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## Perceived Tenure Standards, Scholarly Productivity, and Workloads of Counselor Educators at Comprehensive Universities

Gregory T. Hatchett

Northern Kentucky University, hatchettg@nku.edu

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## Perceived Tenure Standards, Scholarly Productivity, and Workloads of Counselor Educators at Comprehensive Universities

### Abstract

This article describes the results of a survey that inquired about the tenure standards, scholarly productivity, and workloads of counselor educators ( $N = 168$ ) employed at comprehensive colleges and universities. The results from this study describe the respondents' perceptions of the tenure process and their preparation for faculty positions at comprehensive universities, along with additional data on their general workloads, teaching schedules, scholarly productivity, participation in outside professional activities, and financial remuneration. Implications for counselor education and the tenure and promotion process are discussed.

### Keywords

counselor education, tenure and promotion, comprehensive universities, scholarly productivity

At the time of this writing, there are 80 doctoral-level programs accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP; <https://www.cacrep.org/directory>). Most of these programs are housed in universities that have a strong emphasis on research productivity. With regards to the Carnegie Classification System (<http://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu>), 29 (36.3%) of these counselor education programs are housed in R1 (Doctoral Universities-Very High Research Activity), 30 (37.5%) in R2 (Doctoral Universities-High Research Activity), 11 (13.4%) in D/PU (Doctoral/Professional Universities), 8 (9.8%) in M1 (Master's-Larger Programs), 1 (1.2%) in M2 (Master's-Medium Programs), and 1 (1.2%) in M3 (Master's-Smaller Programs) universities. Consequently, most future counselor educators are being trained at universities at which research is highly valued and socialized by counselor educators who are heavily evaluated and rewarded based on their research productivity.

Upon graduation, many new graduates find themselves searching for faculty positions, often at universities quite different from those where they received their doctoral degrees and learned the role of a counselor educator. While some new graduates will find faculty positions at one of the 80 doctoral-level programs accredited by CACREP, many more will likely accept faculty positions at one of the nearly 200 universities that offer only master's degrees in one or more counseling specializations. Many of these nearly 200 universities are categorized as *comprehensive universities*. At comprehensive universities, undergraduate instruction is considered the primary mission of the university, and graduate education at these institutions tends to be limited to professional degree programs (Youn & Price, 2009). Though faculty members at comprehensive universities are typically evaluated in the traditional domains of teaching, scholarship, and service, the relative importance of these criteria diverge from those at more research-intensive universities. In making decisions about tenure and promotion, faculty members

at comprehensive universities are heavily evaluated in the areas of teaching effectiveness, institutional service, and community engagement, with less emphasis placed on scholarly productivity (Henderson, 2011; Youn & Price, 2009). In more recent decades, expectations for scholarly productivity have increased for faculty at comprehensive universities (Youn & Price, 2009), though these expectations are still much lower than those at research-intensive universities (Henderson, 2011). In short, counselor educators at comprehensive universities need to demonstrate some measure of scholarly productivity, but not at the expense of teaching and service.

Counselor educators at all types of universities are concerned about meeting their respective universities' expectations for tenure and promotion (Hill, 2004). For faculty members at comprehensive universities, these fears may be heightened because of the high levels of multitasking commonly demanded at these types of universities. Specifically, faculty members at these universities must demonstrate an often-unambiguous level of scholarly productivity while also maintaining heavy teaching loads combined with high demands for institutional service (Henderson, 2011; Youn & Price, 2009). Some of the worries about expectations for scholarly productivity might be lessened if counselor educators had a better idea as to the level of scholarly productivity typically needed for successful tenure and promotion decisions.

Though not directly aimed at tenure and promotion decisions, several recent studies have provided normative data on the publication patterns of counselor educators at both doctoral- and master's level programs. Based on a review of electronic databases, Barrio Minton et al. (2008) found that counselor educators in programs that offered doctoral degrees attained a median of .3 peer-reviewed journal articles per year, whereas Lambie et al. (2014) found a median rate of .5 peer-reviewed journal articles per year for this same faculty group. Most recently, Hatchett et al.

(2020) investigated the frequency of journal article publications by counselor educators who teach in master's-level programs in comprehensive universities. They found that 46.4% of their sample did not have any journal article publications during a 10-year timeframe, and the median rate of peer-reviewed journal publications was only .1 article per year.

