ITEM 1
UNIT MISSION STATEMENT

The Counseling Department is one of five academic units within the College of Education and one of two departments providing graduate level training only. The purpose of the Counseling Department is to prepare a diverse student population at the Master's Degree level (recognized as the terminal practitioner degree) for professional service as school counselors, professional mental health counselors, student affairs professionals, and/or advanced study. Our department houses one of only two professional counseling programs in Nebraska accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), a division of the American Counseling Association, and the only counseling department in the state that holds accreditation for both the School Counseling and Clinical Mental Health Counseling specializations. The Counseling program is also accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE/CAEP). These accreditations illustrate the program's adherence and commitment to the highest academic and professional standards in the counseling profession.

Mission

The University of Nebraska at Omaha's Role and Mission Statement approved by the Board of Regents in 1990, designates UNO as the major provider of educational opportunities in the metropolitan Omaha area. The following excerpt from the Board's statement summarizes UNO's mission:

UNO exists for the purpose of providing appropriate educational opportunities, discovering and disseminating knowledge through research and teaching, and offering public service to the citizens of the State, particularly the residents of the Omaha metropolitan area. Through these traditional, interdependent, and mutually-reinforcing functions, the faculty of the University of Nebraska at Omaha enrich the lives of students; advance the frontiers of knowledge; and contribute to the social, cultural, international and economic development of the community, State and region.

Similarly, the Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education notes that UNO "...is an urban campus serving the educational needs of the Omaha Metropolitan area." The counselor training program specifically addresses each of these identified purposes. Graduates of the program are prepared to function professionally within their areas of specialization; service to community is a major emphasis, with all faculty providing seminars to schools and service agencies, and with student interns providing counseling through a department/college-sponsored clinic to children, families and individuals in the metropolitan area. Counseling interns serve the needs of many clients with low or no incomes referred by community agencies such as the Open Door Mission, Half-Way House, hospitals, and social agencies. Interns are available to present workshops, under the supervision of faculty supervisors to community groups requesting specific topics, such as a Pregnancy Prevention Workshop to Omaha Housing Authority. All classes are scheduled in the late afternoon and evening to accommodate the needs of the program's non-traditional students. Program graduates are prepared to fill the need for trained professionals to address the violence and other social
problems occurring in today's metropolitan areas and the critical shortage of elementary school counselors. Virtually all of the program's graduates obtain professional employment in the Omaha metropolitan area.

**Counseling Department Mission Statement**

The mission of the UNO Counseling Department is to provide high quality training and curricular experiences to masters-level candidates, leading to eligibility for professional counselor certification and licensure, in alignment with the standards of the (CACREP). We educate academically-grounded and clinically-skilled counselors who are competent to work with diverse clients and in a variety of settings, with special emphasis on issues that emerge in a diverse metropolitan environment. We support our students as they acquire knowledge and skills to practice effectively and ethically, develop as critical and innovative thinkers, and become leaders in the counseling profession and in their area of specialization.

**Unit Value Proposition**

UNO’s Counseling Department is the only graduate program in Nebraska offering two CACREP (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs) accredited degree programs. CACREP is the accrediting body of the American Counseling Association and is evidence of an attitude and philosophy that program excellence is a fundamental goal. Because of our commitment to a rigorous curriculum and student focus, inherent of CACREP accreditation, our UNO Counseling students earn degrees that offer maximum licensure portability while enjoying the benefit of public school tuition rates.

**Unit Nuggets**

1. In a one-year period, 64 Counseling program graduates combined to offer over 44,800 hours of service in the clinic and area mental health or education related facilities. *(64 students complete 100 practicum and 600 hrs. of internship…thus 64 x 700 = 44,800).*

2. The UNO group average for counseling students is consistently higher than the overall national average on the National Counseling Exam with a 96% pass rate.
ITEM 2
Unit Organizational Chart
DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING

Dean of COE
  ↓
Department Chair
  ↓
Secretary
  ↓
Work Study
  ↓
Counseling Department Faculty

Graduate Dean
  ↓
Grad Chair
  ↓
Grad Assistants
  ↓
Grad Committee
  ↓
Department Committees
  ↓
Students
ITEM 3
ACADEMIC PROGRAM INFORMATION

Department/School: COUNSELING
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Program Title: CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH

Program Description:

A minimum 60 credit hour graduate program consisting of didactic courses, skill development courses and nine credit hours (3 semesters) of Practicum and Internship experience in both the UNO Community Counseling Clinic and a community agency other than UNO. The program holds CACREP accreditation, illustrating the program’s adherence and commitment to the highest academic and professional standards of the counseling discipline.

