




Memorandum of Understanding

This MOU has been read and approved by:

Department Chair:  Date: 5/11/2026
Bitra Ghafoori

Dean, College of Education:  Date: 5/11/2026
Anna Ortiz

Vice Provost Academic Programs:  Date: 5/12/2026
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Program Review Summary
Memorandum of Understanding
Advanced Studies in Education and Counseling (ASEC)
College of Education
May 2026

This document summarizes the Program Review findings and serves as a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining the consensus reached by the Department of Advanced Studies in Education and Counseling (ASEC), the College of Education, and the Division of Academic Affairs. It is based on the recently conducted program review, including the self-study report submitted on May 29, 2025, and the external review completed by Drs. Gamble and Kasari on September 25–26, 2025. This MOU describes the goals to be achieved and the actions to be undertaken by all parties during the next program review cycle. Progress toward these goals will be documented in an annual report.

The Department of Advanced Studies in Education and Counseling (ASEC) offers six graduate degree programs (two of which are reviewed separately), one certificate program, and two credential programs. Four graduate programs are under review in this cycle:

1. **M.S. in Counseling Psychology.** A 65-unit program completed over 2-, 2.5-, or 3-year tracks. The program prepares students to meet the competencies required for licensure as Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFT) and Licensed Professional Clinical Counselors (LPCC) through the California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS).
2. **M.S. in Educational Technology and Media Leadership (ETEC).** A 30-unit program completed in 1.5 to 3 years, which transitioned to a fully online format in Spring 2023. Formerly an option within the M.A. in Education, this program provides foundational knowledge and applied skills for advancing careers in educational settings that utilize digital technologies, including artificial intelligence, with an emphasis on supporting diverse populations.
3. **M.A. in Equity, Education, and Social Justice (EESJ).** A 33-unit interdisciplinary program completed in 2 to 3 years. Formerly an option within the M.A. in Education (Social and Cultural Analysis), the program draws on multiple fields, including education, sociology, political science, cultural studies, urban planning, ethnic studies, and gender studies, to examine issues of equity and justice in urban and global contexts. Graduates are prepared for careers in education, nonprofit and community-based organizations, and the private sector (e.g., policy analysis).
4. **M.S. in Special Education.** A minimum 30-unit program that complements the credential program. The program develops advanced knowledge of research, policy, and practice in special education, with a focus on equity and accessibility for students with disabilities and their families.



The Department does not have a prior department-level MOU. However, the M.S. in Counseling Psychology program completed a prior review cycle, with an MOU signed in October 2021. That MOU included the following recommendations: 1) Consistently engage in an ongoing program of assessment of institutional, programmatic, and student learning outcomes across the curriculum, and provide an annual update (due June 1) reporting on annual assessment and progress made towards the actions agreed to in this MOU to the CED dean, the Vice Provost for Academic Programs, and the Coordinator of Program Review and Assessment; 2) Evaluate the curriculum and survey opportunities to integrate diversity across courses; 3) Review elective courses, class size, the availability of classes (including practical fieldwork experience), and faculty resources in consideration of potential program growth; 4) Conduct a comprehensive review of the website for accuracy of its information given the recent changes to the program (recent elevation), including updating the program mission statement in a prominent position within the website; 5) Work with the College to develop a strategic plan which identifies priority needs for hiring tenure-track faculty with consideration for diversity according to available resources; 6) Work with the college to identify potential areas of growth and develop a strategic plan for the necessary resources to support any growth or expansion, either stateside or in self-support. Any growth would need to consider availability of Clinic sites; 7) Work with the College to engage in strategic planning discussions with the program in terms of areas of growth and provide support for any required resources needed (faculty, staff, facilities, etc.); and 8) Work with the College to support the department in the expansion of assessment processes to help improve graduate education and “closing the loop” activities.

