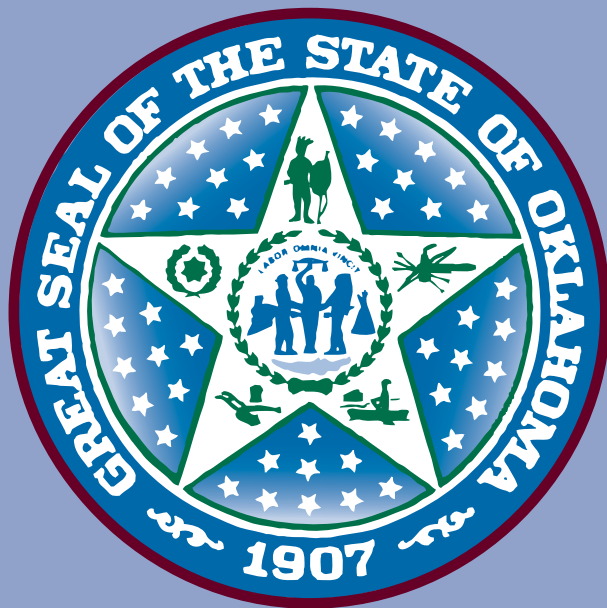


# Certification Examinations for Oklahoma Educators™

## Oklahoma Subject Area Tests™

# STUDY GUIDE

039 School Counselor



Oklahoma Commission  
for Teacher Preparation

OK-SG-FLD039-04

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# STUDY GUIDE INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS FOR OKLAHOMA EDUCATORS

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The first two sections of the study guide are available in a separate PDF file. Click the link below to view or print these sections.

[Study Guide Introduction and General Information About the Certification Examinations for Oklahoma Educators](#)





# FIELD-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

- Test Competencies
  - Practice Test Questions and Answers
  - Constructed-Response Assignment Scoring
- 

## INTRODUCTION

This section includes a list of the test competencies, as well as a set of practice selected-response (multiple-choice) questions and one or more practice constructed-response assignments (if applicable), for the test field included in this study guide.

### Test Competencies

The test competencies are broad, conceptual statements that reflect the subject-matter skills, knowledge, and understanding an entry-level educator needs to teach effectively in Oklahoma public schools. The list of test competencies for each test field represents the **only** source of information about what a specific test will cover and therefore should be reviewed carefully.

The descriptive statements that follow the competencies are included to provide examples of possible content covered by each competency. These descriptive statements are neither exhaustive nor exclusionary.

### Practice Test Questions

The practice selected-response questions and any practice constructed-response assignments included in this section are designed to give you an introduction to the nature of the questions included in this OSAT test field. The practice test questions represent the various types of questions you may expect to see on an actual test; however, they are **not** designed to provide diagnostic information to help you identify specific areas of individual strengths and weaknesses or to predict your performance on the test as a whole.

To help you prepare for your OSAT, each practice selected-response question in this section is preceded by the competency it measures and followed by a brief explanation of the correct response. On the actual test, the competencies, correct responses, and explanations will **not** be given.

If the test field included in this guide has a constructed-response assignment, a sample response is provided immediately following the practice constructed-response assignment. The sample response in this guide is for illustrative purposes only. Your written response should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work.

A description of the process that is used for scoring the constructed-response assignment is provided in addition to the OSAT performance characteristics and score scale.

When you are finished with the practice test questions, you may wish to go back and review the entire list of test competencies and descriptive statements for your test field.

## TEST COMPETENCIES: SCHOOL COUNSELOR

### SUBAREAS:

- I. Human Development and Learning
- II. Assessment and Evaluation
- III. Counseling and Group Guidance
- IV. Educational and Career Planning
- V. Guidance Programs and Professional Knowledge

### SUBAREA I—HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

#### Competency 0001

##### **Understand human development from early childhood to young adulthood.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Recognize stages, characteristics, and processes of physical, motor, social, emotional, language, and cognitive development from early childhood to young adulthood.

Demonstrate knowledge of developmental theories, their characteristics, and their limitations.

Analyze developmental issues of particular importance during the various stages of human growth and development, including issues related to safety and survival skills.

