

Western Association for Counselor Education and Supervision

Counselor Educator Involvement Survey Results

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Chi Sigma Iota International

Author Note

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Purpose

In January 2011 we developed a survey in coordination with leaders within Chi Sigma Iota (CSI) International to assess counselor educator involvement in professional organizations in the Western region. Both CSI and the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) identify the Western region as including Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Arizona, Alaska, and Hawaii. Counselor educators in this region have traditionally been less involved in CSI and other national and international professional counseling organizations than their counterparts in other regions of the country. The purpose of the survey was to determine how CSI might better serve and promote counselor educator involvement.

It is noteworthy that the sample size for this study was small, however, the response rate was not unexpected given the history of lack of participation of WACES counselor educators in CSI and other professional associations. It is likely that those who responded are also among those most interested in professional associations and involved in professional service roles. We believe the findings of the study to be inherently interesting for both CSI and WACES, and while generalization to all Western Region counselor educators cannot be made, the findings do lend themselves to some interesting discussions and potential implications.

Procedures

A survey was developed to assess the following seven areas:

1. The professional identities and terminal degrees of participants;
2. Current professional local, state, and national organizations in which respondents are involved;

3. Current professional local, state, and national organizations in which respondents provide leadership;
4. Counselor educator perceptions of the counseling profession relative to involvement and leadership in professional organizations;
5. Participant involvement and perceptions of CSI International;
6. Motivations for being involved in professional organizations;
7. How CSI International could support counselor educator involvement at the chapter and international levels of CSI.

An initial draft of the survey was piloted with CSI leaders who generously responded to several drafts before the online survey was finalized.

The survey was distributed to 156 counselor educators in the WACES region using an email list provided by the WACES President. An initial email was sent in late January of 2011 and a follow up email sent in early February. Respondents were given three weeks to complete the survey. Twenty-six emails bounced back. Out of the 130 counselor educators' emails that did not bounce, a total of 16 participants completed the survey (a 12% respondent rate). Descriptive data were downloaded from Qualtrics into an excel spreadsheet and are reported below.

Results

Demographics

Ages of the 16 respondents ranged from 35-65 with the average age of 50.6 years. Primary cultural background included Asian American/Pan Pacific American (6%), European American/Caucasian (75%), and 19% identified as "Other" (e.g., Multiracial Asian and White, Multi-ethnic Asian-American, and Maaori/Scottish). Approximately 38% of the sample

identified themselves as male and 62% identified themselves as female. Number of years as a counselor educator ranged from five to forty-five years with a mean of 16.1 years.

Respondents reported receiving terminal degrees in the following areas: Counselor Education & Supervision (n=7; 43.8% of the sample), and other fields (n=8, 56.2%), including Counseling Psychology (n=4; 25% of the sample), Clinical Psychology (n=1; 6.3% of the sample), Educational Psychology (n=2; 12.5% of the sample), Counseling and Mediation (n=1; 6.3% of the sample), and Human and Organizational Systems (n=1; 6.3% of the sample).

Reported professional identities included Clinical Supervisor (n=1; 6.3% of the sample), Professional Counselor/Counselor (n=6; 37.5% of the sample), Counseling Psychologist (n=1; 6.3% of the sample), Marriage and Family Therapist (n=1; 6.3% of the sample, Counselor Educator (n=4; 25% of the sample, Professional Field Officer (n=1; 6.3% of the sample), Counseling psychologist and school counselor (n=1; 6.3% of the sample). One participant did not report professional identity.

Slightly over one third (38%) of participants reported being in CSI at some point, and 31% indicated that they had served as chapter faculty advisor either currently or at some point previously. Forty-three percent indicated their department had a chapter of CSI and 7% reported they were unsure whether their department had a chapter

Licenses and Certifications Currently Held

Table 1 reports the licenses and certifications currently held by participants. Forty-seven percent identified themselves as school counselors, 47% indicated they were National Certified Counselors, and 34% indicated they were Licensed Professional Counselors/Licensed Mental Health Counselors.

