

TESS Rubric Descriptor: Counselor

Arkansas Department of Education



Our classroom and specialty educators strive to promote learning and growth for the students and themselves. Evidence of this work may be seen by multiple measures of student growth on local assessments and statewide tests; in consistent planning and preparing to meet the unique needs of each learner; through a welcoming, caring culture and climate; thoughtful and evidence-based instructional and assessment practices; and continually adhering to professional responsibilities. This rubric descriptor provides guidance towards the aforementioned areas.

Last Updated: April 24, 2024

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

- 1a - Demonstrating Knowledge of Counseling Theory and Techniques*
- 1b - Demonstrating Knowledge of Child and Adolescent Development*
- 1c - Establishing Goals for the Counseling Program Appropriate to the Setting and the Students Served*
- 1d - Planning the Counseling Program with Appropriate Resources*
- 1e - Developing Measures to Evaluate the Counseling Program*

1a - Demonstrating Knowledge of Counseling Theory and Techniques			
UNSATISFACTORY	PROGRESSING	EFFECTIVE	HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
Demonstrates little or no understanding of counseling theory and techniques.	Demonstrates a basic understanding of counseling theory and techniques.	Demonstrates substantial knowledge of counseling theory and techniques.	Demonstrates comprehensive understanding of counseling theory and techniques and applies them appropriately. Uses knowledge to offer differentiated support appropriate to each situation.

1b - Demonstrating Knowledge of Child and Adolescent Development			
UNSATISFACTORY	PROGRESSING	EFFECTIVE	HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
Displays no knowledge of child and adolescent development.	Displays limited knowledge of child and adolescent development.	<p>Displays substantial knowledge of child and adolescent development.</p> <p>Uses developmentally appropriate sources and materials.</p> <p>Recognizes exceptions to general patterns.</p>	<p>Uses accurate knowledge of the typical developmental characteristics of the age group and exceptions to the general patterns to determine which individual students follow the general patterns.</p> <p>Thoroughly considers, recognizes, and acquires knowledge from several sources to work with students with individual differences.</p>

1c - Establishing Goals for the Counseling Program Appropriate to the Setting and the Students Served			
UNSATISFACTORY	PROGRESSING	EFFECTIVE	HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
No clear goals for the counseling program or appropriate goals for either the situation or the age of the students.	Goals for the counseling program that are undeveloped and/or are partially suitable to the situation and the age of the students.	<p>Goals for the counseling program are developed and/or are suitable to the situation and the age of the students.</p> <p>Collects and analyzes data and stakeholder feedback to establish program goals.</p>	<p>Goals for the counseling program are appropriate to the situation, school, and student age.</p> <p>Develops goals following collaboration with students, colleagues, and staff.</p>

1d - Planning the Counseling Program with Appropriate Resources			
UNSATISFACTORY	PROGRESSING	EFFECTIVE	HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
Lacks coherence and is developed without input from stakeholders or inclusion of individual, school, and district needs.	<p>Contains guiding principles but is not consistent with individual, school, and district goals.</p> <p>Seeks minimal input from stakeholders.</p>	<p>Contains guiding principles that are consistent with individual, school, and district goals.</p> <p>Indicates services and resources through plans.</p> <p>Actively collaborates with colleagues in designing plans.</p>	<p>Provides extensive knowledge of resources including those available through the school or district and in the community.</p> <p>Has a deep understanding of the students' needs and the best practices and resources for meeting those needs.</p> <p>Identifies all stakeholders, ensuring collaboration with them when designing a program of services.</p>

1e - Developing Measures to Evaluate the Counseling Program			
UNSATISFACTORY	PROGRESSING	EFFECTIVE	HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
Has not created a plan to evaluate the program.	<p>Has a rudimentary plan to evaluate the counseling program.</p> <p>Has limited provision for the inclusion of input from others or the collection of data designed to assess the degree to which goals have been met.</p>	<p>Develops a program evaluation plan that involves all stakeholders.</p> <p>Collects data to indicate if goals have been met.</p>	<p>Evaluates the program in a highly sophisticated manner, with a wide variety of sources of evidence and a clear path toward improving the program on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Provides for active involvement of stakeholders and careful data collection on program goals.</p>

Domain 2: The Classroom Environment

2a - Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport

2b - Establishing a Culture for Productive Communication

2c - Managing Routines and Procedures in the Counseling Setting

2d - Establishing Expectations/Norms for Student Behavior in the Counseling Setting

2a - Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport

UNSATISFACTORY	PROGRESSING	EFFECTIVE	HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
<p>Does not create a safe and inviting environment.</p> <p>Interactions between counselor and students are negative, inappropriate, or insensitive.</p>	<p>Attempts to create an environment that is safe and inviting.</p> <p>Interactions with students are generally appropriate and free from conflict. They may be characterized by occasional displays of insensitivity or lack of responses to developmental differences.</p>	<p>Creates a safe and inviting environment.</p> <p>Interactions with students are appropriate, respectful, and caring.</p>	<p>Creates an environment that is always inviting, accepting, and reflects awareness regarding the sensitivity to the developmental characteristics of the population.</p> <p>Interactions reflect general warmth and caring and are appropriate to the developmental characteristics of the population served.</p> <p>Individual students seek out the counselor, reflecting a high degree of comfort and trust in the relationship.</p>

2b - Establishing a Culture for Productive Communication			
UNSATISFACTORY	PROGRESSING	EFFECTIVE	HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
Makes no attempt to establish a culture for productive communication in the counseling setting between student and counselor.	Attempts to promote a culture of productive and respectful communication between students and counselor in the counseling setting.	Promotes a culture for productive and respectful communication.	Promotes a culture in the counseling setting for productive and respectful communication with the expectation of more in-depth responses and commitment to the counseling process from the student.

