING.** Safeguarding members from unnecessary psychological or physical risks of being in a group (Corey, 2004); also, the group leader intervening to protect group members from damaging experiences in the group (Morran, Stockton & Whittingham, 2004).
- **MODELING.** Demonstrating skills, attitudes, and other characteristics the leader hopes to engender in group members (Morran, Stockton & Whittingham, 2004).
- **LINKING.** Promoting interaction between group members by connecting through a common theme (Corey, 2004; Morran, Stockton & Whittingham, 2004); also, using statements that accentuate relationships by pairing information from one person to another (Myrick, 2003; Wittmer & Myrick, 1989, p.82).
- **REINFORCEMENT.** The verbal or nonverbal messages from the group leader to a group member to convey approval (Cooper & Simonds, 2003); also, establishing trust (Corey, 2004).
- **BLOCKING.** Intervening by the group leader to stop counterproductive behavior within the group (Corey, 2004).
- **TERMINATING.** Ending a group session or process (Corey, 2004).
- **USING PROXEMICS.** Moving around to spread influence to all group members (Cooper & Simonds, 2003).
- **SUPPORTING.** The leader intervening to reassure members, and encourage and reinforce appropriate participation (Morran, Stockton & Whittingham, 2004).
- **DRAWING OUT.** The leader inviting comments from one (or more) group members to encourage participation from less involved members (Morran, Stockton & Whittingham, 2004).
- **PROCESSING.** Identifying and using significant happenings to help a group member reflect on the meaning of the experience; understand thoughts, feelings, and actions; and generalize what is learned to situation outside of the group (Morran, Stockton & Whittingham, 2004).
- **NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION.** The non-spoken language used to send messages to the group (Wiles & Bondi, 1998).

- **LEARNING STYLES.** The cognitive and/or affective style acquire and use to process information (Cooper & Simonds, 2003).
- **ENTHUSIASM.** The group leader's positive, optimistic approach to the topic and/or group members (Geltner & Clark, 2005).
- **WAIT TIME.** The duration of time before a response is made after a question is asked (Wong & Wong, 2005).
- **TOPIC SELECTION.** The process in which school counselors select appropriate themes or subjects for a school guidance program or lesson (Wittmer, 2000).
- **COOPERATIVE LEARNING.** The use of collaborative interactions among group members to achieve learning (Wong & Wong, 2005).

The Delphi Technique

The Delphi Technique is an iterative process designed to bring about the highest level group consensus possible about ideas and/or opinions deemed important to a relatively specific purpose and/or activity. The Delphi Technique typically includes use of a series of questionnaires to compile judgments from experts (Moore, 1986). The Delphi Technique is the method of choice for this study because it provides a mechanism through which to achieve subject matter expert consensus through feedback loops (Clayton, 1997). It allows opportunity “to harness the knowledge, expertise and abilities of an entire group of people” (Corporate Partnering Institute, 1997).

In the Delphi Technique, the respondent group is selected carefully from among experts in an identified (professional) field. Thus, the expertise of the experts chosen to participate is crucial to the validity of the results (Linstone & Turtoff, 1975). An expert is someone who has specific and extensive knowledge, skills, and experience relevant to the particular subject (Clayton, 1997). Desirable characteristics for participants should be identified prior to application of the technique. In general, nominees should include respected members of the profession. The invitation to participate should be presented as flattering and motivating to potential participants (Clayton, 1997; Scheele, 1975).

The Delphi process includes dissemination of a questionnaire and proceeds through ten stages (Moore, 1986):

1. Decide to administer the questionnaire.
2. Select a respondent group.
3. Design the questionnaire.
4. Give advance notice to respondents (optional).
5. Pilot test questionnaire (optional).
6. Produce questionnaire.
7. Distribute questionnaire.
8. Send reminder or another copy of the questionnaire (optional).
9. Receive completed questionnaire.
10. Analyze completed questionnaire. Return to step 3 for next round of questionnaire dissemination.

The selection of the participant panel and the construction of the questionnaire have great impact on the validity of the results application of the Delphi Technique. Experts recommend careful construction of the questionnaire to ensure adequate response and inclusion of relevant options for consideration (Dillman, 2000; Moore, 1986). A thorough search of the literature should be completed to include all relevant issues to decision making on the topic.

Tyler (1949) supports the use of subject specialists to determine curriculum content for a specified field and the Delphi Technique is well-suited to determination of curricular objectives. The collective expertise allows collective decision making that would not otherwise be possible because of geography or interpersonal issues. Linstone and Turtoff (1975, p.4) outlined additional criteria to employ Delphi Technique:

- The problem does not lend itself to precise analytical techniques, but can benefit from subjective judgments on a collective basis.

- More individuals are needed than who can interact efficiently and effectively in a face-to-face exchange.
- Disagreements among individuals are such that the communication process must be “refereed.”
- The heterogeneity of the participants must be preserved to assure validity of the results, i.e., avoidance of domination by quantity or by strength of personality.

These criteria illustrate the potential usefulness of the Delphi Technique to create a curriculum among diverse members of a group who cannot otherwise meet for group discussions. It is a scientific method that allows each individual to respond and participate, further, personal subjectivity is directed into group response. The technique “attempts to overcome the weaknesses implicit in relying on a single expert, a one-shot group average, or round table discussion” (Clayton, 1997, p. 375). The generally accepted number of participants for a (relatively) homogeneous group is 15 to 30 (Clayton, 1997; Moore, 1986).

Once the questionnaire has been constructed and the participants selected, the questionnaires are distributed to be completed. The results are then interpreted and analyzed to determine an appropriate cut-off point of the number of elements to be retained (Scheibe, Skutsch, & Schofer, 1975). Generally, there is a “gap” pointing the rank-ordered item means after each round. The scores below the gap are deleted and the remaining items are reintroduced in the next round. The process ends when the criteria for consensus is reached (usually by the number of rounds allowed), resulting in the final list of items. Linstone and Turtoff (1975) recommended three rounds as “sufficient to attain stability in the responses” (p.229).

The Delphi Technique was used by Cabaniss (2002) to determine appropriate uses of technology in counseling. The author sought to determine how much counselors and counselor educators relied on computer-related technology, for which counselor-related tasks were counseling professionals using computer-related technology, which job-related tasks required

computer-related technology, and how would computer-related technology be used in the next ten years. Strong agreement on the importance of computer-related technology in counseling and provision of more training in use of computer-related technology in counselor training programs was found.

Dimmitt, Carey, McGannon, and Henningson (2005) used the Delphi Technique to inquire about the future of the school counselor research agenda. An expert panel of 21 members was chosen from among national school counseling leaders, practitioners, and counselor educators. The result was a list of the research questions that the experts thought ought to be addressed in school counseling research. Wittinghill (2000) used the Delphi Technique to identify the initial curriculum components necessary for the preparation of graduate-level substance abuse counselors. An expert panel of 28 members responded to three rounds of an evolving questionnaire rating 198 work behaviors on level of importance in training substance abuse counselors. The result was a list of 89 curriculum items deemed as the most important to be included in training programs. Thus the Delphi Technique has been used successfully for various purposes in the counseling profession, including curriculum development.

Summary of the Related Literature

Professional school counselors are being trained in varying ways across programs. Unfortunately, differential training has led to confusion about school counselor roles, which in turn has affected school counselor education program development. Although there is some agreement about applicable training standards and foci, there remains considerable lack of agreement about which skills are important to teach.

Tyler (1949) outlined steps for creating a curriculum and supported using systematic data collection to identify curricular objectives and components. In regard to classroom management

specifically, training in group processes and interpersonal interactions is helpful but insufficient. This study is intended to address this shortcoming.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to achieve as high as possible consensus among selected practicing school counselors and counselor educators about curriculum components necessary to prepare students in school counselor education programs to lead and manage large-group classroom guidance activities effectively. Presented in this chapter are the population, sampling procedures, resultant sample, questionnaire development, research procedures, and methodological limitations for this study.

Population

The population for this study included two groups of professionals, both associated with the school counseling profession: (a) school counselors working in public and/or private K-12 schools and (b) school counselor educators working in university or college settings. All fifty states require school counselors to hold state-level school counseling certification and to have completed (at least some) graduate course work, with the majority of states requiring achievement of a master's degree (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006–07). In the 2003-04, approximately 99,000 school counselors were employed in public schools in the United States (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2003–04).