Though the previously mentioned studies provide counselor educators with normative data on journal article publications, these research findings have little-to-no value for understanding the level of scholarly productivity needed for successful tenure and promotion decisions. For one, evidence of scholarly productivity is not restricted to peer-reviewed journal article publications but may also include book chapters, conference presentations, and other scholarly artifacts (Ramsey et al., 2002). Furthermore, what is normative may not be sufficient for meeting a specific university's standard for scholarly productivity. Presumably, some of the counselor educators in the previously cited studies were not meeting their university's standards for scholarly productivity and were subsequently turned down for tenure or promotion.

Very little is actually known about the scholarship expectations encountered by counselor educators for tenure and promotion decisions. In one of the few studies of this nature, Davis et al. (2006) surveyed 74 CACREP liaisons about their perceptions of their universities' expectations for promotion and tenure. These liaisons reported that there was a somewhat equal emphasis placed on teaching, research, and service in evaluating counselor educators for tenure and promotion in their programs. However, this was not reflected in how these counselor educators distributed their work responsibilities. Depending on faculty rank, the liaisons reported that counselor educators spent between 49-55% of their time teaching, 26-27% in scholarship, and 18-21% in service. With regard to scholarly productivity, these liaisons reported that .91 journal articles, 1.50 conference presentations, .09 books, and 1.56 committee assignment would need to be attained on an annual

basis to be promoted to the rank of associate professor. Interestingly, they did not find any significant differences in scholarship expectations between counselor educators in master's-only and doctoral-level programs. However, Davis et al. did not disaggregate their results by these universities' Carnegie Classifications, a factor that impacts scholarship requirements for tenure and promotion (Henderson, 2011).

More information is certainly needed about the scholarship requirements encountered by counselor educators. This is especially the case for counselor educators who are faculty at comprehensive universities. Faculty members at these institutions are not only experiencing higher expectations for scholarly productivity, but such faculty members have to balance scholarship productivity with high demands for teaching and service (Henderson, 2011). Because of this, Hatchett et al. (2020) recommended that future researchers more intentionally investigate counselor educators' perceptions of the level of scholarly productivity needed to meet their universities' expectations for tenure and promotion. Furthermore, Davis et al. (2006) recommended that researchers expand this line of research beyond CACREP liaisons and to also examine the cumulative records of those who had successfully earned tenure and promotion. In response to these recommendations, the main objective of this study was to investigate the scholarly productivity and perceived tenure standards of counselor educators at comprehensive universities. This survey research attempted to answer three general research questions related to this overall objective: (1) What are the perceived standards for tenure and scholarly productivity for counselor educators at comprehensive universities? (2) To what extent do counselor educators at comprehensive universities engage in a broad array of scholarly activities beyond publications in peer-reviewed journals? (3) At the time of their tenure applications, what was the level of scholarship attained by counselor educators who successfully received tenure? However, because

scholarly productivity does not occur in a vacuum, a secondary objective of this study was to collect additional data on the overall context in which counselor educators at comprehensive universities work. Additional survey items inquired about teaching loads, financial remuneration, engagement in supplemental professional activities, and perceived preparation for working in a comprehensive university.

The results from this study will not only fill a gap in the counselor education literature, but these results may also help future counselor educators and the doctoral faculty who train them better understand the work experiences and scholarship demands of counselor educators at comprehensive universities. Such information will help new counselor educators make more informed decisions about accepting positions at comprehensive universities, and this same information may help doctoral-level faculty better prepare students for such positions. Finally, as pointed out by Davis et al. (2004), “future research of this nature can aid department chairs, members of promotion and tenure committees, as well as deans who are responsible for establishing standards for promotion and tenure productivity” (p.155).

## **Method**

### **Procedure**

Prior to the data collection process, institutional IRB approval was secured. This research was completed in compliance with the *Code of Ethics* of the American Counseling Association (2014). For the purpose of this study, a comprehensive university was operationally defined as a college or university classified by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education ([www.carnegieclassifications.iu.edu](http://www.carnegieclassifications.iu.edu)) as a master’s-level institution with a designation of M1 (Larger Programs), M2 (Medium Programs), or M3 (Small Programs). The first step of the survey process was to use the online CACREP Directory to identify comprehensive universities that

offered at least one master's degree in counseling and who were actively accredited at the end of 2018. In addition to meeting the operational definition of a comprehensive university, two additional criteria were imposed to develop a more homogenous survey sample. First, any comprehensive university that offered a doctoral degree in counseling or counselor education was excluded from consideration because such universities may have higher expectations for scholarly productivity than universities that offer only master's degrees. Second, to be included in this study, a college or university must have designated its counseling faculty with traditional academic ranks (assistant professor, associate professor, professor); programs that identified their faculty as *core* presumably have lower expectations for scholarly productivity than those programs who use a traditional promotional system. Based on these criteria, 167 colleges or universities were eventually identified.