Examine the significance of developmental factors during early childhood, middle childhood, and adolescence for learning, educational counseling, and assessment.

#### Competency 0002

##### **Understand student diversity and its significance in varied educational contexts.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Identify characteristics and educational needs of students with special needs (e.g., learning disabilities, emotional impairments, mental impairments, physical impairments).

Demonstrate knowledge of how diversity (e.g., in regard to specific impairments and disabilities; gender; racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic background; family and community characteristics) may affect human development, learning, behavior, educational achievement, and career planning.

Recognize the importance of creating a climate of mutual respect in the school that helps all students value themselves and others.

Analyze the significance of student diversity in given educational and counseling contexts.

### Competency 0003

#### **Understand principles of learning and motivation.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Demonstrate knowledge of learning theories and behavioral and cognitive concepts of learning (e.g., reinforcement, transfer of learning, retention).

Examine the relationship between motivation and learning.

Analyze factors that affect student motivation and attitudes toward school.

Apply learning concepts and motivational principles in various educational contexts.

### Competency 0004

#### **Understand how to promote students' cognitive skills development.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for helping students develop goal-setting, problem-solving, and decision-making skills.

Examine techniques and activities for helping students acquire and apply efficient learning strategies.

Apply knowledge of techniques for encouraging students to assess their own needs, interests, and talents and direct their own learning behaviors in response to various demands and tasks.

### Competency 0005

#### **Understand how to promote students' social and personal development.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for helping students develop emotional well-being and positive self-concept.

Recognize key factors affecting students' social and personal development.

Analyze principles and strategies for helping students establish and maintain positive peer relationships, including relationships with peers from diverse backgrounds.

Recognize methods for managing personal interactions and conflicts.

## **SUBAREA II—ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

### Competency 0006

#### **Understand formal assessment and its uses in education.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Identify types of formal assessment (e.g., achievement test, aptitude test), their characteristics, their uses, and their limitations.

Use assessment concepts (e.g., validity, reliability, bias) to determine the appropriateness of a formal assessment instrument in a given situation.

Examine relationships between formal assessment and instruction.

Analyze principles of nondiscriminatory assessment as applied to formal assessment.

## Competency 0007

### **Understand informal assessment and its uses in education.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Identify types of informal assessment (e.g., portfolio, case study, anecdotal records, observation, student self-assessment), their characteristics, their uses, and their limitations.

Demonstrate knowledge of criteria and procedures for selecting informal assessment methods in given contexts.

Examine relationships between informal assessment and instruction.

Analyze principles of nondiscriminatory assessment as applied to informal assessment.

## Competency 0008

### **Understand principles and procedures for administering and interpreting educational assessments.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Recognize appropriate procedures for administering assessments in various situations, including those involving students with specified educational needs (e.g., students with special needs, students with limited English proficiency).

Demonstrate knowledge of computer-based testing programs and procedures.

Apply principles and procedures for scoring tests and interpreting assessment results.

## Competency 0009

### **Understand how to use assessment information to plan instruction and promote educational improvement.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Demonstrate knowledge of procedures for engaging in ongoing assessment and feedback and for evaluating student progress.

Use assessment results to identify individual student strengths and needs and determine appropriate changes to a student's educational environment.

Analyze the role of assessment information in instructional planning, program evaluation, and school improvement.

Apply techniques for communicating assessment information and data to parents/guardians, other educators, and community members.

## **SUBAREA III—COUNSELING AND GROUP GUIDANCE**

### **Competency 0010**

#### **Understand principles and procedures for individual counseling.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Demonstrate knowledge of principles and goals of developmental and preventive counseling.

Apply principles and techniques associated with specified counseling approaches in individual counseling situations.

Recognize procedures and techniques for establishing effective counseling relationships, determining goals, solving problems, and communicating effectively in individual counseling situations.

### **Competency 0011**

#### **Understand principles and procedures for group counseling.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Demonstrate knowledge of goals, functions, techniques, and coordination procedures for group counseling at the elementary, middle, and secondary levels.

Recognize criteria for selecting members for group counseling and stages and characteristics of group development in group counseling.