Among practicing school counselors are the approximately 2000 who currently hold the National Certified School Counselor (NCSC) credential (NBCC, 2006). The NCSC is a specialty certification credential in the school counseling profession for those who choose to apply and are able to qualify. The NCSC credential is a result of joint efforts by the American Counseling Association (ACA), American School Counseling Association (ASCA), and National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), the major professional associations and organizations for the counseling and school counseling professions (Bureau of Labor Statistics,

2006–07). The NCSC requirements included achievement of a master’s degree in school counseling, specialty coursework in school counseling, successful completion of a national examination, and a minimum of three years supervised experience working as a school counselor. The advantages of becoming an NCSC included (a) recognition for and identification as having achieved one of the highest credentials in the school counseling profession, (b) possible base salary increase (in some states and school systems), and (c) demonstration of a continuing commitment to professional excellence in the school counseling profession. The NCSC has been offered since 1991 (NBCC, 2006).

The second group from which a sample was drawn was counselor educators, specifically school counselor educators. Counselor educators hold a doctoral degree in counselor education (or a very closely related field such as counseling psychology), are employed by a college or university, and are teaching or supervising (school) counselors-in-training. Currently, there are forty-two doctoral-level counselor education programs accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational programs (CACREP) (2006). CACREP is the primary national accreditation agency for school counselor education programs (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006–07; Clawson, 2000).

Counselor educators included in this study had an earned doctoral degree, were employed at a college or university having a CACREP-accredited program in school counseling, and had instructional and/or supervisory assignment for school counselors-in-training. They also were members of ACA, ASCA, and the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES). At the time of the study, there were approximately 45,000 members of ACA (ACA, 2006), over 18,000 members of ASCA (ASCA, 2006), and 2079 members of ACES (J. Macdonald, personal communication, May 5, 2006).

The ACES membership roster is partitioned across five geographical regions. For this study, effort was made to include individuals from each of the five regions of ACES. A list of school counselor educators was designed specifically for this study and acquired from ACA (M. Griffith, personal communication, July 18, 2006). There were 776 members of ACES who identified themselves as working in a university setting. The list included each potential participant's name, university affiliation, and email address.

Sampling Procedures

Following procedural guidelines suggested by Tyler (1949) and others, representative participants (i.e., panelists) from the two professional groups (i.e., practicing school counselors and school counselor educators) were sought for this study. Because "expertise...is the desired goal for panel [member] selection" (Clayton, 1997, p. 377), the panelists were selected based on application of criteria germane to the purpose of the study, such as evident history of involvement in the preparation of school counselors and in the school counseling profession.

Practicing school counselors invited to participate were identified from among those who held the NCSC credential, had completed a preparation program that met the CACREP school counseling program accreditation standards, and had a minimum of three years of professional (i.e., employed) experience as a school counselor.

The essential criteria for selection of counselor educators included that they must have been currently employed in an institution of higher education as a faculty member in a master's-level (or higher) school counselor preparation program accredited by the CACREP. Additionally, each counselor educator selected was a member of ASCA, ACA, and ACES, (b) had published at least two (2) articles pertinent to the preparation of school counselors in a professional journal within the last five years and (c) had made at least two (2) professional presentations pertinent to school counselor preparation at a state, regional, or national conference

for (school) counselors and/or counselor educators within the last five years. In addition, a few individuals were invited to participate who held national leadership positions in school counseling or were known for their school counseling research. These latter individuals' qualifications in all other areas exceeded the requirements listed above, but were either not a member of one of the professional organizations (ACA or ACES) or were not currently employed by a CACREP-accredited program. Only one person from this latter group actually participated in the study.

In order to maximize representation of appropriate school counselor educators, attempt was made to have proportionate membership representation of the five ACES's regions. Similarly, attempt was made to have appropriate, diverse representation of the ASCA membership for the participating school counselors. Although not applied as sampling criteria, additional factors of representation such as gender and race/ethnicity were given consideration in the sampling procedures. In general, every attempt was made to include panelists who were as representative as possible of their respective primary professional affiliations and also as diverse as possible. All individuals eligible according to these criteria were invited to participate in the study.

Continued participation by panel members is an issue in any research necessitating repeated response to a survey. Therefore, potential participants were informed (as part of the invitation to participate) as to the nature of complete participation (i.e., three rounds of ratings). Only those who committed to the entire process were initially included as panel members.

Resultant Sample

Attempt was made to enlist the participation of 30 practicing school counselors and 30 school counselor educators through the procedures described. School counselor educators were selected for potential inclusion so as to be proportionately representative of the memberships of

the five ACES' regions. From the ACES' list, 45 individuals were identified who met all qualifications. These 45 school counselor educators were invited to participate in the study; 22 replied affirmatively to the request asking for inclusion in the study. However, continual participation for all three rounds was necessary for inclusion in the study. Therefore the number of school counselor educators who participated as panelists was 18.

NCSC does not subdivide its membership into regional categories. However, from the list of NCSCs generated by NBCC, attempt was made to include nationally certified school counselors from each state to parallel the school counselor educator participants across the ACES' regions. After 120 NCSCs were contacted with an invitation to participate, 29 school counselors requested they be included in the study. However, continual participation for all three rounds was necessary for inclusion in the study. Therefore, the actual number of school counselors who participated as panelists was 15.

In addition, 2 individuals identified themselves in both the school counselor group and the school counselor educator group. One was originally identified from the school counselor (NCSC) list and one from the school counselor educator (ACES) list. Ultimately, the procedures yielded a group of 15 school counselors and 18 school counselor educators as well as 2 who identified in both groups, for a total of 35 initial participants (panelists).

There is not a generally agreed upon guideline for minimum panel size for effective use of the Delphi technique. However, "a general rule-of-thumb [is] 15–30 people for a homogeneous population - that is, experts coming from the same discipline and 5–10 people for a heterogeneous population" (Clayton, 1997, p. 378). Therefore, a minimum of 15 school counselors and 15 school counselor educators was proposed to be considered sufficient for

effective conduct of the study. The final group of 35 participants who completed all three rounds of the survey was thus considered sufficient and satisfactory.

Survey Development

Moore (1986) noted that, “The questionnaire is the essential tool in the Delphi [technique]” (p. 53). The initial survey used for this study had two subsections. The first subsection solicited demographic information from the panelists, including (a) professional position (i.e., practicing school counselor or school counselor educator), (b) race/ethnicity (i.e., Caucasian, African, Hispanic, Asian, Native American or Multiracial), (c) highest degree achieved (i.e., Master’s, Educational Specialist (EdS) or Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS), or Doctorate), and (d) years of experience in current professional position (i.e., as a practicing school counselor or as a school counselor educator). The demographic information subsection of the survey was not presented for the second and third rounds of ratings.

The second subsection for round one included 89 items to be rated. The rating scale for each item had a range of from 1 (not at all important) to 7 (extremely important). The survey was web-based. Each response scale was presented in “radio button” format to disallow more than one rating per item.

The second round of the survey had 56 items to be rated and the third round had 43 items to be rated. For the second and third rounds, the immediately previous round item mean scores were presented along with each item to be rated.

Research Procedures

After the potential participants in each group were identified, a letter of invitation to participate (Appendix A) was sent to each of them via e-mail. The letter included an overview of the study and why it was needed professionally, commented that their individual participation would be a valuable contribution to the school counseling profession, and requested a reply to

inform whether they were willing to participate. These potential participants had a period of three (3) weeks in which to reply. It was proposed that thereafter succeeding potential participants on the respective lists would be contacted and invited to participate until either a minimum of 20 participants for each group had been identified or the list of potential participants has been exhausted. However, all potential participants were contacted initially for both groups and all those that requested participation were included in the study.

The second correspondence (Appendix B) was sent via e-mail to professionals in each group who had agreed to participate as panelists in the study. It included the link to the URL for the study. Note that the informed consent form for the study (Appendix C) was the first webpage of the study's URL. Therefore, participating panelists had to give informed consent to continue to the actual survey. It also should be noted that panelist participation was anonymous after agreement to participate (i.e., after continuing past the initial page of the first round survey).

For each round, participants were contacted via e-mail when the survey was open and available for responding. From that time, participants had three weeks to respond to the current form of the survey. After two weeks, a second participation reminder was sent via e-mail. At the beginning of the final week the survey was to be open, a final reminder was sent via e-mail.

Unfortunately, three days after the initial survey was sent to participants, an error was identified on one page of the survey; there was an additional (eighth) column with a heading "No." How this error occurred could not be determined; presumably it was a fault in the web-based system used for the survey process. The survey was immediately closed and participants notified of the temporary closing and error. Because the survey process was mid data collection, the error could not be corrected on line. Therefore, participants who had not yet completed the survey were notified to disregard the unnecessary response column. The 22 participants who had

already completed the survey were redirected to a one-page update survey to respond to the 14 items having had an extra response column. The updated responses were entered manually when that round of the survey was closed.