The websites of these 167 counseling programs were searched to identify faculty names and email addresses. Only faculty members with traditional academic ranks (assistant professor, associated professor, professor) were selected for study exclusion. From this process, 848 counselor educators were identified. During the spring of 2019, each of these counselor educators was sent a personally addressed email with a link to a Qualtrics Survey. A reminder email was sent approximately 7-14 days after the original email, and a second reminder email was sent approximately 7-14 after the first reminder email. To incentivize participation, participants were given the opportunity to win one of four \$25 gift certificates. To increase confidentiality, the Qualtrics program did not collect participants' IP addresses.

### **Survey Instrument**

The Qualtrics Survey included a potential total of 58 items. The number of survey items that a participant was presented was customized based on the tenure-status of the participant.

Survey respondents who had already attained tenure were presented with 58 items, whereas those who had not received tenure were presented with 49 items. The items were organized into the following general categories: demographics (5 items), professional background (11 items), salary (2 items), workload (12 items), cumulative scholarship (10 items), scholarship at the time of tenure application (9 items), perceived tenure criteria (5 items), and perceived preparation for a faculty position at a comprehensive university (4 items). Survey responses included a mixture of nominal, ordinal, and ratio-level data.

These survey items were specifically created for this single study, and as such, this survey has not been subjected to traditional analyses of test score reliability and validity. Nonetheless, the survey was pilot tested prior to dissemination; pilot testing revealed that the survey items possessed high face validity in that the items were deemed highly relevant to the tenure and promotion processes in counselor education. Furthermore, the items inquiring about tenure and promotion requirements are based firmly in the higher education literature (e.g., Henderson, 2011; Youn & Price, 2009).

## **Participants**

A total of 848 counselor educators met the study inclusion criteria and were sent an email solicitation. From this total population, 210 individuals followed the email link to the Qualtrics website. Thirty-six individuals did not provide any responses to the survey items and were excluded from the final sample. Four additional respondents were excluded because they did not answer at least two-thirds of the survey items, and two more respondents were excluded because they described themselves as adjunct faculty members. These deletions resulted in a final sample size of 168, which when compared to the total identified population ( $N= 848$ ), resulted in a usable response rate of 19.8%.

The basic demographic and professional characteristics of the final sample will be described here, while the remaining survey data will be described in the Results section. With regards to gender identify, 106 (63.1%) of the participants identified as female, 59 (35.1%) identified as male, one (.6%) identified as non-binary, one (.6%) identified as demi-masculine, and one (.6%) participant did not respond to this survey item. With regards to race/ethnicity, 124 (73.8%) of the participants described themselves as white/Caucasian, 19 (11.3%) as black/African American, 7 (4.2%) as Asian/Pacific Islander, 7 (4.2%) as multiple races/ethnicities, 6 (3.6%) as other, and 2 (1.2%) participants did not respond to this item. The ages of these counselor educators ranged from 24 to 74 ( $Mdn = 47.00$ ,  $M = 47.95$ ,  $SD = 10.71$ ). With regards to relationship status, 113 (67.3%) described themselves as married, 25 (14.9%) as single/never married, 16 (9.5%) as divorced, 4 (2.4%) as being in a committed partnership, 4 (2.4%) as widowed, and 6 (3.6%) participants did not respond to this item. With regards to dependent children, 101 (60.1%) of the respondents reported having no children under the age of 18, 28 (16.7%) reported having one child, 25 (14.9%) reported having two children, 6 (3.6%) reported having three children, 2 (1.2%) reported having four children, 1 (.6%) reported having five children, and 5 (3.0%) participants did not respond to this item.