Table 1. Licenses and Certifications of Respondents

Licenses/Certifications	# Endorsed	%
Certified School Counselor	7	47
National Certified Counselor	7	47
Other: (e.g., Licensed Educational Psychologist, Certificate in Feminist Therapy, Certified Family Life Educator, Licensed Teacher/administrator advocate	5	33
Licensed Professional Counselor	4	27
Board Eligible Licensed Professional Counselor/Mental Health Counselor	2	13
Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist	2	13
Licensed Clinical Psychologist	2	13
Licensed School Counselor	1	7
National Certified School Counselor	1	7
Licensed Mental Health Counselor	1	7
Licensed Counseling Psychologist	0	0
Licensed Clinical Social Worker	0	0
Licensed Master Social Worker	0	0
Certified Rehabilitation Counselor	0	0
Certified Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counselor	0	0

Current Organization Membership

Table 2 reports the organizations in which participants claimed membership. Over two-thirds (69%) indicated membership with ACA, 63% indicated involvement with ACES, and 19% indicated membership with CSI.

Table 2. Current Organization Membership of Participants

Organization	# Endorsed	%
American Counseling Association (ACA)	11	69
Association for Counselor Education & Supervision	10	63

State Counseling Association (part of ASCA)	6	38
American School Counselor Association (ASCA)	5	31
Other: (e.g., California Association of School Counselors, Washington School Counselor Association, Ventura School Counseling Association, American Psychological Association, American Women in Psychology)	5	31
Counselors for Social Justice	4	25
State Counseling Association (not part of ACA or ASCA)	3	19
Chi Sigma Iota International	3	19
American Mental Health Counselors Association	2	13
Association for Specialists in Group Work	2	13
Association for Multicultural Counseling & Development	2	13
Ass'n for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender Issues in Counseling	2	13
Regional Counseling Association (part of ACA)	1	6
Association for Adult Development & Aging	1	6
Association for Assessment in Counseling and Education	1	6
American Association for Marriage & Family Therapy	1	6
Association for Creativity in Counseling	1	6
National Career Development Association	1	6
National Employment Counseling Association	1	6
Counseling Ass'n for Humanistic Education & Development	1	6
State Counseling Association (part of ACA)	0	0
Association for Assessment in Counseling and Education	0	0
Association for Creativity in Counseling	0	0
Association for Adult Development & Aging	0	0
Association for Counselors & Educators in Government	0	0
American College Counseling Association	0	0
American Rehabilitation Counseling Association	0	0
International Association of Addictions & Offender Counselors	0	0
Ass'n for Spiritual, Ethical, & Religious Values in Counseling	0	0

Current organizations providing leadership/service

Table 3 reports the organizations in which participants claimed leadership positions. Eight percent of participants indicated they held leadership positions with ACA, 42% indicated they were leaders within ACES, and 17% indicated leadership within CSI.

Table 3. Current Leadership/Service Positions of Respondents

Organization	# Endorsed	%
Association for Counselor Education & Supervision	5	42
Other (e.g., California Association of School Counselors, WACES, APA, Ventura County School Counselors Association)	4	33
State Counseling Association (not part of ACA)	2	17
State Counseling Association (part of ASCA)	2	17
Chi Sigma Iota International	2	17
American Counseling Association (ACA)	1	8
American School Counselor Association (ASCA)	1	8
State Counseling Association (part of ACA)	1	8
Regional Counseling Association (part of ACA)	1	8
Association for Counselors & Educators in Government	1	8
American School Counselor Association	1	8
Association for Specialists in Group Work	1	8
American Psychological Association	1	8
American Association for Marriage & Family Therapy	1	8
Association for Assessment in Counseling and Education	0	0
Association for Creativity in Counseling	0	0
Association for Adult Development & Aging	0	0
American College Counseling Association	0	0
Association for Multicultural Counseling & Development	0	0
American Mental Health Counselors Association	0	0
American Rehabilitation Counseling Association	0	0
Counselors for Social Justice	0	0
International Association of Addictions & Offender Counselors	0	0
National Career Development Association	0	0
Counseling Ass'n for Humanistic Education & Development	0	0
National Employment Counseling Association	0	0
International Association of Marriage & Family Counselors	0	0
Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling	0	0
Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues in Counseling	0	0

Reasons for involvement in professional organizations

Table 4 lists the reported reasons for involvement in professional organizations. The top three reasons listed for involvement included “Improve my skills as a Counselor Educator” (81%), “A desire to shape the present and future directions of my professions” (88%), and “Model professional involvements for my students” (75%).