Examine factors that affect group dynamics, strategies for alleviating problems related to group dynamics, and ethical considerations and issues in group counseling situations.

Identify principles and procedures for establishing and maintaining peer counseling programs.

### **Competency 0012**

#### **Understand principles and procedures for group guidance.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Demonstrate knowledge of goals, functions, and coordination procedures for group guidance at the elementary, middle, and secondary levels.

Identify appropriate procedures and activities for different types of group guidance sessions (e.g., assembly, small group, classroom).

Demonstrate knowledge of how to plan group guidance sessions (e.g., selecting topics and presentation materials, determining group size and composition, scheduling).

Apply procedures for implementing group guidance sessions (e.g., providing follow-up activities, handling disruptive behaviors).

### **Competency 0013**

#### **Understand referral and intervention procedures.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Demonstrate knowledge of the role of the counselor, administrator, student, and family in a school-initiated referral or intervention.

Identify conditions and procedures for referring students to other school or community resources.

Identify appropriate crisis interventions in various group and individual contexts.

### **Competency 0014**

#### **Understand the needs of students with special concerns (e.g., at-risk students, students with personal or family problems).**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Recognize characteristics, needs, and concerns of at-risk students and students with personal or family problems (e.g., substance abuse, pregnancy, serious chronic illness, depression, truancy, neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, sexual harassment).

Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate counselor strategies for dealing with students who have special concerns.

Identify resources that may be useful to students with special concerns.

### **Competency 0015**

#### **Understand the significance of cultural diversity for counseling and guidance.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Recognize principles and procedures for ensuring equitable provision of counseling and guidance services to all students and for promoting a climate of mutual respect.

Examine relationships between culture, values, and students' goals, attitudes, and achievement.

Identify strategies for adapting guidance and counseling styles to meet the needs of students and families from varied cultural backgrounds.

## **SUBAREA IV—EDUCATIONAL AND CAREER PLANNING**

### **Competency 0016**

#### **Understand educational planning and placement decisions in relation to career goals.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Demonstrate knowledge of factors, issues, and procedures related to classroom placements and academic schedules.

Apply procedures for selecting student courses and curricula in various situations, including situations involving students with special educational needs.

Use various types of information (e.g., personal, achievement) to evaluate possible curriculum choices as they relate to career interests.

## Competency 0017

### **Understand career development theories, approaches, and programs.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Demonstrate knowledge of theories of career development and occupational choice (e.g., developmental, need satisfaction, trait factor) and characteristics, procedures, advantages, and limitations of various career counseling approaches.

Recognize goals and objectives of career development programs at the elementary, middle school, and secondary levels.

Apply procedures for establishing effective career education courses and information programs.

Identify strategies for helping students develop job-finding skills (e.g., résumé writing, interviewing techniques).

## Competency 0018

### **Understand procedures for career assessment and career-related decision making.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Identify techniques for helping students understand their abilities, interests, and personality characteristics in relation to career options.

Demonstrate knowledge of career assessment methods (e.g., interest inventories), and interpret career assessment results.

Apply procedures for career-related decision making (e.g., recognizing criteria for evaluating alternative career opportunities).

Identify sources of educational, occupational, and job market information.

## Competency 0019

### **Understand postsecondary educational planning.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Apply strategies for helping students research and choose postsecondary programs, prepare for entrance exams, and fulfill admission requirements.

Demonstrate knowledge of information sources and procedures for applying to colleges and universities and to vocational, technical, military, and apprenticeship programs.

Identify information sources and procedures for seeking financial aid, loans, scholarships, and grants.

## **SUBAREA V—GUIDANCE PROGRAMS AND PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE**

### **Competency 0020**

**Understand the goals and structure of a comprehensive, developmental school guidance and counseling program and procedures for establishing a program that meets students' needs.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Identify goals and objectives of school guidance and counseling programs.

Recognize procedures for developing a guidance curriculum and responsive guidance and counseling services.

Identify procedures for establishing and maintaining good public relations.

Demonstrate knowledge of procedures for establishing school guidance and counseling policies (e.g., advisory committee, confidentiality of records).

### **Competency 0021**

**Understand procedures for evaluating a guidance and counseling program and determining program needs and priorities.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Demonstrate knowledge of goals and procedures associated with a program needs assessment.