Program Objectives:

The Clinical Mental Health Program (CMH) prepares individuals at the graduate level for service in entry level professional counseling positions in community agencies and programs. Typical community programs or agencies include mental health centers, hospitals, substance abuse programs, marriage and family counseling services, college counseling centers, private practice, and rehabilitation counseling. The CMH program also prepares students for doctoral training programs. Degree Offering: M.A. (thesis option) and M.S. (non-thesis option)

Names of full-time faculty who teach within the program:
Abby Bjornsen
David Carter
Daniel Kissinger
Ann Luther
Clyde (Rick) Richards

Accreditations:
Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)
National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE/CAEP)
ITEM 3
ACADEMIC PROGRAM INFORMATION

Department/School: COUNSELING
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Program Title: SCHOOL COUNSELING K-12

Program Description:

A 48-51 credit hour master degree program consisting of didactic coursework, skill development coursework and nine credit hours (3 semesters) of practicum and internship experience in K-12 school guidance and counseling programs. The program is accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

Program Objectives:

The School Counseling Program provides pre-service and continuing education opportunities for persons serving or preparing to serve as professional school counselors. The program also prepares persons for advanced graduate work beyond the master degree.

Degree Offering: M.A. (thesis option) and M.S. (non-thesis option)

Names of full-time faculty who teach within the program:
    Abby Bjornsen
    David Carter
    Daniel Kissinger
    Ann Luther
    Clyde (Rick) Richards

Accreditations:
    Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, CACREP
    National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE/CAEP)
ITEM 3
ACADEMIC PROGRAM INFORMATION

Department/School: COUNSELING
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Program Title: STUDENT AFFAIRS PRACTICE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Program Description:
A 36 credit hour master’s degree program consisting of didactic coursework, skill development courses and Internship experience. The program’s primary emphasis is on preparing students for positions in higher education settings, particularly academic advising and other administrative positions.

Program Objectives:
The Student Affairs Practice in Higher Education Program prepares persons for professional level service in the student affairs services of colleges and universities and for post-graduate work in higher education or related programs. Likely areas of service include admissions, registrar and student records, counseling and testing, career development, student organizations and financial aid as examples.

Degree Offering: M.A. and M.S.

Names of full-time faculty who teach within the program:
  Abby Bjornsen
  David Carter
  Daniel Kissinger
  Ann Luther
  Clyde (Rick) Richards
ITEM 3
ACADEMIC PROGRAM INFORMATION

Department/School: COUNSELING
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Program Title: GERONTOLOGY

Program Description:

This 48 credit hour master degree program in Counseling/Gerontology is a cooperative effort of the Counseling Department and the Gerontology Department. The UNO Gerontology Program offers courses leading to a certificate in gerontology. Graduate students wishing to earn a degree in counseling with emphasis in gerontology must be admitted to the gerontology certificate program and the Counseling Program. The gerontology concentration provides additional coursework and experience through field placement that helps prepare students for direct practice careers in social services to older adults and their families.

Program Objectives:

The gerontology concentration prepares students for direct practice careers in social services to older adults and their families. Through specialized gerontology courses and variety of supervised field placements, students learn to address the complex psychosocial issues of aging. This degree prepares person for professional level service in gerontology; also continued post masters degree work.

