

Incorporating Disability Knowledge and Content into the Counselor Education Curriculum

Disability awareness and content is a necessary part of any counselor's training, yet most counselors are not exposed to any disability content in their training program. This training deficit results in counselors that feel unsure or incompetent when working with individuals with a disability. With a growing number of individuals in the United States living with a disability, it is vital for all counselors to increase their knowledge, awareness, and skills related to disabilities. Therefore, this teaching practice brief will provide specific strategies for educators to infuse more disability-related content into the counselor education curriculum.

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Introduction

As of 2020, approximately 61 million (26%) adults in the United States live with a disability (Centers for Disease Control, 2020). The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act defines disability as “(1) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; (2) a record (or past history) of such an impairment; or (3) being regarded as having a disability” (U.S. Department of Justice, para. 2). Within the definition of disability, there are four broad categories: physical, intellectual, cognitive, and psychiatric (Smart, 2009). For educators, counselors, and other professionals working in the public school system, there are 13 categories of disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): specific learning disability (SLD); other health impairment; autism spectrum disorder; emotional disturbance; speech or language impairment; visual impairment, including blindness; deafness; hearing impairment; deaf-blindness; orthopedic impairment; intellectual disability; traumatic brain injury; and multiple disabilities (Hill & Glade, 2019). Clinical rehabilitation counselors are trained to work with individuals with disabilities, but they should not be the only counseling professionals who are competent to work with this population. Due to the prevalence of and diverse range of disabilities, clinical mental health counselors and school counselors will encounter individuals with disabilities in their professional work and must be able to work competently with them as well.

RELEVANT RESEARCH AND LITERATURE SUPPORT

A limited awareness and knowledge of disability-related issues among mental health professionals has been highlighted in relevant literature. Strike et. al (2004) investigated mental health professionals’ disabilities competencies and discovered a significant lack of self-awareness and perceived knowledge for mental health professionals with less disability-related experience than their colleagues with more disability-related experience. The mental health professionals with less disability-related experience also had a lower level of disability competence than their more experienced counterparts. Researchers have also emphasized this limited awareness for counselors may stem from the absence or limited amount of disability content for counselors-in-training (Feather & Carlson, 2019; Rivas & Hill, 2018; Stuntzer & Hartley, 2014)

Rivas and Hill (2018) conducted a phenomenological study exploring the experiences of master-level counseling students in a CACREP-accredited program, who were providing services to people with disabilities in their clinical internship. Participants reported receiving no information or limited information on disabilities. The limited information on disabilities was provided only in isolated events. As a result, participants expressed guilt when not knowing how to respond or assist their clients with disabilities. Participants also reported that their feelings of guilt also contributed to their frustration with their program and their perceived lack of preparation to effectively meet the mental health needs of client with disabilities.

Similarly, Bialka and Havlik (2020) conducted a qualitative study examining elementary and middle school counselors' experiences with disability awareness and advocacy. They found a need for increased disability-related training within programs that prepare future counselors. The authors recommended that disability issues be included within the framework of multicultural competence in counselor education programs. Lastly, Feather and Carlson (2019) explored the disability competencies of counselor educators and the integration of disability-related content across counseling specialties. Through the 141 survey responses from faculty members of CACREP-accredited institutions, Feather and Carlson (2019) discovered over half of participants believed not enough time is spent on disability-related issues and guidelines in training programs. One third of participants also believed their program did not effectively cover disability-related needs and concerns of adults with disabilities.

KNOWLEDGE GAP

As research shows, there is a knowledge gap around disability/disabilities and working with clients with disabilities for counselors and counselor educators (Bialka & Havlik, 2020; Feather & Carlson, 2019; Rivas & Hill, 2018; Strike et al., 2004). Future counselors do not receive adequate training or resources to work with children and adults with disabilities in their training programs and therefore may not be effective in serving this population when they work with them in a professional setting (Bialka & Havlik, 2020; Rivas, 2020). Counselor education programs must incorporate more disability awareness, knowledge, and skills that are needed to effectively work with individuals with disabilities into counselor education curriculum.

This teaching brief will provide suggestions for incorporating disability content into various classes and content areas across the counselor education curriculum. The authors will also provide information about an assessment that can be used to test student's perceived level of competence to work with people with disabilities. Additionally, the authors will discuss the use and incorporation of the disability-related counseling competencies from the American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA) (Chapin et al., 2018).