Respondents were requested to rate each item in the survey in each round. After panelists completed ratings for the first round, the individual item means were calculated. The survey item means were then ordered from highest to lowest item response mean. Linstone and Turoff (1975) noted that generally there usually is a “gap” in the ordered item means for a Delphi study, and that that gap is the appropriate point below which to eliminate items from subsequent consideration. A gap was evident for the round one item response means in this study and items having means below the “gap” were discarded from subsequent item presentations. Therefore, the second round included 56 items. The respective item wordings were not changed and remained the same across rounds.

Feedback is an important element of the Delphi process because it allows respondents to examine and possibly reevaluate their item ratings from the previous round (Dalkey, 1972; Linstone & Turoff, 1975). Therefore, in the second round, the panelists were provided the respective item means from the first round for the 56 items that had been retained. They were not given the item means for the discarded items. They were requested to rate the items again as was done in the first round. When the second round of ratings were completed, the individual item means were calculated again, the items were ordered by item mean as they were after the first round, and item means below the “gap” were removed from consideration.

In the third round, respondents were provided the respective item means from the second round for the 43 items that had been retained. They were not given the item means for the items that were discarded. They were then requested to make their final ratings.

Data Analyses

The primary data for this study were the item rating response values and means for the items retained for the third round. Note that inspection of the third round means revealed (another) gap in the item response means. Items having means below 5.80 were not considered further in regard to data analyses and therefore data from 40 items were entered into the data analyses.

A series of quantitative data analyses were conducted to allow evaluation of the third research question for the study. An alpha level of $p = .05$ was used as the criterion for statistical significance for all quantitative analyses.

A series of independent t -tests were computed to determine if there were significant differences between the respective, included third round item means based on the panelists' professional position (i.e., practicing school counselor or school counselor educator). It was proposed an independent t -test also would be computed to determine if there were significant differences between the respective item means based on panelists' gender (i.e., male or female). However, because of insufficient sample sizes (males = 8), the Wilcoxon Rank Sum Test was computed for this analysis. The first analysis was for all panelists combined. The second and third analyses were for each group separately.

A two-way (2 x 5), factorial analysis of variance was proposed to determine if there were significant differences among the respective item means based on professional position by race/ethnicity (i.e., Caucasian, African, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, Multiracial or Other). However, it was not computed because approximately 87% of participants were Caucasian. Another two-way (2 x 3) factorial analysis of variance was proposed to determine if there were significant differences among the respective item means based on professional position by highest degree level achieved (i.e., Masters, Educational Specialist/CAS, or Doctorate).

However, only 8.6% of respondents indicated the EdS/CAS category. Therefore, the three degree-level categories were collapsed into two (Masters'/ EdS/ CAS and Doctorate) and an independent *t*-test was conducted. Finally, a series of correlation matrices were proposed to allow evaluation of the significance of relationships among panelists' years of experience in current professional position and the respective item ratings. However, simple linear regression analyses were conducted in its place to achieve more specific examination of those relationships.

Methodological Limitations

The effectiveness of the Delphi technique is contingent primarily upon the quality and expertise of the panelists because their backgrounds, experiences, and expertise directly impact their ratings (Clayton, 1997). In this study, panelist selection criteria were applied such that each panelist was well-qualified for the task. Therefore, although panelist expertise could be a limitation, it was not be a significant limitation in this study.

The necessity for panelists to make three sets of ratings raised the issue of to what extent is sustained motivation a limitation? To counteract this potential limitation, strategies proven to maximize participation for internet surveys (e.g., continued communications with panelist) were used (Dillman, 2000). In addition, panelists knew the nature and extent of requested participation prior to agreeing to serve as panelists. Presumably, the panelists had appropriate and sufficient motivation throughout the study because there was not any indication that they did not (e.g., all responded in a timely manner during each round).

Finally, the panelists were provided a list of possible curriculum components for classroom management training for school counselors and were not allowed to add their personal suggestions. It is possible that some panelists may have reacted to the list not containing components they might have believed important. However, the initial list was extensive and was a broad-scale representation of suggestions extant in the professional literature. Importantly,

there was not any feedback from the panelists as to insufficient content in the lists provided.

Therefore, personal reactions to the list of items apparently were not a limitation for this study.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

The Delphi technique was used in this study to achieve convergence of opinions among selected school counselors and school counselor educators about preferred components of a curriculum for classroom management for large-group guidance activities. Presented in this chapter are the demographic characteristic data for the participants; results of their ratings for rounds one, two, and three; and results of the various data analyses.

Demographic Characteristics

Panelist demographic information was collected in round one of the survey process and the resultant data are shown in Table 4–1. Fifteen (42.9%) of the participants identified themselves as school counselors and eighteen (51.4%) identified themselves as school counselor educators. Two of the panelists (5.7%) identified themselves as both school counselors and school counselor educators. The racial / ethnic identifications of the participants was homogeneous in that thirty-one (88.6%) identified themselves as Caucasian. Two identified themselves as Hispanic (5.7%), one as Native American (2.9%), and one as Caucasian and Native American (2.9%). No participants identified themselves as African American, Asian American, or multiracial. Approximately 23% of participants were male (N = 8) and 77% were female (N = 27).

Nineteen (54.3%) panelists reported having a doctoral degree, three (8.6%) reported having an Educational Specialist (EdS) or Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) degree, and 13 (37.1%) reported having a Master's degree. Because of the homogeneity of the educational preparations of the participants, data from participants having Doctorate and EdS/CAS degrees were combined. Years of experience among the panelists was similar for each group. Years of experience for school counselors ranged from 4 to 31 years (mean = 11.80; s.d. = 7.79). Years of

experience for school counselor educators ranged from three to 28 years (mean = 11.22; s.d. = 6.90). For the combined sample, years of experience ranged from three to 31 years (mean = 11.49; s.d. = 7.04).

Table 4–1. Summary of Panelists’ Demographic Characteristics

	Frequency	Percent
Professional Position		
School Counselor	15	42.9
School Counselor Educator	18	51.4
Both	2	5.7
Gender		
Female	27	77.0
Male	8	23.0
Racial / Ethnic Identification		
Caucasian	31	88.6
Hispanic	2	5.7
Native American	1	2.9
Caucasian and Native American	1	2.9
Highest Degree Attained		
Doctorate	19	54.3
Educational Specialist or Certificate of Advanced Studies	3	8.6
Master’s	13	37.1
Years of Experience		
School Counselors		
Range:	4–31 years	
Mean:	11.80 years	
s.d.:	7.79	
School Counselor Educators		
Range:	3–28 years	
Mean:	11.22 years	
s.d.:	6.9	

Round I

In round one of the study, 45 initial participants rated the initial 89 possible curriculum component items in regard to importance for inclusion in a classroom management training / education for school counselors using a seven-point scale (1= not important and 7=extremely important). Note that ten of the initial panelists did not participate throughout all three rounds.

The item rating means for round one are shown in Table 4–2. Item rating means for this round ranged from 4.42 to 6.69. Items having a first round item rating mean ≤ 5.96 were eliminated from further consideration. It should be noted that adequate dispersion was found in respondent ratings for all rounds.

Table 4–2. Possible Classroom Management Curriculum Components Ordered by Response Item Means Following Round One

Item number	Abbreviated description	Item mean	Difference
38	long-term group	4.42	
4	social loafing	4.93	0.51
1	self-help groups	5.04	0.11
22	homogeneous group	5.07	0.03
67	altruism	5.11	0.04
24	catharsis	5.22	0.11
9	group time orientation	5.40	0.18
28	voluntary group membership	5.47	0.07
7	social identity	5.49	0.02
18	task / work group	5.51	0.02
47	direct advice	5.52	0.01
25	involuntary group membership	5.53	0.01
29	interpreting	5.53	0.00
17	member selection	5.56	0.03
27	heterogeneous group	5.60	0.04
71	group member guidance	5.60	0.00
34	experiential / training (process) group	5.62	0.02
84	suggesting	5.62	0.00
21	counseling group	5.64	0.02
46	deviation from group	5.67	0.03
39	social comparison	5.69	0.02
43	conformity to group	5.71	0.02
6	didactic instruction	5.71	0.00
14	group formation	5.71	0.00
32	insight	5.73	0.02
62	group member roles	5.73	0.00
15	resources	5.78	0.05
37	self-disclosure	5.82	0.04