Degree Offering: M.A. (thesis option) and M.S. (non-thesis option)

Names of full-time faculty who teach within the program:
   Abby Bjornsen
   David Carter
   Daniel Kissinger
   Ann Luther
   Clyde (Rick) Richards
## ANNUAL REPORT - ITEM 4a
### FULL-TIME FACULTY INFORMATION - COUNSELING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Degree &amp; Field¹</th>
<th>Rank²</th>
<th>Tenure Status</th>
<th>Tenure Track</th>
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<tr>
<td>Abby Bjornsen</td>
<td>PhD (2011) in Counseling Psychology, University of Kansas</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
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<td>David Carter</td>
<td>PhD (1994) in Community &amp; Human Resources, University of Nebraska-Lincoln</td>
<td>Professor</td>
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<td>Daniel Kissinger</td>
<td>Ph.D. in Counselor Education (CACREP Accredited), University of South Carolina</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
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<td>Ann Luther</td>
<td>EdD (2002) in Educational Administration, University of Nebraska-Omaha</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
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<td>Clyde Richards</td>
<td>MS (1995) in School Counseling, University of Nebraska-Omaha</td>
<td>Instructor</td>
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¹ Highest degree earned in the field.
² Assistant Professor
³ Associate Professor
⁴ Professor

¹ Highest degree earned in the field.
³ = Caucasian/White
³ = African American/Black
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³ = No Response

⁴ T = teaching EDUC, methods courses
³ = teaching professional courses for other school professionals
³ = supervising student teaching/practicum/internships
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<td>BERTINETTI, JOSEPH</td>
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NOTES:
1. Highest degree earned in the field
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   Instructor
   Assistant Professor
   Associate Professor
   Professor
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   3 = Hispanic
   4 = Asian/Pacific Islander
   5 = Indian/Alaskan
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4. T = teaching EDUC, methods courses
   P = teaching professional courses for other school professional
   S = supervising student teaching/ practicum/internships
ITEM 5
HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

Please align highlights with the Conceptual Framework and Strategic Plan. Items included may be special projects and activities that have occurred Summer 2013, Fall 2013, and Spring 2014. Please record the highlight under the goal and action plan that align with the highlight. Examples include new or significantly revised programs, facility renovations, special student organizations projects, or major honors and events such as an accreditation review.

I. Major accomplishments as Dedicated Practitioners

DP #1: Identify and implement alternative course design and delivery approaches that reflect evidence based best practices.

a) The unit faculty has continued to revise all Counseling courses and syllabi (Clinical Mental Health and School Counseling) based on student course evaluation and faculty discussions related to student learning outcomes. These ongoing reviews and course/syllabi updates are essential for ensuring that courses are not only aligned to CACREP standards, but that we can demonstrate the necessary (i.e., CACREP required) student learning outcomes. To that end, evidence of student learning outcomes were collected from multiple course and submitted with our CACREP re-accreditation report. The department continues to discuss the need and most appropriate means for continually updating our courses/syllabi to ensure they meet and exceed CACREP standards. Moreover, department faculty understand and are engaged in expanding the breadth and depth of data necessary for an ongoing, comprehensive evaluation of student learning outcomes consistent with CACREP standards.

b) The Counseling Department’s partnership with the School of Social Work in the delivery of three courses designed to allow students to attain the Licensed Alcohol Drug Counselor (LADC) credential has remained positive. Although logistical challenges remain, the designation of COUN 8516 as the responsibility of the Counseling Department (i.e., staffing) and COUN 8686 and COUN 8696 as the responsibility of the Social Work Department has reduced administrative problems. Overall, all Counseling students were able to secure a seat in these courses when needed.

c) The Counseling Department continues to improve its delivery of hybrid courses to students. As such, we continue to work in partnership with the School of Social Work to ensure students have access to the hybrid courses and that all hybrid courses remain aligned with all necessary CACREP standards.

DP#2: Align field experiences with program goals and deliver with more consistency and recognition for effectiveness and efficiency for students, community partners, and the college.

a) The Counseling Department continues to assist (and require) part-time instructors in preparing and administering didactic and field experience courses that are consistent with current CACREP requirements.
b) The School Counseling program’s practicum and internship courses continued to utilize the UNO electronic portfolio for documenting hours and assessing student learning outcomes. The COE server’s continued phase-out has jumpstarted the Department’s engagement with LiveText as the new electronic portfolio system. To that end, the School Counseling Coordinator and the Department Chair will be attending the LiveText conference in July, 2015 in order to learn more about the program and better facilitate the introduction of LiveText for faculty and students in the Fall of 2015. This is particularly important to the Counseling Department as LiveText will be an instrumental element of our Program Assessment Plan for CACREP.