Additional items inquired about these counselor educators' professional characteristics and experiences. With regards to academic rank, 82 (48.8%) participants reported they held the rank of assistant professor, 44 (26.2%) the rank of associate professor, and 42 (25.0%) the rank of professor. With regards to tenure status, 77 (44.8%) participants reported they had received tenure, 70 (41.7%) reported being on the tenure-track, 18 (10.7%) reported not having a tenure-track position, and 3 (1.8%) participants did not respond to this item. With regards to their terminal degrees, 140 (83.3%) participants had Ph.D.'s, 18 (10.7%) had Ed.D.'s, 5 (3.0%) had Psy.D.

degrees, 3 (1.8%) identified themselves as doctoral candidates, and two (1.2%) participants reported having both an Ed.D. and Ph.D. The disciplines in which these participants attained their terminal degrees included counselor education/counseling ( $n = 121$ , 72.0%), counseling psychology ( $n = 16$ , 9.5%), rehabilitation counseling ( $n = 10$ , 6.0%), clinical psychology ( $n = 6$ , 3.6%), educational leadership ( $n = 5$ , 3.0%), and other ( $n = 10$ , 6.0%). Almost three-fourths (73.2%,  $n = 123$ ) of the participants reported their terminal degrees were attained from CACREP doctoral programs. The years during which their terminal degrees were attained ranged from 1973 to 2018 ( $Mdn = 2009$ ,  $M = 2007.35$ ,  $SD = 8.96$ ). Participants reported a median of 10 years of experience as counselor educators ( $M = 11.03$ ,  $SD = 8.02$ ), and a median of 5 years in their current faculty positions ( $M = 7.45$ ,  $SD = 6.57$ ). Survey respondents were also asked to identify the specialization within CACREP to which they most strongly identified: 81 (48.2%) reported the strongest affiliation with clinical mental health counseling, 33 (19.6%) with school counseling, 19 (11.3%) with clinical rehabilitation counseling, 7 (4.2%) with marriage, couple, and family counseling, 3 (1.8%) with addiction counseling, 3 (1.8%) with college counseling and student affairs, 2 (1.2%) with career counseling, 16 (9.5%) with multiple specializations, and 2 (1.2%) reported other areas, which were not specified in an available text box. Participants were asked to classify the institutional affiliation of their current universities: 115 (68.5%) respondents worked at public universities, 33 (19.6%) at private, religious-affiliated universities, 19 (11.3%) at private, non-sectarian universities, and 1 (.6%) participant did not respond to this item.

## **Results**

### **Data Analysis Strategy**

The subsequent survey items required responses that were a mixture of ordinal and ratio-level data. Many of the items on this survey asked participants to respond to questions using Likert-

type response options. As one example, participants were asked the following question: *At your current university, what is the value placed on teaching effectiveness in evaluating candidates for tenure?* The response options to this item included *extremely important*, *very important*, *moderately important*, and *slightly/not important*. These response options—and similar response options associated with other survey items—were treated as ordinal-level data; no attempts were made to assign numerical values to these Likert scale responses and calculate indices of central tendency or dispersion. Several survey items inquired about characteristics measured on a ratio-level scale, such as the number of publications attained in peer-reviewed journal articles. For many of these items, participants' responses were positively skewed, so the median was typically reported in addition to the mean and standard deviation. Finally, the Results section includes very few inferential statistical tests. Numerous inferential tests would have not only increased Type I error rates but would have also distracted readers from the focus of this research, which was to simply describe the perceived tenure standards, scholarly productivity, and work experiences of counselor educators at comprehensive universities.

### **Perceptions of Tenure Criteria**

All of the participants were asked to evaluate the importance of five professional activities (teaching, scholarship, institutional service, professional service, community service) in evaluating a counselor educator for tenure at their own institutions, using a four-point rating scale that ranged from *extremely important* to *slightly/not important*. These questions and the participants' responses are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1***Perceptions of Tenure Criteria at Counselor Educators' Universities*

Survey Item	<i>Extremely Important</i>	<i>Very Important</i>	<i>Moderately Important</i>	<i>Slightly/Not Important</i>
At your current university, what is the value placed on <i>teaching effectiveness</i> in evaluating candidates for tenure?	102 (66.7%)	38 (24.8%)	12 (7.8%)	1 (.7%)
At your current university, what is the value placed on <i>research and scholarship</i> in evaluating candidates for tenure?	23 (15.0%)	60 (39.2%)	49 (32.0%)	21 (13.8%)
At your current university, what is the value placed on <i>institutional service</i> in evaluating candidates for tenure?	27 (17.9%)	80 (53.0%)	37 (24.5%)	7 (4.6%)
At your current university, what is the value placed on <i>professional service</i> in evaluating candidates for tenure?	14 (9.3%)	58 (38.4%)	56 (37.1%)	23 (15.2%)
At your current university, what is the value placed on <i>community service</i> in evaluating candidates for tenure?	18 (11.8%)	42 (27.6%)	57 (37.5%)	35 (23.0%)

Participants were also asked to rank order the importance of seven scholarship artifacts in evaluating the scholarly productivity of tenure candidates at their respective universities. Peer-reviewed journal articles were rated highest ( $M = 1.36$ ,  $SD = .83$ ), followed by national or international conference presentations ( $M = 3.34$ ,  $SD = 1.35$ ), book chapters ( $M = 3.63$ ,  $SD = 1.33$ ), published books ( $M = 4.17$ ,  $SD = 1.90$ ), grants ( $M = 4.29$ ,  $SD = 1.70$ ), regional or state conference presentations ( $M = 4.63$ ,  $SD = 1.46$ ), and articles published in newsletters ( $M = 6.57$ ,  $SD = .77$ ).