2c - Managing Routines and Procedures in the Counseling Setting			
UNSATISFACTORY	PROGRESSING	EFFECTIVE	HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
<p>Routines for the counseling center or classroom work are nonexistent or in disarray.</p> <p>Unable to prioritize time-sensitive tasks.</p> <p>Does not have an organized crisis response plan to address emergencies.</p>	<p>Has rudimentary and partially successful routines for the counseling center or classroom work.</p> <p>Prioritizes a limited number of time-sensitive tasks.</p> <p>Has a rudimentary crisis response plan to address emergencies.</p>	<p>Develops effective procedures for counseling center or classroom work.</p> <p>Prioritizes time-sensitive tasks.</p> <p>Has a defined crisis response plan to address emergencies.</p>	<p>Sets routines for the counseling center or classroom that are seamless, and students assist in maintaining them.</p> <p>Demonstrates ability to prioritize all time-sensitive tasks or to delegate them to other professionals.</p> <p>Develops and communicates crisis response plan collaborating with all stakeholders.</p>

2d - Establishing Expectations/Norms for Student Behavior in the Counseling Setting			
UNSATISFACTORY	PROGRESSING	EFFECTIVE	HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
<p>No standards of conduct for students during counseling sessions are established.</p> <p>Makes no effort to maintain an environment of civility in the school.</p>	<p>Establishes partially successful standards of conduct for counseling sessions.</p> <p>Attempts, with limited success, to contribute to the level of civility in the school.</p>	<p>Establishes clear standards of conduct for counseling sessions.</p> <p>Contributes positively to the level of civility in the school.</p> <p>Communicates, models, and encourages high expectations for student behavior.</p>	<p>Clear standards of conduct for counseling sessions are established, and students are actively involved in maintaining them.</p> <p>Makes a significant contribution to the environment of civility in the school.</p> <p>Is responsive to intervention needs related to student behaviors as they arise.</p>

Domain 3: Instruction

- 3a - Communicating with Students to Determine their Needs*
- 3b - Assisting Students in the Formulation of Academic, Personal/Social, and Career Plans Based on Knowledge of Student Needs*
- 3c - Delivering Counseling Services and Resources to Support Students*
- 3d - Using Assessment to Guide Counseling Services*
- 3e - Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness*

3a - Communicating with Students to Determine their Needs

UNSATISFACTORY	PROGRESSING	EFFECTIVE	HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
<p>Does not assess behavior or academic student needs, or the assessments result in inaccurate conclusions.</p> <p>Does not communicate or collaborate with colleagues to assess student needs.</p>	<p>Assesses the basic needs of student behaviors and academics.</p> <p>Sporadically communicates and collaborates with colleagues regarding student needs.</p>	<p>Assesses the majority of student behavior or academic needs.</p> <p>Provides opportunities for all students to be involved in the counseling program.</p> <p>Uses communication with colleagues and parents as part of the assessment of student needs.</p>	<p>Creates detailed and individualized counseling plans based on student needs.</p> <p>Provides opportunities for all students to be involved in the counseling program through responsive services including individual, group, or classroom counseling.</p> <p>Uses communication with colleagues, parents, and outside community agencies as part of the assessment of student needs.</p>

3b - Assisting Students in the Formulation of Academic, Personal/Social, and Career Plans Based on Knowledge of Student Needs			
UNSATISFACTORY	PROGRESSING	EFFECTIVE	HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
Does not attempt to help students formulate academic, personal/social, and career plans.	Attempts to help students formulate academic, personal/social, and career plans.	Uses data to help students formulate academic, personal/social, and career needs. Helps students in career planning.	Helps individual students formulate academic, personal/social, and career plans while using data regarding student needs. Encourages students to take part in their academic, personal/social, and career plan.

3c - Delivering Counseling Services and Resources to Support Students			
UNSATISFACTORY	PROGRESSING	EFFECTIVE	HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
Does not make connections with other programs to meet student needs. Does not provide appropriate services and is unaware of resources or does not make appropriate referrals.	Collaborates minimally with other programs in the school. Has a basic understanding of services to be delivered but makes minimal use of resources and makes appropriate referrals inconsistently.	Collaborates successfully with other programs in the school. Understands services to be delivered and uses appropriate resources and referrals consistently.	Collaborates with other colleagues, programs, and agencies both within and beyond the school or district to meet individual student needs and ensures follow-through. Utilizes available resources to provide appropriate services. Makes the appropriate referrals on a consistent basis in collaboration with school service personnel based upon the needs of individual student needs and ensures follow-through.