Table 4–2. Continued

Item number	Abbreviated description	Item mean	Difference
45	universality	5.82	0.00
23	group culture	5.84	0.02
2	enthusiasm	5.87	0.03
19	experiential learning	5.96	0.00
54	human development	5.96	0.00
36	short-term group	6.02	0.06
44	theories of group counseling	6.02	0.00
53	group transition stage	6.04	0.02
70	vicarious learning	6.04	0.00
33	group identification	6.07	0.03
42	socializing techniques	6.07	0.00
12	topic selection	6.09	0.02
51	using proxemics	6.09	0.00
26	linking	6.13	0.04
65	learning styles	6.16	0.03
88	blocking	6.16	0.00
56	group tasks	6.17	0.01
57	interpersonal learning	6.17	0.00
58	group working stage	6.17	0.00
31	group initial stage	6.18	0.01
40	group development	6.18	0.00
49	group conflict	6.20	0.02
68	goal setting	6.20	0.00
11	instillation of hope	6.22	0.02
60	post-group issues	6.22	0.00
64	restating	6.24	0.02
85	protecting	6.24	0.00
59	group final stage	6.26	0.02
3	group cohesion	6.27	0.01
41	group process	6.29	0.02
20	rule setting	6.29	0.00
66	drawing out	6.29	0.00
80	initiating	6.29	0.00
50	group cohesiveness	6.30	0.01
35	nonverbal communication	6.31	0.01
69	clarifying	6.33	0.02
75	reflecting feelings	6.33	0.00
8	supporting	6.36	0.03

Table 4–2. Continued

Item number	Abbreviated description	Item mean	Difference
13	cooperative learning	6.38	0.02
72	summarizing	6.38	0.00
55	confronting	6.39	0.01
61	evaluation of group	6.40	0.01
78	showing empathy	6.44	0.04
82	acknowledging	6.44	0.00
48	legal considerations for group work	6.46	0.02
76	supporting	6.47	0.01
10	multicultural diversity	6.49	0.02
74	wait time	6.49	0.00
77	processing	6.49	0.00
87	reinforcing	6.49	0.00
81	evaluating	6.51	0.02
89	terminating	6.51	0.00
16	group dynamics	6.53	0.02
63	active listening	6.53	0.00
73	open-ended questioning	6.53	0.00
52	group leadership style	6.57	0.04
5	guidance / psychoeducational group	6.58	0.01
30	ethical considerations for group work	6.60	0.02
86	modeling	6.60	0.00
83	giving feedback	6.62	0.02
79	facilitating group interactions	6.69	0.07

Round II

For the second round, a revised survey included the retained 56 possible curriculum component items and the item rating means from round one. Forty-one of the original panelists responded in the second round. The item rating means for round one are shown in Table 4–3 and ranged from 5.46 to 6.59. Items having a second-round item rating mean ≤ 5.93 were eliminated from further consideration.

Table 4–3. Possible Classroom Management Curriculum Components Ordered by Response Item Means Following Round Two

Item number	Abbreviated description	Item mean	Difference
51	using proxemics	5.46	
12	topic selection	5.59	0.13
44	theories of group counseling	5.76	0.17
53	group transition stage	5.76	0.00
33	group identification	5.80	0.04
36	short-term group	5.80	0.00
42	socializing techniques	5.80	0.00
56	group tasks	5.80	0.00
58	group working stage	5.80	0.00
40	group development	5.85	0.05
60	post-group issues	5.85	0.00
70	vicarious learning	5.85	0.00
11	instillation of hope	5.88	0.03
55	confronting	5.93	0.05
3	group cohesion	5.95	0.02
65	learning styles	5.95	0.00
57	interpersonal learning	5.98	0.03
41	group process	6.00	0.02
88	blocking	6.02	0.02
31	group initial stage	6.05	0.03
59	group final stage	6.05	0.00
49	group conflict	6.07	0.02
52	group leadership style	6.07	0.00
66	drawing out	6.07	0.00
5	guidance / psychoeducational group	6.10	0.03
26	linking	6.10	0.00
72	summarizing	6.10	0.00
76	supporting	6.10	0.00
80	initiating	6.10	0.00
8	supporting	6.12	0.02
13	cooperative learning	6.12	0.00
50	group cohesiveness	6.12	0.00
74	wait time	6.12	0.00
81	evaluating	6.12	0.00
68	goal setting	6.15	0.03

Table 4–3. Continued

Item number	Abbreviated description	Item mean	Difference
69	clarifying	6.15	0.00
82	acknowledging	6.17	0.02
87	reinforcing	6.17	0.02
35	nonverbal communication	6.20	0.03
64	restating	6.20	0.00
75	reflecting feelings	6.20	0.00
77	processing	6.22	0.02
85	protecting	6.22	0.00
10	multicultural diversity	6.24	0.02
89	terminating	6.27	0.03
48	legal considerations for group work	6.29	0.02
78	showing empathy	6.32	0.03
73	open-ended questioning	6.37	0.05
83	giving feedback	6.39	0.04
16	group dynamics	6.41	0.02
20	rule setting	6.41	0.00
61	evaluation of group	6.44	0.03
86	modeling	6.44	0.00
79	facilitating group interactions	6.46	0.02
30	ethical considerations for group work	6.59	0.13
63	active listening	6.59	0.00

Round III

In the third (final) round, the survey included 43 items and the item rating means from round two. Thirty-five panelists responded in the third iteration of the survey process. The item rating means for round three are shown in Table 4–4 and ranged from 5.51 to 6.54. Items having a third-round item mean ≤ 5.80 were not included in subsequent data analyses, resulting in analyses for 40 classroom management curriculum items.

Table 4–4. Possible Classroom Management Curriculum Components Ordered by Response Item Means Following Round Three

Item number	Abbreviated description	Item mean	Difference
55	confronting	5.51	

Table 4–4. Continued

Item number	Abbreviated description	Item mean	Difference
57	interpersonal learning	5.57	0.06
65	learning styles	5.63	0.06
35	nonverbal communication	5.80	0.17
59	group final stage	5.80	0.00
49	group conflict	5.83	0.03
3	group cohesion	5.89	0.06
31	group initial stage	5.89	0.00
75	reflecting feelings	5.89	0.00
41	group process	5.91	0.02
68	goal setting	5.91	0.00
74	wait time	5.91	0.00
81	evaluating	5.91	0.00
50	group cohesiveness	5.94	0.03
64	restating	5.94	0.00
66	drawing out	5.94	0.00
52	group leadership style	5.97	0.03
69	clarifying	5.97	0.00
13	cooperative learning	6.00	0.03
82	acknowledging	6.00	0.00
10	multicultural diversity	6.03	0.03
72	summarizing	6.03	0.00
80	initiating	6.03	0.00
8	supporting	6.06	0.03
87	reinforcing	6.06	0.00
88	blocking	6.06	0.00
26	linking	6.09	0.03
48	legal considerations for group work	6.09	0.00
76	supporting	6.09	0.00
83	giving feedback	6.09	0.00
77	processing	6.11	0.02
16	group dynamics	6.14	0.03
73	open-ended questioning	6.20	0.06
78	showing empathy	6.20	0.00
89	terminating	6.23	0.03
85	protecting	6.29	0.06
86	modeling	6.29	0.00
79	facilitating group interactions	6.31	0.02
5	guidance / psychoeducational group	6.34	0.03

Table 4–4. Continued

Item number	Abbreviated description	Item mean	Difference
61	evaluation of group	6.37	0.03
63	active listening	6.40	0.03
30	ethical considerations for group work	6.43	0.03
20	rule setting	6.54	0.11

Post Hoc Analyses

The third research question for this study was investigated through *post hoc* analyses of the interrelationships among the respondents' demographic characteristics and preferred curriculum components (items). Specifically, analyses were conducted to determine the statistical significance of the differences in endorsement of school counselor preparation program curriculum components for classroom management for large-group guidance activities based on respective respondents' professional position, gender, or educational level.

Additionally, the relationship between respondents' years of experience and item preference levels was examined. The Bonferroni correction was applied; a Bonferroni-corrected alpha of $p = .0012$ was used as the criterion for statistical significance for all quantitative analyses. Possible differences in endorsement of school counselor preparation program curriculum components for classroom management for large-group guidance activities based on racial / ethnic identification was not examined because of the racial / ethnic homogeneity among the respondents.

A series of independent *t*-tests were computed to determine if there were significant differences between the third round item means based on the panelists' professional position (i.e., practicing school counselor or school counselor educator). Presented in Table 4–5 are the respective item means and standard deviations for the school counselor and school counselor educator respondent groups and the *t* values for each item. No statistically significant differences were found for any of the items.