Survey respondents were also asked to record their perception as to the number of peer-reviewed journal article publications that a counselor educator must accrue to successfully attain tenure at their respective universities. Of the 138 counselor educators who answered this item, the median number of peer-reviewed publications perceived to be needed for a successful tenure application was 4.00 ( $m = 4.17, sd = 2.87$ ).

### **Scholarly Productivity**

The next series of items inquired about participants' cumulative achievements across seven common indices of scholarly productivity: national/international journal article publications, state-level journal article publications, book chapters, books, national/international conference presentations, regional/state conference presentations, and successfully funded grants. Because the respondents varied in their years of counselor education experience ( $SD = 8.02$ ), scholarly productivity was estimated on an annual basis. Specifically, productivity indices were calculated by taking the number of scholarly products in each area and dividing this sum by the total number of a counselor educator's years of professional experience. Thus, the following statistics represent the average number of scholarly products attained by these counselor educators on an annual basis. These participants reported attaining a median of .45 ( $M = .81, SD = 1.06$ ) national or international journal article publications each year, a median of 0 ( $M = .13, SD = .27$ ) state-level journal publications each year, a median of .08 ( $M = .27, SD = .66$ ) book chapters each year, and a median of .00 ( $M = .05, SD = .133$ ) books each year. With regards to conference presentations, these participants reported delivering a median of 1.38 ( $M = 2.21, SD = 2.29$ ) national or international conference presentations per year, and a median of 1.39 ( $M = 2.73, SD = 3.99$ ) regional or state conference presentations per year. Finally, these participants reported a median of .11 ( $M = .34, SD = .68$ ) successfully funded grants each year.

As previously mentioned, 77 of the participants had already attained tenure. These participants were directed to a separate series of questions that inquired about their scholarly achievements *at the time* they applied for tenure. At the time of their tenure applications, these counselor educators reported a median of 5.00 ( $m = 5.90$ ,  $sd = 5.66$ ) publications in national or international journals, a median of 0 ( $m = 1.28$ ,  $sd = 2.12$ ) publications in state-level journals, a median of 1.00 ( $m = 1.68$ ,  $sd = 1.91$ ) book chapter, and a median of 0 books ( $m = .51$ ,  $sd = 2.20$ ). They reported a median of 10 ( $m = 13.70$ ,  $sd = 13.90$ ) presentations at national or international conferences, and a median of 8.00 ( $m = 10.31$ ,  $sd = 8.64$ ) presentations at regional or state conferences. They also reported a median of 1.00 ( $m = 2.15$ ,  $sd = 4.86$ ) successfully funded grants.

### **Teaching Loads, Salaries, Work Allocations, and Outside Employment**

These counselor educators reported teaching a median of three courses each fall and spring semester ( $M = 3.15$ ,  $SD = .83$ ). Approximately half ( $n = 83$ ) of the participants reported receiving reassigned time from teaching for other faculty responsibilities. For those who received release time, 58 participants reported receiving release time for administrative responsibilities, 17 for research, 8 for advising, and 16 for *other* reasons. Some of these *other* reasons included clinical coordination, grant work, faculty development, and clinical supervision. The counselor educators ( $n = 83$ ) who received release time from teaching taught fewer courses ( $m = 2.93$ ,  $sd = .84$ ) than those counselor educators ( $n = 84$ ) who did not receive any release time ( $m = 3.37$ ,  $sd = .77$ ):  $F(1, 165) = 12.53$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $R^2 = .07$ . Most ( $n = 149$ , 88.7%) of these counselor educators reported teaching during the summer semester, teaching a median of two courses ( $m = 2.03$ ,  $sd = .81$ ).