Resources reviewed for the report:

1. Self-study 2025
2. External review 2025
3. M.S. Counseling Psychology MOU 2020
4. Department of ASEC website

Strengths Identified in the Reports

1. **Enrollment Demand and Stable Cohort Model.** ASEC maintains stable enrollment across its graduate programs, with an average of approximately 331 students enrolled annually across six programs (typically two cohorts per program). Most programs maintain cohort sizes of 25-30 students and consistently receive sufficient applications to meet enrollment targets.
 - M.S. in Counseling Psychology. This program demonstrates particularly high demand, with a low admit yield. In response, the program increased its cohort size from 30 to 50 students in Fall 2024, resulting in an increase in total headcount from approximately 74-78 students to 95 students.
 - M.S. in ETEC. Headcount ranged from 46 (Fall 2018) to 38 (Fall 2021), stabilizing at approximately 25 students following transition to a fully online format (unclear if representing one or two cohorts).



- M.A. in EESJ. Headcount ranged from 58-61 (Fall 2018-2022), with 45 students in Fall 2023 and 49 in Fall 2024 following program redesign.
- M.S. in Special Education. Consistent enrollment between 41 and 51 students, with current enrollment at 48.

In addition, ASEC generates significant FTES through credential students classified as undergraduates, resulting in substantial non-major and undergraduate enrollment in ASEC courses.

2. **Commitment to Diversity and Inclusive Practices.** ASEC demonstrates a strong commitment to recruiting and supporting diverse students, faculty, and staff. Faculty composition includes a high representation of faculty of color and women, and the student population reflects the demographics of the Long Beach region, with a high proportion of Latinx students.

Recent faculty hiring in Counseling Psychology has further strengthened faculty representation. Comparisons between faculty and student demographics suggest progress toward aligning faculty composition with the communities served. Programs emphasize inclusive learning environments through the use of culturally responsive pedagogy. Faculty participate in professional development opportunities offered by the College of Education and engage in departmental discussions focused on inclusive teaching practices.

Due to small cohort sizes, disaggregated data by race and ethnicity are limited. However, available evidence does not indicate significant equity gaps across programs.

3. **High-Impact Practices.** All four programs incorporate high-impact practices that emphasize applied learning, including service learning, community engagement, and field-based experiences. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) are aligned with professional practice, and the cohort model fosters strong learning communities that support collaboration and engagement.
4. **Time to Degree and Graduation Rates.** The cohort-based structure supports strong student persistence (typically above 90%) and high graduation rates across programs. Time to degree is generally consistent with program design, with variations often attributable to external factors such as employment, family responsibilities, and COVID-19 disruptions. Graduation rates by program include.
 - M.S. Counseling Psychology: 3-year graduation rate ~90% (2-year rates lower due to extended cohort structure)
 - ETEC: 2- and 3-year rates ranging from 66.7% to 100% (small cohort sizes)
 - EESJ: 2-year rates of 93.8–100%; 3-year rates of 83-95.7%
 - M.S. Special Education: 2-year rates of 66.7–95.8%; 3-year rates of 76.2–100%

A small number of students (typically 1–3 annually) do not complete culminating requirements on schedule. However, advising support is in place to help students remain on track.

5. **Low CDFW Rates.** The department reports no courses with aggregate CDFW rates above 15% or enrollments below five students. Faculty provide advising and academic support as needed to promote student success.



6. **Assessment Practices.** With support from the College of Education Assessment Office, ASEC demonstrates strong assessment practices. Each program has assessed at least one PLO annually, in addition to evaluating signature assignments. Indirect assessment through student surveys is also regularly conducted. Assessment results indicate that PLOs are being met at rates of 90% or higher across programs. Findings are reviewed annually by faculty and used to inform curriculum planning and continuous improvement efforts.
7. **Student-Centered Practice.** ASEC programs employ a student-centered approach that incorporates regular feedback from students to guide program improvements. Student feedback indicates that programs provide a strong academic foundation and effectively prepare graduates for professional and academic advancement.

Concerns Noted in the Reports:

No major concerns were identified in either the self-study or the external review report.