DP #3: Incorporate a continuing professional development plan at the end of the program which identifies candidate goals as dedicated practitioners, reflective scholars, and responsible citizens.

a) The core counseling curriculum includes exposure to pertinent licensure and certifications necessary to work in NE and nationally. These requirements are discussed in more detail as the student progresses in their respective concentrations, with particular detail during the internship semesters.

b) Clinical Mental health students are able, with the Chair’s permission, to sit for the National Counselor Examination prior to graduation if they have successfully completed their comprehensive exam(s).

c) Students in both concentrations are exposed to didactive and experiential opportunities that center are the development of critical thinking and becoming competent reflective practitioners.

d) In the School Counseling Concentration, degree candidates are asked to complete a self-evaluation during clinical experiences and are advised to meet requirements to apply for professional credentials. Graduating degree candidates are also required to meet with program faculty once every two weeks. Professional development plans will be enhanced as we move forward with portfolio improvement (ie, LiveText).

DP #4: Develop and implement a comprehensive sustainable real-time assessment system that allows us to model assessment practices for students.

a) The Counseling Department’s comprehensive assessment plan was submitted as part of the CACREP re-accreditation report. We have received permission for a CACREP site visit in the Fall of 2015 and all faculty members will continue to build on this assessment plan.

b) The program has a dynamic system of evaluation that includes evaluation of: students, instructors, site supervisors and courses. Key assessments are in place, yet additional assessments will be updated to ensure CACREP compliance.

c) The upcoming transition to LiveText is a potentially invaluable resource for facilitating active and ongoing assessment consistent with CACREP standards and the UNO Counseling Department plans to work closely with the new LiveText coordinator to ensure all faculty and students are utilizing it well.
II. Major accomplishments as Reflective Scholars

RS #1: Share, honor and promote research and creative activities internally and externally.

a) The Counseling Department will be ending its association with the Avenue Scholars program due to the program’s decision to re-purpose their funds. However this partnership has been a positive one and our most recent recipient, Katelyn Schany, was selected for a school counseling position from a large and very competitive pool. She credits the experiences with as a graduate assistant with Avenue Scholars to be a key element of her success and ability to secure her position.

b) Students in both concentrations are exposed to didactive and experiential opportunities that center are the development of critical thinking and becoming competent reflective practitioners.

III. Major accomplishments as Responsible Citizens

RC #1: Increase candidates' knowledge and understanding of teaching students who are different from themselves (culturally responsive teaching).

a) Two Counseling Department faculty (Drs. Luther and Bjornsen) took the lead in co-chairing the COE Diversity Committee. In their role, they worked with faculty and staff across campus to provide diversity themed programming.

b) All faculty within the UNO Counseling Department are required to adhere to the ethical codes of the American Counseling Association, American School Counseling Association, Association for Counselor Educational and Supervision, and/or the American Psychology Association. Each of these involves best practices with clients, students, supervisees, and other professionals.

c) Faculty members have volunteered in several community programs and have provided pro-bono clinical services to members of the Omaha community.

RC#2: Emphasize the personal and professional dispositions that support effective classrooms and workplaces.

a) All counseling students are evaluated by faculty at the end of every course to clarify their appropriate progress is being made and to help ensure the student remains in good standing with the department. This evaluation helps the faculty recognize outstanding student performances as well as clarify students who require additional attention. It is also an important element for ensuring counseling faculty are performing their “gatekeeper” responsibility to the profession. These evaluations include are completed at the end of every course by the instructor and, as noted, address issues related to appropriate progress and professional disposition. The evaluation form is routed to each student’s advisor for review and student consultation as necessary.
b) The Counseling Department continues as among the early adopters of UNO's Automated Course Evaluation system. Faculty and students are adapting to the system and increase in complete online assessments has been noted. Faculty are being encouraged to be proactive in finding ways to increase student completion rates, including helping students understand that such evaluations are critical in helping faculty improve and innovate their courses.

c) Faculty are encouraged to have faculty mentors from outside our department come and provide an evaluation of their teaching methods.