Recognize criteria for evaluating school guidance and counseling programs.

Use program evaluation results or information about students to identify program needs and priorities.

Identify effective methods for presenting program evaluation data.

### **Competency 0022**

**Understand roles, responsibilities, and professional standards of school counselors.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Identify roles and responsibilities of the school counselor in situations involving students, families, and school personnel.

Apply professional standards in various guidance and counseling contexts.

Recognize the importance of ongoing professional development for school counselors and methods for promoting professional development.

### **Competency 0023**

**Understand procedures for consultation, collaboration, and coordination.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Apply principles and procedures for consulting and collaborating with teachers, administrators, parents/guardians, and others inside and outside the school to build and maintain a strong support system for students.

Demonstrate knowledge of procedures for initiating schoolwide programs, participating on decision-making teams, and coordinating materials or services for students in various situations.

## **Competency 0024**

### **Understand how to establish and maintain effective school-home relationships.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Apply skills and strategies for communicating effectively with students' families, including those from diverse backgrounds.

Demonstrate knowledge of how to help parents/guardians support their children academically and understand the skills students need for academic and career success.

Identify appropriate ways to convey information to parents/guardians about a student's educational program and progress.

## **Competency 0025**

### **Understand legal and ethical issues related to the rights and responsibilities of students, parents/guardians, and school personnel.**

*The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.*

Demonstrate knowledge of the legal rights of students and parents/guardians regarding assessment, student records, and confidentiality.

Identify rules and procedures related to the education of students with special educational needs.

Identify legal guidelines regarding neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and sexual harassment.

Apply ethical standards and guidelines in various counseling contexts.

## PRACTICE TEST QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: SCHOOL COUNSELOR

### Practice Selected-Response Questions

#### Competency 0001

Understand human development from early childhood to young adulthood.

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1. A counselor is helping a first grader, Brian, deal with the death of a family member. It is especially important for the school counselor to:
  - A. provide Brian with the vocabulary needed for labeling and expressing his feelings.
  - B. reassure Brian that he will not always feel as sad as he does now.
  - C. describe the counselor's personal experience of losing a loved one.
  - D. accompany Brian to his classroom to explain the situation to his classmates.

**Correct Response: A.** Children who are grieving over the death of a family member may not be able to recognize or label the emotions they are experiencing. Therefore, the counselor will be most helpful to Brian by offering a way to express his feelings through words.

## Competency 0008

Understand principles and procedures for administering and interpreting educational assessments.

---

2. Ramon is a second grader who receives a grade-equivalent score of 4.5 on a mathematics achievement test. Which of the following is the best interpretation of Ramon's test result?
- A. Ramon knows mathematics about as well as a typical fourth grader at the end of the fifth month of school.
  - B. Ramon's performance on this test is about the same as that expected of an average fourth grader midway through the school year.
  - C. Ramon's current mathematics instruction should focus on content typically taught to fourth graders during the fifth month of school.
  - D. Ramon has mastered about half the mathematics content typically included in the fourth grade curriculum.

**Correct Response: B.** Grade-equivalent scores compare a student's performance to average achievement by students at specific grade levels. Ramon's score of 4.5 indicates that his performance is average for a fourth grader five deciles, or  $\frac{5}{10}$ , through the school year.

### Competency 0009

Understand how to use assessment information to plan instruction and promote educational improvement.

---

3. A school counselor is a member of a committee that is developing goals for the school. One committee recommendation is to monitor student progress closely in relation to curriculum goals and objectives. Which of the following practices would likely be most effective in implementing this recommendation?
- A. ensuring that all assessment results are reported in a standardized form that allows the results to be easily compared
  - B. obtaining frequent feedback on student progress using multiple measures
  - C. instituting a pass-fail grading system based on holistic teacher evaluations rather than on numerical or letter grades
  - D. carefully reviewing individual results on standardized tests in light of curriculum requirements

**Correct Response: B.** Each assessment method has advantages and disadvantages in evaluating individuals. Therefore, using a number of different types of assessments administered frequently throughout the school year is likely to result in the most accurate picture of how well students are acquiring and mastering curriculum goals and objectives.