Table 4. Reasons for involvement in professional organizations

Reasons for Involvement	# Endorsed	%
A desire to shape the present and future directions of my profession	14	88
Improve my skills as a Counselor Educator	13	81
Model professional involvements for my students	12	75
A desire to be a leader in my profession	11	69
Professional advocacy	11	69
Improve my skills as a supervisor	10	63
Networking opportunities	10	63
Opportunities to work closely with students	10	63
Improve my skills as a researcher	9	56
Personal satisfaction from being involved in relevant organizations	9	56
Opportunities to present at conferences	8	50
Client Advocacy	6	38
Subscriptions to journals associated with the organization	5	31
Improve my skills as a practitioner	4	25
I was encouraged to do so by my mentors in graduate school	4	25
Opportunities to attend conferences	4	25
Continued Education credits	3	19
Insurance	3	19
Required by my contract/department	1	6
Other:	1	6

Perceptions of the Counseling Profession

Table 5 lists participants’ perceptions of the counseling profession relative to their professional involvements. One hundred percent of participants agreed or strongly agreed that a strong professional identity is vital in moving the counseling profession forward. Ninety-four

percent of participants reported feeling that being involved in leadership was an important way to demonstrate a strong counselor identity to others. All but one participant indicated that they were satisfied with their current involvement with professional organizations. There was a significant amount of variability among responses for items 2 and 5.

Table 5. Perceptions of the Counseling Profession

Perceptions of Counseling Profession and Involvement	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)	Mean	S. D.
1. I believe a strong counselor identity is vital in moving the counseling profession forward.	0	0	6	10	3.6	.50
2. Being involved in leadership and service within the counseling profession is an important way to demonstrate a strong counselor identity to others (e.g., colleagues, students and/or community we serve).	0	1	4	11	3.6	.62
3. I believe it is important for me to model relevant leadership and service in the counseling profession to my students.	0	0	3	12	3.8	.40
4. I am required to take part in leadership and/or service in professional counseling organizations as part of my departmental obligations/contract.	1	3	8	3	2.9	.83
5. Even if it was not required by my department to take part in leadership and/or service activities, I would still be actively engaged in leadership and/or service as part of my commitment to the counseling profession.	0	0	5	10	3.7	.49
6. I am currently satisfied with my leadership and/or service involvements within the counseling profession.	0	1	4	11	3.6	.32

Current Involvement In and Perceptions of CSI

Table 6 lists participants' current involvement and perceptions of CSI. Six participants (38% of the sample) either strongly disagreed or disagreed that they were familiar with CSI's mission. Nine participants (56% of the sample) believed that CSI was an organization relevant to their professional development. Most participants (56% of the sample) reported that they disagreed or strongly disagreed that they were "actively involved" with CSI at the international level; more participants reported being involved at the chapter level (31% of the sample). **Fifty percent of the sample indicated they would like to become more involved with CSI whereas 25% indicated they would like to increase their involvement at the chapter level.**

The items with the greatest variability in responses were #4, I am actively involved within my department's chapter of CSI International (S.D. = 1.6), and #12, I would become more involved in my department's chapter of CSI International if it seemed more relevant to my needs as a faculty member (S. D. = 1.5).

Table 6. Current Involvement and Perceptions of CSI

Involvement & Perceptions of CSI	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	S.D.
1. I am familiar with CSI International's mission and purpose within the counseling profession.	5	1	7	3	2.5	1.2
2. I believe that CSI International is an organization relevant to my professional development.	1	2	6	3	3.4	1.2
3. I believe that CSI International is an organization relevant to my students' professional development.	0	1	6	3	3.8	1.0
4. I am actively involved within my department's chapter of CSI International.	3	2	3	2	3.3	1.6
5. I am actively involved with CSI International at the national level.	3	6	2	1	2.7	1.4

6. I am satisfied with my current level of involvement with CSI International at the national level.	0	6	2	1	3.4	1.4
7. I am satisfied with my current level of involvement with CSI International at the chapter level.	1	4	2	3	3.5	1.4
8. I believe CSI International is a powerful resource that can help engage my students in scholarly achievements, service, and other professional opportunities.	0	2	7	2	3.5	1.1
9. I would like to become more involved in my department's CSI chapter.	0	7	3	1	3.1	1.3
10. I would like to become more involved at a national level with CSI International.	0	3	5	3	3.5	1.1
11. I would like it if CSI International would provide more activities and opportunities of relevance to faculty members.	1	1	6	4	3.6	1.2
12. I would become more involved in my department's chapter of CSI International if it seemed more relevant to my needs as a faculty member.	2	1	4	1	3.7	1.5

Current Involvement with CSI

Table 7 reports the current level of involvement with CSI. Sixty-nine percent of participants indicated they were not currently involved with CSI. Thirteen percent of participants indicated they were highly involved, and 19% indicated they were either involved or somewhat involved with the organization.