RC #3: Recruit and retain a diverse student body and faculty who are committed to working in high need areas.

a) The Department continues to receive applications from higher numbers of students than can be accepted under our CACREP accreditation standards. The Department admitted/enrolled 79 new counseling degree candidates (8 Summer 2014; 18 Fall 2014, and 23 Spring 2015). These numbers were lower than the previous year on purpose in order to better align the department’s numbers with CACREP faculty/student ratios ahead of the anticipated site visit in the Fall of 2015.

b) As the department chair, I have received several unsolicited statements from professionals in the community that UNO Counseling students are better prepared for field placements than students from competing programs in the area. This includes professionalism and skill/knowledge sets.

c) Counseling faculty collaborated with area school districts to recruit prospective school counselors, who are currently serving in teaching positions. The recruiting sessions were held at area district offices and school sites.

d) The Counseling faculty continues to recognize need to diversify both our student body and faculty. This understanding was evident during our successful faculty hire this year and will be again as we seek to fill another position in the Fall of 2015.

RC #4: Increase personal knowledge and presence in P-12 schools and in the community

Plan of Action:

a) During 2013-14 we partnered with area k-12 schools to place 18 practicum and internship students who each contributed 700 hours of services to their respective P-12 school site(s).

b) The Counseling Department advisory committee continued in 2013-2014, which meets once each semester.

c) The Department partnered with area agencies to place practicum and interns in areas hospitals, correctional facilities, shelters, and other human service agencies (36 to 40 per semester for 2014/15). Each student completed over 700 hours of service via direct and indirect service hours.
RC #5: Communicate the Mission & Vision of the College
Plan of Action:

a) The Department of Counseling is working to use the content management system (CMS) to update the content of UNO’s website.

b) The Vision and Mission of COE are communicated through the department’s focus on providing programs and experiences that align with the stated COE and UNO Mission and Vision. These are communicated through our CACREP accredited curriculum, focus on personal as well as professional development throughout the program, and an increased focus and expectation for scholarship and research at the regional, national, and international levels. Examples include Counseling faculty presenting 5 state level presentations, 2 at the regional level, 3 at the national level, and 1 international presentation. These presentations, along with additional publications in peer reviewed journals and service activities, are consistent with the mission and vision of COE and UNO.

c) The Counseling Department’s 2014 Program Outcomes report has been posted on the Department website. This is a CACREP requirement and while the document is quantitative in nature, it has been updated to provide a more visually appealing product for users of the website.
(http://www.unomaha.edu/collegeeducation/counseling/_files/docs/outcomes-report.pdf)

d) The Counseling Department’s CACREP re-accreditation self-study was submitted and received permission for a site visit in the Fall 2015 semester. This process illustrates both the Counseling Department’s and COE’s commitment to training critical thinkers as well as ethically and culturally competent reflective practitioners that meet and exceed the highest academic standards of the Counseling discipline.
ITEM 6
COMMUNITY COUNSELING CLINIC REPORT

The Community Counseling Clinic is a service of the University of Nebraska at Omaha Graduate Counseling Department, a part of the College of Education. The Counseling Department provides graduate students with a quality education, part of which is supplied by their practicum experiences within the Clinic. The clinic is staffed by graduate students in the UNO Clinical Mental Health program under the supervision of the UNO Counseling Program faculty. These students have completed more specified pre-requisite courses that ground them in the counseling skills and knowledge necessary to prepare them to begin providing direct client services under faculty supervision.

The clinic provides the Omaha community the option for quality counseling opportunities at a low cost. Currently, the UNO Community Clinic provides low-cost or free counseling services to UNO students (free), faculty, and staff. Services offered include assessment, couples counseling, individual counseling (children, adolescents, adults), group counseling, and professional referral. Flexible hours (afternoon/evening) and ease of parking are additional benefits of the clinic.