## Competency 0011

Understand principles and procedures for group counseling.

---

4. A school counselor has selected several students for a group counseling session, and all the selected students have agreed to participate in the session. Which of the following should be the counselor's first step at the group's initial session?
- A. guiding group members to establish peer agreement about issues of group confidentiality
  - B. discussing the counselor's goals and expected outcomes for the group
  - C. establishing rules of order and etiquette to be used during the group sessions
  - D. explaining the sequence and purposes of activities the counselor has chosen for the group

**Correct Response: A.** Confidentiality is a necessary feature of trust building in all counseling situations, and it is particularly crucial to establish trust among group members at the outset of forming a counseling group. Professional standards also demand that issues related to confidentiality be clearly established at the beginning of all counseling relationships.

## Competency 0012

Understand principles and procedures for group guidance.

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5. A counselor in a middle school has started holding a series of discussions about issues of interest to adolescents. The issue currently under discussion is stereotyping. The counselor begins the session by showing the group some pictures from magazines and asking students to describe their reactions to the people shown in the pictures. Which of the following are advantages of the way the counselor has introduced the topic?
- I. It promotes students' immediate involvement in the issue.
  - II. It makes students appreciate the qualities within themselves that are unique.
  - III. It reduces the chances of individual group members' feeling directly threatened by the topic.
  - IV. It prompts students to express their own individuality without worrying about the reactions of other people.
- A. I and II only
  - B. III and IV only
  - C. I and III only
  - D. II and IV only

**Correct Response: C.** By asking students to describe their own reactions, the counselor has encouraged the students' immediate involvement. The exercise is also likely to be non-threatening, since the discussion is centered on photographs, not on people within the group.

## Competency 0015

Understand the significance of cultural diversity for counseling and guidance.

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6. A school counselor in a multicultural community makes it a personal priority to understand traditional family interactions (e.g., methods of decision making) characteristic of different groups. The greatest benefit of such an effort would be to help the counselor:
- A. convince families in the community to obtain appropriate counseling when needed.
  - B. adapt counseling techniques to be more responsive to individual students' personal experiences.
  - C. encourage the different groups in the community to appreciate the similarities among them.
  - D. develop an approach to counseling that is based primarily on a single theoretical model.

**Correct Response: B.** Family patterns in different cultural and ethnic groups can vary widely. A counselor who understands the characteristic patterns in families within the community is more likely to understand the life of the students and be able to adapt counseling methods to individual students more effectively. This is particularly important in situations where a student's reaction and perceptions of counseling, as well as to other life and school events, may be affected by cultural values and traditions that are different from those of the counselor.

## Competency 0016

Understand educational planning and placement decisions in relation to career goals.

---

7. A middle school counselor would like to be part of an effort that encourages more girls to pursue math, science, and other traditionally male-dominated fields. Which of the following would be the best strategy for achieving this goal?
- A. strongly advising the highest-achieving girls among the student population to take more courses in these areas
  - B. urging girls to seek any extra help they need to achieve in these fields, including counseling to allay any anxiety they may feel
  - C. initiating a program of advising, tutoring, and mentoring to help girls develop confidence and competence in these fields
  - D. routinely counseling girls to enroll in math and science courses and to inform the counselor right away if they find the courses too difficult

**Correct Response: C.** Research indicates that lack of confidence and belief in their own abilities is a major reason for girls' avoidance of math and science fields. Individual advising and tutoring with a positive emphasis are likely to help develop confidence and an increased sense of competence for girls in these subject areas.

### Competency 0017

Understand career development theories, approaches, and programs.

---

8. Alicia, a secondary school student in a college preparatory program, has many interests but is unsure about which interest to pursue as a career. Using a trait-factor approach, a school counselor's first step would be to:
- A. provide Alicia with detailed information about occupations in her areas of interest.
  - B. advise Alicia to complete a liberal arts degree before choosing a career.
  - C. encourage Alicia to pursue a career in her area of greatest achievement.
  - D. administer tests to provide Alicia with a profile of her interests, aptitudes, and personality.