Survey respondents were asked to report their faculty salaries for both the academic (9/10 months) and full calendar year. The academic year (9/10 month) salaries for these counselor educators ranged from \$35,000 to \$120,000 ( $Mdn = \$64,000$ ,  $M = \$67,595$ ,  $SD = \$15,350$ ). As

expected, these salaries varied as a function of academic rank [ $F(2,154) = 52.05, p < .001, R^2 = .40$ ): assistant professors ( $m = \$59,072, sd = \$8,059$ ), associate professors ( $m = \$69,587, sd = \$11,870$ ), and professors ( $m = \$82,540, sd = \$17,284$ ). The 12-month salaries of these counselor educators ranged from \$42,000 to \$140,000 ( $Mdn = \$72,000, M = \$76,345, SD = \$19,027$ ). These twelve-month salaries also varied as a function of academic rank [ $F(2,154) = 42.44, p < .001, R^2 = .36$ ): assistant professors ( $m = \$66,669, sd = \$11,013$ ), associate professors ( $m = \$77,786, sd = \$14,948$ ), and professors ( $m = \$94,087, sd = \$19,027$ ).

Participants were also asked to estimate the total number of hours they spent working on faculty-related responsibilities in a typical workweek; their responses are summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Time Spent on Faculty-Related Responsibilities in a Typical Week*

Work Pattern	<i>n</i>	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Less than 20 hours a week	9	5.4%	5.4%
20-25 hours a week	15	8.9%	14.3%
26-30 hours week	15	8.9%	23.2%
31-35 hours a week	18	10.7%	33.9%
36-40 hours a week	33	19.6%	53.5%
41-45 hours a week	17	10.1%	63.6%
46-50 hours a week	17	10.1%	73.7%
51-55 hours a week	11	6.5%	80.2%
56-60 hours a week	17	10.1%	90.3%
More than 60 hours a week	14	8.3%	98.6%

*Note.* Two (1.2%) participants did not answer this survey item.

Participants were asked to estimate the percentage of their worktime spent across four general faculty responsibilities: (1) teaching, (2) research/scholarship, (3) service, and (4) administration. Participants reported that a median of 50% of their worktime was spent on

teaching-related responsibilities ( $M = 47.63$ ,  $SD = 18.84$ ), a median of 10% of their worktime was spent on research/scholarship ( $M = 13.73$ ,  $SD = 9.53$ ), a median of 15% of their worktime was spent on service ( $M = 16.94$ ,  $SD = 9.84$ ), and a median of 15% of their worktime was spent on administrative tasks ( $M = 19.22$ ,  $SD = 17.98$ ). (On the survey, participants were instructed to be sure that the percentages for all four activities totaled to 100%, but this was not always followed.)

Additional survey items inquired about participants' participation in remunerated professional activities apart from their regular faculty responsibilities. Of the 167 participants who responded to this survey item, 74 (43%) reported receiving supplemental financial compensation from professional activities outside their regular faculty salaries. In this subsample, the most commonly reported reimbursed activities included clinical practice ( $n = 43$ ), clinical supervision ( $n = 26$ ), consultation ( $n = 23$ ), adjunct teaching ( $n = 21$ ), and *other* activities ( $n = 19$ ). Some of the activities reported in the *other* category were teaching course overloads, coaching, providing workshops, and writing.

### **Perceived Preparation for a Faculty Position at a Comprehensive University**

The final series of survey items asked participants to evaluate how well their doctoral programs prepared them to be successful as faculty members at comprehensive universities. Participants were first asked a general question about their overall level of preparation: *Overall, how well did your doctoral program prepare you to be successful as a faculty member at a teaching-focused or comprehensive university?* Of the 154 participants who responded to this survey item, 36 (23.4%) responded they were *extremely well prepared*, 59 (38.3%) responded *very well prepared*, 42 (27.3%) responded *moderately well prepared*, 10 (6.5%) responded *slightly well prepared*, and 7 (4.5%) responded *not prepared at all*. Participants were also asked to evaluate how well they were prepared for a faculty position at a comprehensive university in three specific

domains of counselor education: course preparation and teaching, research and scholarship, and clinical supervision. Their responses, which involved a slightly different rating scale, are detailed in Table 3.