Table 4–5. Round Three t-tests by Respondent Professional Specialization

Item number	Item mean	Item mean	Item s.d.	Item s.d.	<i>t</i> value
	School Counselors ¹	Counselor Educators ²	School Counselors	Counselor Educators	
3	6.000	5.780	1.000	1.003	0.635
5	6.270	6.390	0.704	0.698	-0.499
8	6.000	6.060	0.845	0.802	-0.192
10	5.800	6.170	0.941	0.924	-1.124
13	6.000	6.000	0.756	0.970	0.000
16	6.070	6.170	0.884	0.924	-0.317
20	6.600	6.440	0.737	0.616	0.650
26	6.070	6.060	0.704	0.725	0.045
30	6.330	6.440	0.976	0.984	-0.325
31	6.270	5.440	0.799	1.199	2.350
35	5.800	5.720	0.862	0.826	0.263
41	5.930	5.830	0.884	1.043	0.298
48	6.070	6.060	1.163	1.162	0.027
49	5.670	5.940	0.816	0.873	-0.943
50	5.930	5.890	0.799	0.758	0.163
52	6.070	5.890	0.961	0.758	0.581
55	5.470	5.500	1.246	1.150	-0.079
57	5.600	5.500	1.121	0.985	0.269
59	5.800	5.720	0.862	1.127	0.224
61	6.070	6.610	0.799	0.502	-2.290
63	6.330	6.390	0.617	0.778	-0.229
64	5.800	6.060	1.014	0.873	-0.767
65	5.670	5.500	0.816	1.505	0.404
66	5.870	5.940	0.834	0.998	-0.244
68	5.730	6.000	0.799	0.970	-0.866
69	5.870	6.060	0.915	0.873	-0.603
72	5.870	6.110	0.915	0.900	-0.770
73	6.270	6.110	0.704	1.023	0.515
74	5.930	5.830	0.799	1.043	0.312
75	5.870	5.830	0.834	1.150	0.096
76	6.000	6.110	0.845	0.900	-0.365
77	5.930	6.220	0.704	0.878	-1.049
78	6.270	6.110	0.704	1.023	0.515
79	6.270	6.330	0.799	0.840	-0.233
80	5.870	6.110	0.834	1.132	-0.713

Table 4–5. Continued

Item number	Item mean	Item mean	Item s.d.	Item s.d.	<i>t</i> value
	School Counselors ¹	Counselor Educators ²	School Counselors	Counselor Educators	
81	5.670	6.060	1.175	0.938	-1.036
82	5.930	6.000	0.961	1.029	-0.192
83	5.930	6.170	0.884	1.043	-0.696
85	6.470	6.110	0.640	1.231	1.065
86	6.470	6.170	0.516	0.924	1.175
87	6.000	6.000	0.799	1.085	0.203
88	6.000	6.110	0.655	0.963	-0.393
89	6.270	6.170	0.799	0.985	0.322

¹NCSC N = 15 for all analyses

²ACES N = 18 for all analyses

Differences in item means based on panelists' highest academic degree attained (Masters/EDS/CAS versus PHD) were examined through a similar series of independent *t*-tests.. Presented in Table 4–6 are the respective item means and standard deviations for the Masters/EDS/CAS and PHD respondent groups and the *t* values for each item. No statistically significant differences were found for any of the items based on educational level.

Table 4–6. Round Three t-tests by Respondent Educational Level

Item number	Item mean	Item mean	Item s.d.	Item s.d.	<i>t</i> value
	Masters/EDS/CAS ¹	PHD ²	Masters/EDS/CAS	PHD	
3	6.06	5.74	0.998	0.933	0.990
5	6.19	6.47	0.750	0.612	-1.222
8	6.06	6.05	0.854	0.780	0.035
10	5.75	6.26	0.931	0.872	-1.672
13	6.00	6.00	0.730	0.943	0.000
16	6.06	6.21	0.854	0.918	-0.494
20	6.63	6.47	0.719	0.612	0.664
26	6.00	6.16	0.730	0.688	-0.654
30	6.38	6.47	0.957	0.964	-0.303
31	6.31	5.53	0.793	1.219	2.294
35	5.81	5.79	0.834	0.855	0.080
41	5.88	5.95	0.885	1.026	-0.224

Table 4–6. Continued

Item number	Item mean	Item mean	Item s.d.	Item s.d.	<i>t</i> value
	Masters/ EDS/CAS ¹	PHD ²	Masters/ EDS/CAS	PHD	
48	6.13	6.05	1.147	1.129	0.187
49	5.63	6.00	0.806	0.882	-1.313
50	5.94	5.95	0.772	0.780	-0.038
52	6.06	5.89	0.929	0.737	0.584
55	5.44	5.58	1.209	1.121	-0.356
57	5.56	5.58	1.094	0.961	-0.047
59	5.88	5.74	0.885	1.098	0.412
61	6.06	6.63	0.772	0.496	-2.541
63	6.38	6.42	0.619	0.769	-0.196
64	5.88	6.05	1.025	0.848	-0.552
65	5.56	5.68	0.892	1.455	-0.303
66	5.81	6.05	0.834	0.970	-0.787
68	5.69	6.11	0.793	0.937	-1.429
69	5.88	6.05	0.885	0.911	-0.584
72	5.88	6.16	0.885	0.898	-0.936
73	6.25	6.16	0.683	1.015	0.319
74	5.88	5.95	0.806	1.026	-0.234
75	5.81	5.95	0.834	1.129	-0.406
76	6.06	6.11	0.854	0.875	-0.146
77	5.94	6.26	0.680	0.872	-1.240
78	6.31	6.11	0.704	0.994	0.719
79	6.31	6.32	0.793	0.820	-0.012
80	5.88	6.16	0.806	1.119	-0.867
81	5.69	6.11	1.138	0.937	-1.172
82	5.81	6.16	1.047	0.898	-1.037
83	5.88	6.26	0.885	0.991	-1.223
85	6.50	6.11	0.632	1.197	1.246
86	6.44	6.16	0.512	0.898	1.152
87	6.06	6.05	0.772	1.079	0.031
88	6.06	6.05	0.680	0.911	0.037
89	6.31	6.16	0.793	0.958	0.522

¹ N = 16 for all analyses² N = 19 for all analyses

The Wilcoxon Rank-Sum Test was used to examine differences in item response means based on gender. Presented in Table 4–7 are the respective item medians for male and female respondent groups and the W_s and z values for each item. No statistically significant differences were found for any of the items based on gender of the respondent.

Table 4–7. Round Three Wilcoxon Signed Rank Sum Test by Respondent Gender

Item number	Item median	Item median	<i>Wilcoxon</i> <i>W</i>	<i>z</i>
	Males ¹	Females ²		
3	6.0	6.0	128.0	-0.658
5	6.5	6.0	481.5	-0.195
8	6.0	6.0	111.0	-1.393
10	6.0	6.0	122.0	-0.912
13	5.5	6.0	109.0	-1.485
16	6.0	6.0	135.5	-0.358
20	6.0	7.0	077.5	-3.061
26	6.0	6.0	133.5	-0.452
30	6.5	7.0	125.0	-0.888
31	5.0	6.0	094.5	-2.044
35	5.5	6.0	135.0	-0.378
41	5.5	6.0	132.5	-0.482
48	6.0	7.0	122.0	-0.929
49	6.0	6.0	140.0	-0.169
50	6.0	6.0	125.0	-0.798
52	6.0	6.0	117.5	-1.134
55	5.5	6.0	137.5	-0.265
57	6.0	6.0	472.0	-0.572
59	5.5	6.0	123.0	-0.861
61	7.0	6.0	459.5	-1.171
63	6.5	6.0	140.5	-0.155
64	6.0	6.0	485.5	-0.021
65	5.0	6.0	119.0	-1.024
66	6.0	6.0	483.0	-0.124
68	6.5	6.0	466.0	-0.846
69	6.5	6.0	478.0	-0.332
72	6.5	6.0	471.5	-0.604
73	6.5	6.0	136.0	-0.340
74	6.5	6.0	475.5	-0.437

Table 4–7. Continued

Item number	Item median	Item median	<i>Wilcoxon W</i>	<i>z</i>
	Males ¹	Females ²		
75	6.5	6.0	464.5	-0.884
76	6.5	6.0	475.5	-0.438
77	7.0	6.0	470.0	-0.670
78	6.0	6.0	116.0	-1.189
79	6.5	7.0	139.0	-0.215
80	7.0	6.0	473.5	-0.520
81	7.0	6.0	450.0	-1.484
82	6.5	6.0	472.0	-0.580
83	7.0	6.0	477.5	-0.359
85	6.0	7.0	108.5	-1.543
86	6.0	6.0	116.0	-1.210
87	6.5	6.0	486.0	0.000
88	6.0	6.0	134.0	-0.422
89	6.0	6.0	138.0	-0.259

¹ N = 8 for all analyses

² N = 27 for all analyses

A linear regression analysis was computed to examine how third round item responses were related to respondents' respective years of experience in current professional position. The data for this analysis are presented in Table 4–8. No significant differences were found for any of the items based on respondent's years of experience in current position.