Table 7. Current Involvement with CSI

Current Involvement with CSI	# Endorsed	%
Not Involved	11	69
Somewhat Involved	2	13
Involved	1	6
Highly Involved	2	13

Reported Incentives to Increase Involvement in CSI at Chapter Level

Table 8 reports the incentives that counselor educators indicated would increase involvement in CSI at the chapter level. Counselor educators rated increased funding (57%), reduced costs for membership (50%), the offerings of workshops and seminars (43%), and opportunities to present at conferences (43%) the highest.

Table 8. Reported Incentives to Increase Involvement in CSI at Chapter Level

Incentive for involvement in CSI at chapter level	# Endorsed	%
Funding to attend conferences	8	57
Reduce membership costs for Counselor Educators	7	50
Workshops and seminars at the chapter level relevant to building my skills as a practitioner, Counselor Educator, researcher, and/or supervisor	6	43
Opportunities to present at conferences	6	43
Opportunities to advocate for my students	6	43
More ways to become involved at the chapter level without becoming a chapter faculty advisor	5	36
Opportunities to advocate for populations within my community	5	36
Online continuing education (CEU) credits	4	29
Increased networking opportunities	4	29
Increased opportunities for student contact/mentoring opportunities	3	21
Other: (e.g., admittance into CSI, provide more information with what CSI is)	2	14
Insurance	1	7

Reported Incentives to Increase Involvement in CSI at International/National Level

Table 9 reports the incentives that counselor educators indicated would increase involvement in CSI at the international and/or national level. Counselor educators rated increased networking opportunities nationally/internationally (77%), opportunities to present at

conferences nationally/internationally (62%), and opportunities to advocate for high-risk populations nationally/internationally (62%) the highest.

Table 9. Incentives to Increase Involvement in CSI at International/National Level

Incentive for increased involvement in CSI at International/National Level	# Endorsed	%
Increased networking opportunities nationally/internationally	10	77
Opportunities to present at conferences nationally/internationally	8	62
Opportunities to advocate for high-risk populations nationally/internationally	8	62
Workshops and seminars at the international level relevant to building my skills as a practitioner, Counselor Educator, researcher, and/or supervisor	7	54
Funding to attend conferences nationally/internationally	7	54
Reduce membership costs for Counselor Educators	6	46
Increased opportunities for student contact/mentoring opportunities nationally	4	31
More ways to become involved at the national level without becoming a chapter faculty advisor	4	31
Opportunities to advocate for my students at the national/international level	3	23
Online continued Education credits	2	15
Other: (e.g., admittance into CSI, provide more information with what CSI is)	2	15
Insurance	1	8

Discussion

The purpose of this survey study was to assess seven areas of counselor educator leadership and involvement in professional organizations in order to determine how CSI International might better serve counselor educators in the WACES region. Sixteen counselor educators participated in the study, providing a 12% overall respondent rate. Results are discussed in the context of each of the seven areas of assessment below.

1. The professional identities and terminal degrees of participants

The reported professional identities and terminal degrees of participants were diverse. Over half of the participants in this sample cannot be members of CSI by virtue of their terminal degrees being in a field different than counselor education. Several counselor educators with reported professional identities other than “counselor educator” or “professional counselor” expressed resentment through the use of comments toward CSI since their terminal degrees were not in Counselor Education. It would be highly informative to determine the number of counselor educators in WACES relative to other regions receiving terminal degrees outside of counselor education. This might help explain why there is some resentment from counselor educators in WACES and possibly lower involvement in CSI as compared to other regions (e.g., Southern ACES). If future inquiry suggests that a large number of WACES counselor educators received terminal degrees fields other than counselor education, CSI ought to consider how they can collaborate with organizations to keep in touch with counselor educators and counselor advocacy on the west coast.

2. & 3. Current professional local, state, and national organizations in which respondents are involved and/or provide leadership

The counselor educators in this sample were members of local, state, and national/international organizations. They reported themselves as holding numerous leadership positions, though relatively few were members of CSI and most of these members in this sample also held leadership positions in the organization. Relatively few participants indicated membership in CSI.

4. Counselor educator perceptions of the counseling profession relative to involvement and leadership in professional organizations

Overall, counselor educators reported membership and involvement in professional organizations relevant to counseling and counselor education. All participants reported believing that a strong professional identity was vital in moving the counseling profession forward into the future. Leadership in organizations was viewed as being an important way to demonstrate a strong counselor identity to others and most felt good about their involvement in organizations. These results suggest that this sample of counselor educators possess a favorable attitude toward involvement in counseling organizations on the whole. They felt satisfied with their current involvements and felt like they contributed positively to the profession.