**Correct Response: D.** Trait-factor approaches regard individuals as a collection of traits or characteristics that can be identified by objective means and profiled to represent an individual's potential for certain careers. Therefore, a school counselor using the trait-factor approach would begin his or her work with Alicia by administering tests that would provide information about the traits and characteristics Alicia possesses.

## Competency 0022

Understand roles, responsibilities, and professional standards of school counselors.

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9. A school counselor recently began weekly sessions with a fifth-grade student at the recommendation of her teacher and with the consent of her parents. The counselor is surprised to learn from the student that she has been seeing a psychiatrist for an anxiety disorder. In this situation, the counselor's first step should be to:
- A. encourage the student to view both counseling professionals as partners working to help her feel better.
  - B. terminate the weekly sessions at school because the student's work with the psychiatrist had been started first.
  - C. advise the student's parents that their child should choose only one counseling professional to see to avoid confusion and conflict.
  - D. ask the parents' permission to contact the psychiatrist and continue counseling in school only if the parents and psychiatrist approve.

**Correct Response: D.** When a student is receiving ongoing treatment outside the school setting, it is crucial for the school counselor to communicate with the therapist in question, with parental permission. A determination can then be made regarding the desirability of having the student receive services in both settings. If the student will receive services from both the school counselor and the psychologist, effective treatment must be carefully planned and coordinated by both practitioners.

## Competency 0025

Understand legal and ethical issues related to the rights and responsibilities of students, parents/guardians, and school personnel.

---

10. At the request of the principal, a middle school counselor is establishing a social skills group to resolve an ongoing dispute between two groups of seventh-grade students that have caused classroom and other disruptions for several months. Which of the following is the first step the counselor should take in establishing this social skills group?
- A. Advise the students' parents or guardians that their children have been assigned to this group at the request of the principal.
  - B. Inform the students that as a result of their continuing conflicts, they will be required to participate in this group.
  - C. Contact each student's parent or guardian to discuss the purpose of the group and request permission for the student to attend.
  - D. Ask each student to sign a release form indicating his or her understanding of the group's purpose and willingness to participate.

**Correct Response: C.** At the middle school level, parental permission is necessary for children to participate in any type of specialized, out-of-classroom programming. In addition, generalization of skills, such as social skills, need to be practiced and reinforced in a variety of settings, including the home, so parental support of the group's goals is very important.

## Practice Constructed-Response Assignment

11. **Read the information below; then complete the exercise that follows.**

A high school counselor is planning to launch a peer counseling program to help students deal with personal problems. The counselor envisions a program staffed by peer counselors that offers one-on-one counseling as well as mediation services for two or more parties. The counselor has the support of the administration in establishing the program, which will be available during and after school.

In an essay, discuss important factors the counselor should consider when planning such a program and describe key counseling principles and strategies to incorporate into the program. In your essay:

- discuss appropriate goals for the program and explain how such a program can benefit students;
- describe important considerations and appropriate strategies for recruiting, selecting, and training peer counselors; and
- identify and discuss effective counseling techniques and strategies (e.g., empathetic listening, problem solving) for use by peer counselors in the program.

## A Very Good Response to the Practice Constructed-Response Assignment

A peer counseling and mediation program should provide a structured way for students to talk about and resolve problems in a nonthreatening setting. Key program goals should include engaging students in productive compromise, decision-making, and problem-solving skills. Increasing self-understanding should also be stressed. A peer counseling program is particularly effective for adolescents, given their developmental characteristics, which include a strong need to identify with peers and a tendency to reject authority figures. A primary benefit to students is the cathartic effect that one-on-one counseling often has—when people are given the opportunity to talk about what is bothering them without interruption, they usually feel better afterward.

In recruiting peer counselors, nominations by peers will most likely result in candidates whom other students already listen to and trust. Teachers are also valuable resources in recruiting peer counselors; recommendations should be collected from all interested teachers. The underlying principle of a peer support program is that adolescents who are confused or in trouble naturally go to peers for advice and help; a good support program teaches these peers to be more effective helpers. Authenticity, genuineness, caring, respect, and compassion are important characteristics of a successful counselor. Peer counselors should believe they can be helpful; this will be communicated to counselees and provide support and comfort. It is important to emphasize that being nonjudgmental requires a conscious effort by adults and adolescents alike. A professional counselor or volunteer teacher trained in conjunction with the peer counselors should be available at all times for support and for more serious student problems that may arise. Trainers and peer counselors should work together to establish guidelines regarding referral options and confidentiality. Situational role-playing techniques are likely to help peer counselors apply those guidelines.