Table 4–8. Summary of Simple Linear Regression Analysis of Mean Item Ratings and Years of Experience for Total Sample (N = 35)

Predictor variable: Years of experience	Response variable: Item number	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
	3	.043	.023	.312
	5	-.020	.017	-.207
	8	.046	.018	.401
	10	-.006	.023	-.047
	13	.011	.021	.094
	16	.012	.022	.098
	20	.055	.016	.056

Table 4–8. Continued

Predictor variable: Years of experience	Response variable: Item number	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
	26	.001	.017	.009
	30	.044	.022	.329
	31	.024	.027	.151
	35	.036	.020	.308
	41	.031	.023	.226
	48	.043	.027	.270
	49	0.00	.021	.000
	50	.011	.019	.104
	52	.001	.020	.013
	55	.014	.028	.088
	57	.036	.024	.250
	59	.010	.025	.069
	61	-.013	.017	-.129
	63	.030	.016	.308
	64	.032	.022	.242
	65	-.034	.029	-.198
	66	.002	.022	.014
	68	-.013	.022	-.106
	69	.008	.022	.063
	72	.015	.022	.120
	73	-.006	.021	-.045
	74	-.028	.022	-.211
	75	.004	.025	.025
	76	.022	.021	.179
	77	.006	.020	.053
	78	.032	.021	.263
	79	.025	.019	.219
	80	.028	.024	.197
	81	.028	.025	.187
	82	-.003	.024	-.022
	83	.018	.023	.134
	85	.025	.024	.178
	86	.020	.018	.190
	87	.019	.023	.143
	88	.017	.020	.151
	89	.023	.021	.181

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION

This study investigated school counselor and school counselor educator recommended curriculum components to prepare school counselors in classroom management for large-group guidance activities. Although regulatory guidelines are provided by states and within the profession for general training of school counselors, specific recommendations for curriculum components for training school counselors in classroom management for large-group guidance activities do not exist. Therefore, this study used the Delphi consensus building technique to identify needed, specific curriculum components.

Generalizability Limitations

The Delphi method is a process intended to achieve opinion consensus through iterative surveying of topic/subject matter experts. Panelists from two professional groups, school counselors and school counselor educators, participated in this study. The panelists were selected based on germane professional criteria, including each panelist having had a history in involvement in preparation of school counselors and in the school counseling profession.

Effort was made to secure an as large as possible number of school counselors and school counselor educators who met the sampling criteria, with intention to have 30 in each panelist group. There is not a generally agreed upon guideline for minimum panel size for effective use of the Delphi technique. However, “a general rule-of-thumb is 15–30 people for a homogeneous population - that is, experts coming from the same discipline and 5–10 people for a heterogeneous population” (Clayton, 1997, p. 378). A total of 29 school counselors and 22 school counselor educators indicated initial interest in participation in the study. However, the actual sample of 35 panelists who completed all three rounds of the process included 16 school counselor and 19 school counselor educators.

Although the respondent sample was not as large as desired, the actual participants were representative of the respective school counselor and school counselor educator populations in regard to the sampling criteria applied. Indeed, the professional credentials of the vast majority of the panelists exceeded the minimum participation criteria set for the study. Therefore, the resultant panelist sample was sufficient and suitable for the purposes of the study.

Evaluation of Research Questions

The first two research questions investigated related to school counselors' and school counselor educators' respective levels of endorsement and priority among the curriculum components deemed (minimally) requisite for school counselor preparation for classroom management for large-group guidance activities. Shown in Table 5–9 are the items resulting from the completed Delphi process and the item rating means for both school counselor and school counselor educator panelists. It can be seen that the respective item means are highly similar across respondent groups; indeed, no statistically significant differences in item means between respondent groups were found. There were, however, a few minor differences across groups in the various item priorities as reflected in the specific item mean rankings.

Table 5–9. Final Item Rankings Ordered by Respondent Group

Item number	Item description	School Counselors		School Counselor Educators	
		Item mean	Ranking	Item mean	Ranking
20	rule setting	6.600	1	6.440	2.5
85	protecting	6.470	2.5	6.001	16
86	modeling	6.470	2.5	6.170	10
30	ethical considerations for group work	6.330	4.5	6.440	2.5
63	active listening	6.330	4.5	6.390	4.5
5	guidance / psychoeducational group	6.270	6.7	6.390	4.5
31	group initial stage	6.270	6.7	5.440	40

Table 5–9. Continued

Item number	Item description	School Counselors		School Counselor Educators	
		Item mean	Ranking	Item mean	Ranking
73	open-ended questioning	6.270	6.7	6.110	16
78	showing empathy	6.270	6.7	6.110	16
79	facilitating group interactions	6.270	6.7	6.330	6
89	terminating	6.270	6.7	6.170	10
16	group dynamics	6.070	14	6.170	10
26	linking	6.070	14	6.060	22.5
48	legal considerations for group work	6.070	14	6.060	22.5
52	group leadership style	6.070	14	5.890	32.5
61	evaluation of group	6.070	14	6.610	1
3	group cohesion	6.000	19.5	5.780	37
8	supporting (leader intervening to reassure members, encourage and reinforce participation)	6.000	19.5	6.060	22.5
13	cooperative learning	6.000	19.5	6.000	27.5
76	supporting (the act of attempting to provide encouragement to a group member)	6.000	19.5	6.110	16
87	reinforcing	6.000	19.5	6.000	27.5
88	blocking	6.000	19.5	6.110	16
41	group process	5.930	25.5	5.830	35
50	group cohesiveness	5.930	25.5	5.890	32.5
74	wait time	5.930	25.5	5.830	35
77	processing	5.930	25.5	6.220	7
82	acknowledging	5.930	25.5	6.000	27.5
83	giving feedback	5.930	25.5	6.170	10
66	drawing out	5.870	31	5.940	30.5
69	clarifying	5.870	31	6.060	22.5
72	summarizing	5.870	31	6.110	16
75	reflecting feelings	5.870	31	5.830	35
80	initiating	5.870	31	6.110	16
10	multicultural diversity	5.800	35.5	6.170	10
35	nonverbal communication	5.800	35.5	5.720	38.5
59	group final stage	5.800	35.5	5.720	38.5

Table 5–9. Continued

Item number	Item description	School Counselors		School Counselor Educators	
		Item mean	Ranking	Item mean	Ranking
64	restating	5.800	35.5	6.060	22.5
68	goal setting	5.730	38	6.000	27.5
49	group conflict	5.670	39.5	5.940	30.5
81	evaluating	5.670	39.5	6.060	22.5

It can be noted that there was substantial consensus among the panelists throughout the Delphi process conducted. In the first round, nine items received a mean rating below 5.50. However, in the second and third rounds, no item received a mean rating below 5.50, which suggests that panelists generally believed the remaining items were either important or extremely important.

The third research question in this study addressed differences in levels of endorsement based on selected personal and professional characteristics of the respondents. The statistical analyses conducted examined possible item response mean differences or relationships by gender, educational level, years of experience in current professional position, and group. No statistically significant differences based on these characteristics were found for any of the final 40 curriculum items.

Conclusions

The Delphi technique is an iterative process designed to achieve the highest possible level of group consensus about ideas and/or opinions deemed important to a relatively specific purpose and/or activity. Because it is an iterative process, the degree of consensus achieved following each round can be examined, specifically in regard to the research questions posed for the study.

The first research question addressed school counseling professionals' respective endorsement levels of curriculum components deemed (minimally) requisite for school counselor preparation for classroom management. A wide range of endorsements levels for the possible curriculum components was evident initially. However, movement toward consensus was rapid across rounds. In particular, fewer items were eliminated across the second and third rounds. The initial item set included 89 items, the second included 56 items (33 items eliminated), and the final one 43 items (13 items eliminated). Further, most final item means were high relative to the top of the rating scale; panelists apparently held relatively strong opinions about the (final) items they endorsed. For example, the lowest item mean among those in round three was 5.51.

The second research question addressed the respective panelists' item endorsement priorities. The difference between the largest and smallest item means for the final round was .48. With such a small difference in ratings, the importance of the order of the item mean rankings is negligible. However, it is interesting to note that some items that were consistently rated higher or lower than other items by the panelists. For example, *rule setting* was the highest rated item on the final list (mean = 6.54). This item was rated .11 higher than the second item, *ethical consideration for group work*. This difference of .11 was the greatest difference between any consecutive items on the final list of 40 curriculum items. Clearly, the panelists, as a group, believed this item was of greater importance in comparison to the other items included.