Description of Instructional Strategy

There are several simple ways to incorporate more disability content and knowledge into the counselor education curriculum. In the opinion of the authors, the best way to address this would be to with a class that addresses disability content and knowledge, but the authors recognize that this is most likely not possible for many programs.

APPLICATION OF THE TOPIC TO COUNSELOR EDUCATION

Disability content and knowledge can be easily woven into the content of many core classes within the counselor education curriculum.

Theories Course

In a counseling theories course, the suitability of each counseling theory for individuals for disabilities can be discussed and applied. For example, Adlerian, motivational interviewing, brief solution-focused therapy (BSFT), rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT), behavioral therapy, gestalt, and cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) have been shown to be effective when working with clients with disabilities and chronic illness (Livneh & Sherwood, 1991; Millington, 2018). Specifically, motivational interviewing and BSFT are considered evidence-based practices for success when working with clients with disabilities in the rehabilitation counseling field (Olney et al., 2009). Adlerian counseling is also useful when working with clients with disabilities because of its case for community inclusion and the idea that many individuals have an unfulfilled need to belong (Millington, 2018). Behavioral therapy and the concepts of removing maladaptive behaviors, shaping, prompting, reinforcing, and chaining may be especially appropriate when working with clients with developmental or intellectual disabilities (Millington, 2018). In addition, CBT may be especially useful when working with clients with chronic pain and chronic fatigue syndrome in helping deal with depression, anxiety, stress, medical compliance, and self-defeating behaviors (Millington, 2018). REBT can be useful in many ways: reframing negative or irrational thoughts and beliefs about the disability, focusing on beliefs that mediate coping, adjustment, and help-seeking behaviors, assisting with accepting changing realities, and building new, constructive beliefs (Millington, 2018).

Another way to incorporate people with disabilities/chronic illness into a counseling theories course is through case studies and having students decide what theory might be best to use with a sample client. Sample case studies are included in the next section that could be used for this purpose. An additional assignment that can be used in this course is to have students interview a counselor who works with clients with disabilities and chronic illness and ask them what theories and techniques they use. Alternatively, an instructor can have a counselor whose practice focuses on this population come to class and deliver a guest lecture. In both instances, students can write a brief reflection paper about what they learned and how they can apply that knowledge in their future practice.

Counseling Skills Course

In a counseling skills or techniques course, instructors can incorporate clients with disabilities into case studies and role plays when practicing skill sets. An instructor could also show one or more of the movies or TV shows that feature characters with both visible and invisible disabilities and discuss how students would work with one or more of the characters as clients. A visible disability could be a character that uses a wheelchair or a character with Down Syndrome, and an invisible disability could be a character with autism or a learning disability like dyslexia. Suggestions for shows with these types of characters are listed in the

resources section. For example, an instructor could show one or two episodes of the television show *Speechless* or *Atypical* and put the class in small groups and have each group counsel one of the characters from the show. Each group could decide on a presenting concern, treatment goals and interventions for each character. Another option is to use the example case studies and have the students pair up and role play counseling one of the clients. Case studies should feature clients from various ethnic backgrounds with a variety of disabilities and chronic illnesses, both visible and invisible. Some example case studies are included below.

Maria is a 22-year-old Latina female with cerebral palsy. She uses a walker as a mobility aid. She recently graduated from college with a degree in marketing and has landed a great job. She currently lives at home with her parents and two younger sisters. Maria feels ready to move out on her own and has even found an apartment that is accessible to her needs and that she can afford. However, she is struggling with talking to her parents about wanting to move out. She is afraid they won't be supportive of her decision and will want her to keep living at home with them.

Jane is a 28-year-old White female who was recently diagnosed with fibromyalgia. She decided to leave her dream job of teaching preschool special education because the pain was interfering with her ability to do her job. Since leaving her job, Jane has been feeling depressed and hopeless and has no idea what she wants to do next in her life.

Terrence is a 35-year-old Black male who uses a wheelchair after a spinal cord injury from a car accident almost one year ago. Since the car accident, he has struggled with an extreme phobia of getting in a car and has panic attacks every time he even thinks about getting in a car. He has worked with vocational rehabilitation to modify a vehicle to suit his needs, so he is able to drive. But he can't bring himself to get in the car.

Kimmy is a 14-year-old Asian-American female with an intellectual disability who recently transferred to your school. She comes across as very quiet and shy. She is doing fine academically in her classes but has struggled to make friends and tells her parents that she is lonely at school. Her parents have asked you, the school counselor, to meet with her to see if you can help her with making friends.