A primary goal of a training program should be to encourage use of general counseling strategies to build an open, trusting, and accepting atmosphere in the counseling relationship. Examples include basic interpersonal and communication skills, conflict resolution and problem solving, and developmental counseling strategies. Specifically, essentials of good counseling include attending skills, such as giving one's full attention and showing interest in what someone is saying through body language

(continued)

## A Very Good Response to the Practice Constructed-Response Assignment (continued)

(smiling, nodding, etc.). Questioning skills are important to cover in training; peer counselors should be advised to ask open-ended questions rather than yes-no questions to encourage the counselee to explore his or her feelings. At the most basic level, advising peer counselors to begin sentences with "You feel . . ." is an effective technique for promoting active listening and empathy. Rephrasing or restating something the counselee has said is particularly helpful in clarifying further what the counselee is trying to express. When implemented in this manner, peer counseling programs can be highly effective.

## CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE ASSIGNMENT SCORING

All responses to OSAT constructed-response assignments (written and oral) are scored using scoring scales that describe varying levels of performance. These scales were approved by committees of Oklahoma educators who reviewed both the performance characteristics and the scoring scales.

Each response is scored by multiple scorers according to standardized procedures during scoring sessions held immediately after each administration of the CEOE. Scorers with relevant professional backgrounds are oriented to these procedures before the scoring session and are carefully monitored during the scoring sessions.

A constructed-response assignment response is designated unscorable if it is blank, not on the assigned topic, illegible or unintelligible, not in the appropriate language, or of insufficient length to score. If you do not provide a scorable response for each constructed-response assignment on your test, you cannot pass the test regardless of your scores on the other section(s) of the test.

### Sample Performance Characteristics for Constructed-Response Assignments

<b>PURPOSE</b>	The extent to which the response achieves the purpose of the assignment
<b>SUBJECT MATTER KNOWLEDGE</b>	Accuracy and appropriateness in the application of subject matter knowledge
<b>SUPPORT</b>	Quality and relevance of supporting details
<b>RATIONALE</b>	Soundness of argument and degree of understanding of the subject matter

### Sample Scoring Scale for Constructed-Response Assignments

<b>SCORE POINT</b>	<b>SCORE POINT DESCRIPTION</b>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>The "4" response reflects a thorough knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The purpose of the assignment is fully achieved.</li> <li>• There is a substantial, accurate, and appropriate application of subject matter knowledge.</li> <li>• The supporting evidence is sound; there are high-quality, relevant examples.</li> <li>• The response reflects an ably reasoned, comprehensive understanding of the topic.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>The "3" response reflects a general knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The purpose of the assignment is largely achieved.</li> <li>• There is a generally accurate and appropriate application of subject matter knowledge.</li> <li>• The supporting evidence generally supports the discussion; there are some relevant examples.</li> <li>• The response reflects a general understanding of the topic.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>The "2" response reflects a partial knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The purpose of the assignment is partially achieved.</li> <li>• There is a limited, possibly inaccurate or inappropriate application of subject matter knowledge.</li> <li>• The supporting evidence is limited; there are few relevant examples.</li> <li>• The response reflects a limited, poorly reasoned understanding of the topic.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<p><b>The "1" response reflects little or no knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The purpose of the assignment is not achieved.</li> <li>• There is little or no appropriate or accurate application of subject matter knowledge.</li> <li>• The supporting evidence, if present, is weak; there are few or no relevant examples.</li> <li>• The response reflects little or no reasoning about or understanding of the topic.</li> </ul>
<b>U</b>	<b>The response is unscorable because it is illegible, not written to the assigned topic, written in a language other than English, or of insufficient length to score.</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>There is no response to the assignment.</b>

**CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS FOR OKLAHOMA EDUCATORS  
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