**Table 3**

*Perceptions of Preparation for a Faculty Position at a Comprehensive University*

Competency	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Terrible</i>
<i>Course Preparation and Teaching</i>	41 (26.5%)	59 (38.1%)	33 (21.3%)	20 (12.9%)	2 (1.3%)
<i>Research and Scholarship</i>	53 (34.2%)	64 (41.3%)	28 (18.1%)	9 (12.9%)	1 (.6%)
<i>Clinical Supervision</i>	82 (52.9%)	53 (34.2%)	13 (8.4%)	6 (3.9%)	1 (.6%)

### **Discussion**

The primary objective of this study was to collect descriptive data on the scholarly productivity of counselor educators at comprehensive universities, together with their perceptions as to the tenure standards for scholarly productivity at their respective universities. A secondary objective was to collect additional survey data on the work experiences of these counselor educators, including teaching loads, financial remuneration, engagement in supplemental professional activities, and perceived preparation for working at a comprehensive university. Rather than discussing all the specific findings of the survey—many of which are self-explanatory, this discussion will highlight those findings deemed to be most relevant to the study’s objectives and those results that can be directly compared to previous research in the counselor education literature.

When calculated on an annual basis, the counselor educators in this survey reported attaining a median of .45 national or international journal article publications per year. These journal article publication rates were similar to those reported by Barrio Minton et al. (2008) and Lambie et al. (2014) for counselor educators at doctoral-level counseling programs, but much higher than the publication rates reported by Hatchett et al. (2020) in a study of counselor educators at comprehensive universities. Specifically, Barrio Minto found that doctoral-level counselor educators published a median of .3 articles per year, while Lambie et al. reported a median of .5 articles per year. Hatchett et al., who investigated counselor educators at comprehensive universities, reported a median of only .1 article per year. These discrepancies were likely the result of both methodological and population differences among these four samples. Barrio Minto et al., Lambie et al., and Hatchett et al. derived their estimates of journal article publications by searching counselor educators' names through research databases, such as Psycinfo, whereas in the current study, participants self-reported scholarly productivity. In addition to general problems with self-report data, respondents in this study may have included publications that were not indexed in any of the major research databases. A second explanation for these discrepancies may be survey selection bias. Counselor educators who voluntarily respond to surveys on scholarly productivity may be much more interested in and productive in scholarship than counselor educators who do not respond to such surveys.

The results attained in the current study both converged and diverged from the earlier study by Davis et al. (2004). Assuming a counselor educator would apply for tenure at the beginning of the sixth year of service, the respondents in Davis et al.'s study indicated that a tenure-track counselor educator would need 4.55 journal articles, 7.50 conference presentations, .45 books, and 7.8 committee assignments to be promoted to associate professor. In the current study, counselor

educators who had received tenure reported a median of 5.00 publications in national or international journals, a median of 1.00 book chapter, a median of 10 national or international conference presentations, a median of 8.00 presentations at regional or state conferences, and a median of one successfully funded grant at time of their tenure applications. When asked for a specific number of peer-reviewed journal publications needed for tenure, the respondents in this study reported a median of 4 journal article publications, which was only slightly below the estimate in the Davis et al. study. One potential explanation for the differences found in the current study and those by Davis et al. is that the two studies covered different time periods. As mentioned previously, the scholarly expectations for tenure and promotion have increased for faculty at both comprehensive and research-intensive universities (e.g., Henderson, 2011), so the estimates reported in the earlier Davis et al. study may now be outdated.

Davis et al. (2004) also asked CACREP liaisons to estimate the importance of teaching, research, and service in performance evaluations, and to indicate the proportion of time that counselor educators spent in each activity. The respondents in the Davis et al. study reported that teaching, research, and service were equivalent in performance evaluations, and they estimated that counselor educators spent 49-55% of their time teaching, 26-27% in scholarship, and 18-21% in service. In the current study, counselor educators at comprehensive universities more clearly rank ordered the importance of these professional activities for tenure decisions. Though inferential tests were not conducted, teaching effectiveness was arguably considered most important (85.5% rated this criterion as *extremely* or *very important*), followed by institutional service (70.9% rated this as *extremely* or *very important*), research/scholarship (54.2% rated this as *extremely* or *very important*), professional service (47.7% rated this as *extremely* or *very important*), and community service (38.4% rated this as *extremely* or *very important*). Participants

in the current study reported spending a median of 50% of their workload on teaching-related responsibilities, a median of 30% of their workload on service and administrative tasks, and a median of 10% of their workload on research/scholarship. This study's participants and those in the Davis et al. study reported similar proportions of their worktime on teaching, but the participants in the current study reported spending more time on service/administration tasks and less time on research compared to those in the Davis et al. study.