5. Participant involvement and perceptions of CSI International

A large number of participants indicated they were not aware of CSI's mission. Nonetheless, most believed that CSI was relevant to their professional development. The majority of participants indicated a lack of involvement at the chapter and international/national levels yet half of the sample indicated they would like to become more involved with CSI in some way. This suggests that half of the participants in this sample wanted to become more involved with CSI and may need more information or be provided with resources on how to increase involvement.

6. Motivations for being involved in professional organizations

Counselor educators were involved in professional organizations because they wanted to become better counselor educators, they wanted to shape the profession, and they have a desire to model professional involvement to their students. These results suggest that CSI might provide increased opportunities for education, such as increased workshops and seminars on topics in counselor education. CSI International may want to provide more opportunities that bring counselor educators and students together through opportunities in mentoring programs. In

addition, CSI may need to do more work in marketing leadership opportunities in the WACES region. This sample had a desire to “shape the profession.” So, providing increased mailings and free literature on how they can shape the profession may be relevant.

7. How CSI International could support counselor educator involvement at the chapter and international levels of CSI

At both the chapter and international/national levels, counselor educators indicated they would appreciate more opportunities for funding. As mentioned in the previous section, participants in this survey indicated a preference for more workshops and seminars as well as opportunities to present at conferences. At the national/international level counselor educators reported a desire to make a difference with high-risk populations. Just as CSI had a presence at the service day in New Orleans at the ACA national convention in 2011, CSI need consider how it can continue having an impact on the populations in which counselor educators want to make an impact. In addition, participants emphasized the importance of networking at the national/international level. Since ACA will be in San Francisco, California in 2012, CSI can look into how they might market the CSI day ahead of time through the use of several different outlets with WACES counselor educators.

Implications

Earlier it was stated that the purpose of conducting this survey study was to determine how CSI might better serve and promote counselor educator involvement in CSI International in the WACES region. The participants in this survey reported a rich involvement in professional organizations and claimed that strong professional identity is of importance to them. However, many indicated they were not aware of CSI’s mission yet identified CSI as being relevant to their professional development. This result suggests that CSI might consider doing more marketing in

WACES regions to make its mission known and establish a presence at state level and regional conferences. In addition, counselor educators in this region reported educational opportunities to enhance their skills as educators as a driving force in being involved in professional organizations. Providing leadership and pedagogical training seminars at local and regional conferences might play a role in attracting and meeting the needs of counselor educators in this region. CSI can also have a strong presence in San Francisco at ACA in 2012 and may consider how they might collaborate with WACES leaders in serving counselor educators at the conference to enhance networking opportunities and mentorship.

One of the most important findings in this survey study was that over half of the participants in this sample are ineligible for membership in CSI by virtue of their terminal degrees not being in counselor education. With only a 12% respondent rate any of the results of this study are far from generalizable. However, it is very possible that many other counselor educators in this region might share this same dilemma. If many counselor educators in WACES possess terminal degrees in fields other than counselor education it should be of little wonder that CSI International lacks involvement and support from counselor educators in this region. CSI International need consider how it can meet the needs of counselor educators who lack terminal degrees in counselor education. Doing so might enhance its ability to spread its mission across regions on the west side of the United States. If membership is not an option, CSI international still might provide funding opportunities or invitations to leadership events at state, regional, and national conferences for counselor educators as well as student members. The use of honorary or alternative CSI chapters might also provide students in the WACES regions with scholarly and leadership opportunities when entire departments lack eligible chapter faculty advisors (CFAs). The organization might establish trainings specific to faculty who lack terminal

degrees in counselor education who desire to be CFAs so they can be clear and carry forward the mission of CSI while serving their students in this role.

As mentioned, the generalizability of this survey study is limited. Results should be interpreted with caution. Nonetheless, such a low respondent rate is noteworthy. These authors wonder whether such a low respondent rate is unique to WACES counselor educators or if similar respondent rates would span across ACES regions. In addition, it is of interest to determine the professional identities of counselor educators in other ACES regions and to what extent counselor educators face similar dilemmas to over half of the sample in this study. One way to determine the professional identities of counselor educators and whether similar respondent rates will occur within other regions of ACES is by administering this same instrument to counselor educators in other regions. It is recommended to CSI International that such an administration occurs to answer such questions and to most importantly further determine how the needs of counselor educators might be similar or different across regions.