Opportunities for Development Identified in the Reports

1. **Faculty and Program Growth.** While the number of tenure-line faculty has increased modestly (from 23 to 26) and lecturer faculty from 62 to 73, tenure density has remained relatively stable (52.7% to 53.1%). Given the relatively high student-to-faculty ratio (average SFR of 18.6) and the continued growth of programs (particularly the expansion of the M.S. in Counseling Psychology and the proposed PsyD), additional full-time faculty resources may be needed to sustain program operation, support student demand, and maintain appropriate advising, teaching, and supervision capacity.
2. **Curriculum Development.** The department has successfully completed program elevations to comply with EO 1071. Continued expansion of the M.S. in Counseling Psychology and the proposed development of a Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) in Counseling Psychology program present opportunities to further strengthen curriculum design, ensure alignment with professional standards, and assess long-term sustainability of program growth.
3. **Facilities and Resources:** Current facilities support instructional and student needs. However, anticipated program growth, particularly the development of a PsyD program, will require additional infrastructure. This includes a dedicated training clinic with appropriate technology, assessment materials, and staff to support practicum experiences. In addition, expanding access to graduate-level writing support may be beneficial, as current campus resources are limited relative to student demand.
4. **Alumni and Community Involvement.** Strengthening alumni and community partnerships presents an opportunity to enhance student outcomes through expanded fieldwork placements, mentoring, and professional development opportunities. Increased engagement may also support recruitment efforts and create opportunities for alumni contributions, including mentorship, internship placement, and collaboration on community-based projects.



5. **Challenges with Online Instruction.** The department's online programs (i.e., ETEC and Special Education) have opportunities to further enhance instructional effectiveness by strengthening student engagement and collaboration in online environments. Additional focus on supporting academic writing, maintaining academic integrity (such as use of Generative AI), and exploring hybrid models may further improve student learning and program quality.
6. **Program Offerings.** There is an opportunity to review and potentially streamline program offerings, particularly within Special Education, to reduce overlap and improve clarity for prospective students. Aligning program structure, cohort size targets (e.g., 22–25 students), and growth goals with institutional resources and long-term sustainability will be important for maintaining program quality and equity across offerings

Recommendations

It is therefore agreed that the Department of Advanced Studies in Education and Counseling (ASEC) will collaborate with the College of Education and Division of Academic Affairs to:

1. Continue to implement the program's comprehensive assessment plan in order to complete annual assessments using direct and indirect methods and report on closing-the-loop activities to illustrate that continuous learning outcome data are used to inform decision making. Expanding preparation for comprehensive assessments across all programs is critical. Utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data will provide valuable insights for curriculum revisions and support strategies to enhance student outcomes. The Department will provide an annual progress report (due in December) to the Dean for College of Education, Vice Provost for Academic Programs, and Coordinators of Program Review and Assessment. The review cycle will span 2025-2032, with a comprehensive self-study due in September 2032 for the 2032–2033 academic year review.
2. Continue to review and update curricula to ensure alignment with current disciplinary standards and pedagogical practices. Advance the development of the proposed PsyD in Counseling Psychology, including identification of required resources to support implementation. Address challenges associated with online instruction, including student engagement, academic writing development, and appropriate use of emerging technologies (e.g., AI). (*Opportunities 2, 3, and 5*).
3. Develop a strategic plan for faculty hiring and space allocation to support current program needs and anticipated growth, including expansion of the M.S. in Counseling Psychology and development of the PsyD program. (*Opportunity 1 and 3*).
4. Expand alumni and community partnerships to enhance fieldwork placements, student mentoring, and professional development opportunities. Strengthen engagement to support student recruitment, external funding, and community-based learning initiatives. (*Opportunity 4*).
5. Review and refine program offerings to ensure alignment with institutional growth goals, financial sustainability, and equity across programs. This includes evaluating



potential consolidation or restructuring of programs where appropriate. (*Opportunity 6*).

This MOU has been reviewed and approved by:

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