### **Limitations**

The greatest limitation to the generalizability of these results was the relatively low response rate (19.8%) of the survey participants. This was a relatively long survey which asked participants to provide details about their professional achievements, details that may have required a review of their curriculum vitae. Nonetheless, the response rate yielded in this survey was similar to the response rates reported in other recent surveys of counselor educators (e.g., Stebnicki et al., 2017; Welfare et al., 2017). Though speculative, the participants who took the time to complete this survey may have had higher interests in scholarship and the tenure and promotion process than those who chose not to respond. Counselor educators for whom scholarship is not an important job responsibility may have been unmotivated to complete a survey of this nature. If this is correct, the numbers reported herein may represent higher bound estimates of the perceived tenure standards and scholarly productivity of counselor educators at comprehensive universities. Another concern is the extent to which the survey respondents may have differed from the total population of counselor educators at comprehensive universities on key demographic variables. Though there is not a readily available dataset on the demographic characteristics of counselor education faculty, the demographic characteristics of the participants

in the current study were similar to the demographic characteristics reported by Hatchett et al. (2020) who used a more systematic data collection method.

A second limitation, common to all research of this nature, is the self-report nature of the survey data. Participants were asked very specific questions about their history of scholarly productivity, questions that would require either a very good memory or a curriculum vita in hand to answer accurately. In addition to problems with accurate recall, the counselor educators in this sample may have included very minor publications or publications that did not represent peer-reviewed journal articles. There is a fairly wide discrepancy between the publication rates in this study and those reported by Hatchett et al. (2020). Specifically, the counselor educators in the current study reported a median of .45 journal article publications a year compared to a median of .1 journal articles a year in the study by Hatchett et al. (2020). In the current study, participants self-reported their publications, whereas Hatchett et al. counted only publications indexed in the PsychINFO, ERIC, or Academic Search Complete databases.

### **Implications for Counselor Education Training**

The results of the current study have implications for counselor education training as well as tenure and promotion decisions. Hill (2004) recommended that doctoral-level faculty better educate future counselor educators about faculty responsibilities and how to attain some semblance of balance among teaching, research, and service. The results of the current study, combined with those attained by Davis et al. (2004), Barrio Minton et al. (2008), Lambie et al., and Hatchett et al. (2020), could be disseminated and discussed in counselor education seminars, so doctoral students better understand publication norms and tenure standards across different types of universities. New doctoral students would also benefit from more general information about the nature of

comprehensive universities, and how these universities differ from the more intensive research universities where they are likely completing their doctoral training.

The results of the current study, along with the results attained by Davis et al. (2004), Barrio Minton et al. (2008), Lambie et al. (2014), and Hatchett et al. (2020), could also be used to shape discussions about tenure and promotion standards for counselor educators across different kinds of universities. However, the results from these studies should not be used in a prescriptive or mechanical manner for at least two reasons. First, colleges and universities have distinct missions and priorities, which should be reflected in their expectations for tenure and promotion. Summary statistics, such as the median number of journal article publications attained by counselor educators in this sample, will not be appropriate for evaluating counselor educators at every comprehensive university. Second, much remains unknown about the scholarly productivity and the tenure and promotion standards encountered by counselor educators across different kinds of universities. As just one example of this limitation, only about 20% of the counselor educators solicited for this study completed the survey. Thus, we do not know anything about the tenure and promotion standards that apply to the hundreds of counselor educators at comprehensive universities who did not complete the survey.

Finally, doctoral-level counselor educators might find the survey responses on participants' preparation for faculty positions at comprehensive universities informative. While these participants rated their training in clinical supervision very favorably, they perceived their training in teaching and research less favorably. This is consistent with other concerns expressed in the counselor education literature. Borders et al. (2013) reported that many doctoral programs graduates may not be well trained in research and publishing, while others have pointed out that effective pedagogy is often neglected topic in the counseling literature (e.g., Barrio Minton,

Wachter Morris, & Yaites, 2014; Orr, Hall, & Hulse-Killacky, 2008). Hopefully, the findings from the current study will be used by counselor educators in doctoral-granting program to evaluate how well their programs are preparing future counselor educators to be successful across the full breath of counselor education.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

As previously mentioned, many questions remain about the scholarship expectations for counselor educators who are seeking tenure and promotion. Thus, there are many paths that researchers could take in building upon the results of the current survey. For one, researchers could replicate this survey research with counselor educators who are faculty at more research-intensive universities or faculty employed in doctoral-level counselor education programs. Such research may help illuminate how tenure and publication standards systematically vary across different kinds of universities and counseling programs. As recommended by Hatchett et al. (2020), researchers could also conduct content analyses of tenure and promotion documents for a sample of counselor education programs. Finally, researchers could use also qualitative research strategies to explore in depth the experiences and perceptions of counselor educators who have recently attained tenure at different kinds of universities.

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