The final research question addressed differences in endorsement of school counselor classroom management curriculum component items based on selected criteria of the panelists. No significant differences or relationships were found based on respondents' group, gender, educational level, or years of experience. Notably, *rule setting* was the highest rated item for both groups and the highest ranked item for school counselors. The school counselor educator

group item mean score for *rule setting* ranked it in the top three items, second with *ethical considerations for group work* and below *evaluation of group*. Overall, school counselor educators consistently rated evaluation-related items higher than did practicing school counselors. Other interesting differences between groups in the rankings included *group initial stage*, ranked seventh by school counselors but fortieth (last) by school counselor educators. Also, *multicultural diversity* was ranked thirty-fourth by school counselors but tenth by school counselor educators.

Implications

Knowledge of the requisite and desirable components of school counselor preparation to engage in classroom guidance activities effectively and efficiently has implications for school counselor professional preparation and practice, and also for associated future research and theory development. Importantly, knowing what school counselors should know and be capable of in regard to classroom management for large-group guidance activities allows for determination of what should and should not be included in school counselor training programs. The first step in Tyler's curriculum development model (1949) is to identify the "educational purposes" the "school seek(s) to attain" (p.1). The identification of these items is the first necessary step to developing a curriculum and thus a standard for the profession.

The final list of curriculum component items is of course the most significant result of the study because it suggests what school counselors should know and be able to do in order to manage classroom groups effectively and successfully in the context of classroom guidance activities. In addition, the relatively high degree of consensus achieved for the items recommended for inclusion in classroom management preparation for school counselors is noteworthy. In particular, the general absence of differences based on respondent characteristics points to substantive agreement about the components endorsed. Thus, the final list of

curriculum components for classroom management endorsed by the panelists could serve as a preparation paradigm for use in school counselor training programs, and consequently, for future school counseling practice. Following Tyler's curriculum development model (1949), the 40 curriculum items identified lead to the organization of course objectives, to attain the purpose of efficient and productive instruction in classroom management for large-group guidance activities.

The original list of 89 items included both knowledge and skill component items. Of the 89 items, 55 were (pre-classified as) *knowledge* items and 34 as *skill* items, a knowledge-to-skill items ratio of approximately 1.62:1. The final list of 40 items included a much smaller number of knowledge items (13) and a somewhat smaller number of skill items (27), a ratio of approximately .48:1. Thus it became evident across rounds that both school counselors' and school counselor educators' emphasis was on skills for actual practice of classroom management rather than on the knowledge underlying classroom management.

It appears that many of the items discarded were those that otherwise would be included in group counseling training. For example, *theories of group counseling* and *group transition stage* were two of the lowest scoring items in round two of the survey. Although these were rated as important (mean rating of 5.76 for both items), neither were rated nearly as high as, for example, *giving feedback* (6.62) or *facilitating group interactions* (6.69), the highest rated items in round one. Again, items related to the practice of classroom management were rated highest for inclusion for training school counselors.

Opinion convergence notwithstanding, there was one evident differential in the endorsements: school counselor educators relatively consistently placed higher value on evaluation-related preparation components than did practicing school counselors. A strong,

general emphasis on evaluation of professional functioning in (school) counselor preparation programs is evident in the professional literature (e.g., Baker & Gerler, 2004). In addition, there is a strong emphasis on evaluation of professional functioning evident in the *ASCA National Model* (2005). Apparently, that emphasis has been embraced far more by school counselor educators than by practicing school counselors. The basis for this differential may lie in the contrast between school counselor educators' focus on "what school counseling should be" and practicing school counselors' focus on "what school counseling is." Unfortunately, there is some evident disconnect between what school counselors are being taught and admonished to do and what they actually do on the job.

Ethical considerations for group work and *rule setting* were ranked high by both groups, indicating consensus on the importance of conducting classroom management in accord with high professional standards of conduct. These items may have been viewed as important in both practical and theoretical senses. From a practical perspective, both items can be viewed as applicable to both group counseling and a classroom (i.e., large-group guidance) setting. *Ethical considerations* are of course important and appropriate for all aspects of counseling preparation and practice and *rule setting* is also an essential practice in both contexts. From a theoretical perspective, these items may be viewed as those that simply must be included for large group / classroom guidance because they are paramount to success in the profession in general.

The Delphi process used in this study was apparently a useful and successful way to identify desired curriculum components of classroom management preparation for school counselors. Therefore, the results of this study support the curriculum development model presented by Tyler (1949), Ornstein and Hunkins, (1998), and others. However, it is a method that is not without limitations, not the least of which was the relatively small numbers of

participating professionals and the relatively unique perspectives they represented. Thus while the Delphi technique can be presumed to be an effective method for obtaining opinion information for the school counseling profession, its application is limited to situations in which opinion consensus from established experts is desired.

The final list of curriculum component items of course has direct implications for school counselor preparation (and thus practice). Specifically, the 40 retained items should be included in school counselor preparation given that school counselors are supposed to engage in classroom management in the larger context of classroom guidance (e.g., ASCA, 2003; Baker, 2000; Geltner & Clark, 2005).

Recommendations

The panelists for this study agreed upon 40 specific curriculum components for training school counselors in classroom management. However, the panelists were not asked to suggest specific methods of instruction for the recommended curricular components. Several possibilities exist for how these items could be included in a school counselor education curriculum. A model will be presented here that addresses both how to best cluster these items and how they should be incorporated into a school counseling training program.

There are two evident groupings among the 40 items recommended: *knowledge* items and *skill* items. All the knowledge items appear to be related to group (counseling) work. Therefore, these items would be best covered in the basic group counseling course required for school counselor trainees in CACREP-accredited programs. In the context of this study, it would be advisable and necessary, however, to point out specifically their significance to classroom guidance and classroom management for school counselors. Such preparation would be best accomplished through a group counseling course specifically and solely for school counselors-in-training. However, few programs are sufficient in student numbers for such a course.

Therefore, integrating these items into a general group work course and also addressing their specific importance to school counselors would accomplish the same goal. Further, these items could be reconsidered and stressed in school counseling program students' practica and internship experiences.

The 26 *skill* items are focused upon specific classroom management actions and/or behaviors that a school counselor should utilize in delivering classroom guidance. Thus, these items can be viewed as classroom management techniques, and would be more appropriately placed in a school counseling course. For example, these techniques might be inserted into a core school counseling course such as counseling children. Because the composition of such courses differs across universities, the specific course would have to be determined by the particular counselor education department. However, the integrity of the items could and should be maintained as a curricular grouping of *skill* items to train school counselor in classroom management for the purposes of classroom guidance. As above, these items should again be reviewed as the student proceeds through practica and internship experiences to allow evaluation of the skills in actual practice.

Two items, *evaluating* (the process of assessing and associating value(s) with individual and/or group behaviors) and *evaluation of group* (the process of measuring group outcomes), merit additional consideration. These particular items should be addressed in more than one area of school counselor preparation. For example, evaluation in general is covered extensively in assessment courses, a core course for school counselors. In addition, evaluating group process and/or result should be included in any group (counseling) work course. However, again, specific attention would need to be paid to school counselors evaluating classroom guidance

activities and to assessing outcomes of those activities. And yet again, these evaluation items could and should be reviewed during students' practica and internship experiences.

In general, the knowledge and skills to evaluate classroom guidance activities are crucial to creating a successful school counseling program because evaluation can inform whether the skills and knowledge are being implemented appropriately, effectively, and/or successfully.

Recommendations for future research include conducting a larger study that encompasses a greater number of school counselor practitioners. For example, such a study could examine the opinions of the school counselor practitioners in regard to the items recommended in this study. Basically, it would allow determination of whether larger numbers of school counselors concur with the recommendations of the expert panel. It also would be appropriate to investigate the extent to which practicing school counselors already possess the knowledge and skill items presented in the final list of items. That is, it would be important to determine if school counselors believe that they already have the knowledge and skills but are just not using them or if they believe that they have not been provided such knowledge and skills in their school counselor preparation programs.

Because school counselor preparation programs nationwide are removing the "prior teaching experience" requirement for program admission, determination of school counselors' effectiveness in classroom guidance activities is warranted to ascertain need for further or additional training. Specifically, it is important to determine whether school counselors who have the knowledge and exhibit the skills identified herein are actually more effective in the classroom than those who do not.

Another important area to study is the difference between practicing school counselors' and school counselor educators' perceptions related to evaluation specifically. The emphasis on

evaluation items by school counselor educators was much stronger than it was for school counselors. Both groups rated the evaluation items as important, but school counselor educators rated them much higher. It is important to determine if this issue is problematic. Through examination of these differences, ways to bridge the divide could be suggested.

Finally, it would be important to examine the perceptions of others in the school system in regard to school counselors' effectiveness in classroom guidance activities. Determining if, for example, school administrators and teachers agree with the knowledge and skill items recommended could effect how the school counselors actually conduct classroom guidance activities as well as how their activities are perceived. Both teachers and administrators may be more supportive of school counselors being in classrooms if they concur with the recommendations derived from this study.