3d - Using Assessment to Guide Counseling Services			
UNSATISFACTORY	PROGRESSING	EFFECTIVE	HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
Does not evaluate student progress or consult with team members to meet students' needs.	Inconsistently evaluates student progress. Inconsistently consults with team members to meet students' needs.	Consistently evaluates student progress. Consistently consults with team members to meet student needs.	Evaluates student progress using multiple measures and consults with team members. Students demonstrate some self-assessment techniques and self-advocacy.

3e - Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness			
UNSATISFACTORY	PROGRESSING	EFFECTIVE	HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
Does not adjust and prioritize routines to meet student needs. Not aware of student needs.	Minor adjustments and revisions are made to routines to meet student needs. Attempts to modify priorities to meet student needs through use of technology and best practice. Aware of student needs.	Adjustments are made to routines to meet the needs of students. Routinely modifies priorities to meet the needs of students. Continually aware of student needs.	Proposes changes and quickly incorporates new developments that will best serve the needs of students. Proactively adjusts daily routines to serve student needs.

Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities

- 4a - Reflecting on Counseling Practice*
- 4b - Maintaining Accurate Records*
- 4c - Communicating with Families*
- 4d - Participating in a Professional Community*
- 4e - Growing and Developing Professionally*
- 4f - Showing Professionalism*

4a - Reflecting on Counseling Practice

UNSATISFACTORY	PROGRESSING	EFFECTIVE	HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
<p>Reflections, adjustments, and evaluations do not exist.</p>	<p>Reflections, adjustments, and evaluations are inconsistent.</p> <p>Makes general suggestions as to how the counseling program might be improved based on some data sources.</p>	<p>Reflections, adjustments, and evaluations are consistent.</p> <p>Makes some specific suggestions as to how the program might be improved based on data sources.</p>	<p>Provides an accurate and perceptive description of the practices and processes of evaluation.</p> <p>Makes detailed suggestions as to how the counseling program might be improved based on multiple data sources.</p>

4b - Maintaining Accurate Records			
UNSATISFACTORY	PROGRESSING	EFFECTIVE	HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
Tends to produce reports, records, and documentation that are either missing, delivered late, or contain inaccuracies.	Tends to produce accurate reports, records, and documentation but turns them in late occasionally.	Keeps accurate records and submits in a timely manner.	Manages record-keeping in a methodical and effective manner.

4c - Communicating with Families			
UNSATISFACTORY	PROGRESSING	EFFECTIVE	HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
Provides no information to families, either about the counseling program, affiliated student service programs, or about individual students.	Provides limited information to families about the counseling program, affiliated student service programs or about individual students.	Provides accurate information about the counseling program to all stakeholders.	Provides accurate information about the counseling program, to all stakeholders in various ways. Includes other colleagues when necessary.

4d - Participating in a Professional Community			
UNSATISFACTORY	PROGRESSING	EFFECTIVE	HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
<p>Forms relationships with colleagues that are negative or self-serving.</p> <p>Avoids being involved in school and district events and projects.</p> <p>Does not support and is not involved in the implementation of the district mission.</p>	<p>Participates in school and district meetings and events when specifically requested to do so.</p> <p>Forms relationships with colleagues that are cordial.</p> <p>Supports the district mission and is partially involved in its implementation.</p>	<p>Participates in school and district meetings.</p> <p>Maintains positive and productive relationships with colleagues.</p> <p>Supports the district mission and is engaged in the implementation.</p>	<p>Assumes a leadership role and makes a substantial contribution to school and district meetings and events.</p> <p>Creates positive and productive relationships with colleagues.</p> <p>Is highly supportive of the district mission and actively involved in its implementation.</p>

4e - Growing and Developing Professionally			
UNSATISFACTORY	PROGRESSING	EFFECTIVE	HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
<p>Does not participate in professional development even when the need is evident.</p>	<p>Participates in required professional development activities.</p> <p>At times, pursues other convenient professional development activities.</p>	<p>Seeks opportunities for engaging professional development to enhance best practices.</p>	<p>Consistently provides a leadership role in seeking out professional development opportunities, applying knowledge, and implementing practices to increase district counseling services.</p> <p>Makes a substantial contribution to the profession.</p> <p>Takes on a leadership role by presenting information to colleagues.</p>

4f - Showing Professionalism			
UNSATISFACTORY	PROGRESSING	EFFECTIVE	HIGHLY EFFECTIVE
<p>Does not display honesty, integrity, and confidentiality in interactions with colleagues, students, and the public.</p> <p>Does not advocate for students.</p> <p>Does not adhere to district, state, and federal regulations.</p>	<p>Inconsistently displays honesty, integrity, and confidentiality in interactions with colleagues, students, and the public.</p> <p>Advocates for some students.</p> <p>Inconsistently adheres to district, state, and federal regulations.</p>	<p>Consistently displays honesty, integrity, and confidentiality with all stakeholders.</p> <p>Advocates for all students.</p> <p>Has practices that reflect professional and ethical standards and adhere to district, state, and federal regulations.</p>	<p>Continuously models' professionalism with colleagues.</p>