The UNO Counseling Clinic is among the most modern stand-alone graduate level counselor training facilities in the country. This year saw the Department Chair review all aspects of the Clinic’s operation with the intention of improving how it is utilized. This review was bolstered significantly by a marketing report by UNO MBA students, in which they outlined several key factors that could bolster the reputation of the clinic in order to increase client traffic for the clinic. In doing so, students will be afforded a more diverse practicum experience (i.e., client case load) and the clinic will move more quickly toward being financially solvent. Additional meetings among clinical faculty are planned for the Summer of 2015 to clarify roles and responsibilities related to the Clinic. This will include an expanded role for the Clinical Mental Health Coordinator and classification and clarification of the Clinic Coordinator Role and

While we will continue to focus on client services, the focus on the clinic will also be refocused as a critical element in the educational element of department. As such, faculty will be encouraged to design courses that utilize the clinic’s rooms for training purposes. The goal is to enhance the skill/knowledge integration prior to students entering the practicum experience. Several courses will also be adapted to provide a more effective transition to the practicum course, including documentation.

CLINIC USAGE – SUMMER 2014–SPRING 2015
Numbers are based on scheduled clients, and may reflect occasional inaccuracies. These numbers are relevant only to hours in the UNO clinic. A second section of Practicum students is based at an outside community agency (ENCAP).

Total Clinic Clients: 172 (Summer 14 to Spring 15)
Total Clinic Client Hours: 1440 (Summer 14 to Spring 15)
Shows client attend an average of 8 sessions at the clinic.
(a positive rate of attendance vs. outpatient mental health clinics.)

INCOME GENERATED
Summer 2014 $1,915.00 – May-Aug. 13 ($1,585.00 clinic; $330.00 group exp.)
Fall 2014 $1,324.00 – Sept.-Dec. 13 ($884.00 clinic; $440.00 group exp.)
Spring 2015 $2,350.00 – Jan.-Apr. 14 ($810 clinic; $1,540.00 group exp.)
$5,589.00
ITEM 7
UNIT STRATEGIC PLAN
IDENTIFYING GOALS FOR THE COMING YEAR

Please align these goals with the Conceptual Framework, Strategic Goals and Plan of Action in Item 5.

1) Will continue the transition to implementing consistent model for documenting student learning outcomes – Live Text
   a. Faculty with build on School Counseling use of LiveText-based portfolio transition to utilizing LiveText across all Counseling specializations by the beginning of fall 2016. (DP #1, DP #4)

2) Design and implement updated Practicum and Internship Manuals for the School Counseling and Clinical Mental Health (DP #2) programs. This includes standardizing documentation requirements.

3) Update UNO Community Counseling Handbook, including standardizing documentation to ensure Practicum students are trained consistent with current agency/healthcare standards.

4) Create and maintain updated Field Experience (practicum/Internship) site list. (DP#2)

5) Submit CACREP addendum in summer of 2015 ahead of CACREP site visit scheduled for fall 2015.

6) The School Counseling and Clinical Mental Health concentrations will be re-accredited by CACREP. (RC#2, RC #5, RS #1, DP #1, DP #2, DP #3, DP#4)

7) Hire one full-time tenure track faculty member for 2015-16.
   a. To allow for program growth while maintaining an overall faculty to student ratio of 10:1 (CACREP), the Department will form a search committee to identify candidates and ultimately hire a tenure-track assistant professor. (RC #2, RC#3)

8) The department will continue to review adjunct faculty evaluations and will retain those providing best practices courses and seek to expand the adjunct pool to include a broader range of professional experiences and knowledge bases. (RC #3)

9) The department website will receive a thorough update to make it easier to navigate and be more informative for current and prospective students. (DP #2)
10) The department will review and revise departmental staff and leadership positions and make change necessary to improve/expand the services provided to students in the classroom and UNO Community Clinic. (RC #2 & #5).

11) The Department will review and update/innovate UNO Community Clinic materials and engage in a marketing strategy to increase client hours and campus/community recognition. (DP #2, RC #5)