An alternative approach to knowledge transmission and skill development for practicing school counselors is continuing education. For example, the basic knowledge and skills necessary for effective classroom management could be introduced at an initial inservice workshop and followed by more intensive workshops. Such a process would allow practicing school counselors adequate time for accumulation and self-evaluation of knowledge and skills.

Summary

Ostensibly, there are many school counselors in schools without the requisite knowledge and skills to provide classroom guidance activities successfully and effectively. One of the major causes of lack of effectiveness in this context is school counselors' lack of knowledge and skills specifically for classroom management. Such knowledge and skills must be made available to those who want to complete a school counselor preparation program and become effective school counselors.. Identified in this study were 40 curriculum components that experts believed essential for such preparation. School counselors will be better able to deliver

classroom guidance activities when they have sound knowledge and skills in classroom management.

APPENDIX A
INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A DELPHI STUDY

DATE

Dear _____:

Because of your recognized expertise and experience in school counseling, you are invited to participate in a Delphi study to examine one part of school counselor training. Your individual participation would be a valuable contribution to the school counseling profession.

Classroom (large-group) guidance is an important component of any comprehensive school counseling program and therefore it is important that school counselors receive training for it that is as effective as possible. Good skills in classroom management are essential to delivery of successful classroom guidance services. Obviously, the most effective training results from a sound, well-grounded curriculum. Unfortunately, a set of agreed upon, professionally endorsed curriculum components for classroom management training for school counselors has not yet been developed. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify primary curriculum components important to effective teaching of classroom management skills to school counselors-in-training.

Your participation in the study would include rating potential curriculum components for classroom management training for school counselors on three occasions. You would make your ratings on a web-based survey. If you are willing to participate, you would be given an access code for the survey. You would be asked to make your first set of ratings within the next three weeks, and approximately three weeks will be allowed to make ratings for the second and third rounds. The second and third rounds will have fewer items to be rated.

I appreciate your consideration of this request. If you are willing to participate in this research, please send a brief response to me at the e-mail address below.

Sincerely,

Jill Geltner, Ed.S., NCC
Doctoral candidate
University of Florida
jillgeltner@bellsouth.net

Larry C. Loesch, Ph.D., NCC
Professor, Counselor Education
University of Florida

APPENDIX B
INITIAL CORRESPONDENCE TO PARTICIPANTS

September 3, 2006

Dear School Counseling Expert,

Thank you for your willingness to participate in my study entitled, “Curriculum Components of Classroom Management Training for School Counselors: A Delphi Study”.

Please click on the link below to connect to URL for the first page of the study, which is the informed consent form and acknowledgment. Upon selecting “I agree to participate in the study,” you will be moved to the actual survey. Instructions for providing some demographic information and making ratings are provided on the survey.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or problems connecting to the survey.

Jill Geltner
University of Florida
Doctoral candidate
Department of Counselor Education

jillgeltner@bellsouth.net

(link to URL for the study was placed here)

APPENDIX C
INFORMED CONSENT

(Appeared as the first webpage of the study)

Dear _____,

I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Counselor Education at the University of Florida. For my doctoral dissertation, I am conducting research to identify the counselor preparation program curriculum components best suited to teach school counselors-in-training effective classroom management. Your participation has been requested because you are an experienced, knowledgeable, and professionally involved school counseling professional.

Your participation in this study involves serving as an expert panelist in a three round Delphi procedure. In the first round, you are asked to provide some demographic information. Please know that only aggregate demographic description of the participants will be included in this study. In each round you are requested to rate the importance of potential curriculum components. The first round includes approximately 90 items. Subsequent rounds will include fewer items to be rated. In addition, you will be given feedback about mean item ratings after the first and second rounds.

Confidentiality will be maintained within the limits of law. Your name also will not be revealed in any subsequent dissemination of the results of this study, including presentations at professional meetings or publication in professional journals. Your name will not be identified in my dissertation.

There are no anticipated risks, compensation or direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. You are entirely free to withdraw your consent to participate and/or to discontinue participation in the study at any time without any consequence to you.

If you have further questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact me at (352) 373–2799 or my faculty advisor, Dr. Larry C. Loesch at (352) 392–0731. Questions regarding the rights of research participants may be directed to the University of Florida Institutional Review Board at (352) 392–0433.

Thank you very much for helping with this important study.

Sincerely,

Jill Geltner
Doctoral Candidate
University of Florida

I have read the preceding description about Jill Geltner’s study of recommended curriculum components for teaching classroom management to school counselors-in-training. I voluntarily agree to participate in the study.

**Clicking on the “agree” link below indicates your voluntary
and informed consent participation in this research.**

APPENDIX D
PARTICIPATION REMINDER

Dear _____,

Several weeks ago, you agreed to be an expert panelist for my study of desired curriculum components for training school counselors about classroom management. If you have already completed this round for the research, please know that I appreciate your participation. If you have not yet completed this round, I would appreciate it if you would do so as soon as possible. The survey link is: (insert link to survey here).

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Jill Geltner
University of Florida
Doctoral candidate
Department of Counselor Education

jillgeltner@bellsouth.net

APPENDIX E
INITIAL SURVEY

Note: Response choices for items 1 – 4 were presented as mutually exclusive, “radio” buttons

1. What is your current professional position?

- School counselor
- School counselor educator

2. Which of the following best represents your racial / ethnic identification?

- Caucasian
- African
- Asian
- Hispanic
- Native American
- Multiracial
- Other

3. What is the highest academic degree you have achieved?

- Master’s
- Educational Specialist (EdS) or Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS)
- Doctorate

Note: Response choice for item 4 will be on a drop down menu ranging from 1 – 50.

4. How many years of experience do you have in your current professional position?

years

Please rate each of the following *items* for importance for inclusion in a classroom management training / education for school counselors using a scale of one to seven in which 1 = not important to 7 = extremely important.

	Not Important					Extremely Important	
1. Self-help groups (a supportive group for individuals with common problems)	<input type="radio"/>						
2. Enthusiasm (the expression of positive reaction to what is happening in a group)	<input type="radio"/>						
3. Group cohesion (the level of group members' feeling of acceptance among one another)	<input type="radio"/>						
4. Social loafing (the tendency for group members to work below individual ability levels)	<input type="radio"/>						
5. Guidance/psychoeducational group (a large group to which specific knowledge or skills are taught)	<input type="radio"/>						
6. Didactic instruction (a formal process of teaching, including lecture and leader-focused presentations)	<input type="radio"/>						

Not
Important

Extremely
Important

- | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 23. Group culture
(group member perceptions about how the group is organized and conducted) | <input type="radio"/> |
| 24. Catharsis
(a process of release of pent-up emotions) | <input type="radio"/> |
| 25. Involuntary group membership
(a group in which members did not have a choice about joining the group) | <input type="radio"/> |
| 26. Linking
(group leader promoting interaction between group members by connecting through a common theme) | <input type="radio"/> |
| 27. Heterogeneous group
(a group in which members are relatively different from one another) | <input type="radio"/> |
| 28. Voluntary group membership
(a group in which members had a choice about joining the group) | <input type="radio"/> |
| 29. Interpreting
(the act of attempting to explain verbally a group member's thoughts, feelings or behaviors) | <input type="radio"/> |

Not
Important

Extremely
Important

87. Reinforcing
(the attempt to encourage a group member to continue to
speak or behave in the same way)

88. Blocking
(the act of attempting to stop a group member's specific
verbalizations or behaviors in a group)

89. Terminating
(the process of ending the group process)

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Born in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania December 10, 1970, Jill A. Geltner always dreamed of teaching. In 1992, she graduated with honors from Lehigh University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in sociology. After a post-bachelor year of working with children, in 1993 she returned to school to pursue a teaching degree at the University of Florida. She enrolled in the highly respected Department of Counselor Education at the University of Florida.

In 1996, she graduated with concurrent degrees from the University of Florida, a Master of Education and a Specialist in Education majoring in school counseling and guidance and mental health counseling. In addition, Geltner was awarded the University of Florida Presidential Recognition Award. After her training as a school and mental health counselor, she worked in a variety of settings with special focus on middle schools and early adolescents. Working in both rural, city and private school settings as a school counselor provided a variety of experiences.

In 2003, she returned to the University of Florida to pursue a doctorate in counselor education at the University of Florida studying under nationally recognized counselor educator, Larry C. Loesch. In 2005, she was awarded the Chi Sigma Iota, Outstanding Service to Chapter Award and in 2006, the Dr. Robert O. Stripling Scholarship Award. Geltner graduated in May 2007, her dissertation titled *Curriculum Components of Classroom Management Training for School Counselors: A Delphi Study*.