Group Counseling Course

In a group counseling course, instructors can discuss group counseling for individuals with disabilities and how modifications may need to be made for certain types of disabilities when conducting groups. Groups for individuals with disabilities and chronic illness are typically homogenous based on type disability or chronic illness. The length of time of a group session may vary, and students may benefit from knowing that for individuals with intellectual disabilities, the length of group sessions may need to be shorter than average due to a limited attention span (Hill et al., 2023).

Most group counseling courses involve students participating in a group counseling experience, as well as participating in a role play or mock group counseling experience. Instructors should consider partnering with agencies or organizations in their communities that provide group counseling for individuals with disabilities or chronic illness and see if students would be

allowed to observe one or two group sessions to get an understanding of how those types of groups are run. Additionally, in the classroom, the mock counseling groups could be set up to function as a support group or psychoeducational group for individuals with different chronic illnesses, and the students could role play the group members and group leader. This experience would allow students to gain empathy for the experiences of individuals with chronic illness by having to research what it is like to live with a chronic illness to be able to accurately role play the person and also to understand what it would be like to lead this type of group as a counselor. Bauman and Shaw's (2016) book, "Group work with Persons with Disabilities," is a practical resource for working with groups composed of individuals with disabilities and provides guidance for group work for different disability types.

Lifespan/Human Development Course

In a lifespan or human development course, instructors can incorporate information about the differences between congenital and acquired disabilities and the impact they may have on development. Information can also be included about families coping with disabilities, either congenital or acquired. One assignment that can be used to understand and discuss the different ways families approach supporting children with disabilities is to show the movie, *Temple Grandin*, and then show the first episode of the TV series, *Speechless*. This assignment/activity can either be done in class or outside of class. Next, students can participate in a class discussion or online discussion board or submit a short, written assignment comparing and contrasting the ways each family approached having a child with a disability.

If human sexuality is included in this course, instructors can include information about myths and stereotypes about sex and sexuality for individuals with disabilities and proper methods of sexuality and relationship education for individuals with different types of disabilities. People with disabilities are often left out of the conversation about sex and sexuality, and many are not included in sexuality- and relationship-education classes in schools. One way to address this concern is to educate and empower counselors to be prepared to address issues related to sexuality, sex, and relationships with clients with disabilities and chronic illness. One assignment that can prepare students for this is to have students create a presentation (or school counseling classroom lesson) on a topic related to sexuality and relationship education for young adults with disabilities or chronic illness. This assignment/activity can be done individually or in small groups. First, students should choose a specific population (e.g., people with intellectual disabilities, people with spinal cord injuries) Second, students should choose a topic related to sexuality and relationship education (e.g., dating, birth control options, medical exams, sexual identities and orientations). Third, students should create their presentation with their target population in mind and make any adjustments to the presentation that would be necessary given the needs of the target population. Presentations can either be given in class, or they can be recorded and uploaded to a discussion board on a learning management system and viewed and commented on by classmates there.

Career Course

In a career course, instructors can include information related to disability and career development, career theories specific to disabilities, rights under the law for job accommodations, and how to request and use job accommodations. There are several career theories that are especially applicable to those living with disability and chronic illness: Super's lifespan career theory, Krumboltz's social learning theory, and Hershenson's model of work adjustment (Szymanski & Hershenson, 1998). Super's career model is often referred to as a life-career rainbow and is composed of five life stages. These life stages are "growth (birth-14), exploration (15-24), establishment (25-44), maintenance (45-64), and decline (65+)" (Szymanski & Hershenson, 1998, p. 330). In relation to people with a disability and chronic illness, Szymanski and Hershenson (1998) stated that "Super's concept of career maturity has considerable utility with persons ... who have acquired disabilities early in their career development. For people with acquired disabilities, career development can be destabilized and result in the need for reexploration and reestablishment" (p. 332). Krumboltz's social learning theory "suggests that four factors influence career decisions: genetic endowment and special abilities, environmental conditions and events, learning experiences, and task approach skills" (Szymanski & Hershenson, 1998, p. 341). This theory is considered applicable to people with disabilities and chronic illness because it places an emphasis on providing learning experiences and opportunities to try different work experiences through job shadowing, internships, etc. Hershenson's model of work adjustment combines career development and work adjustment theories and is meant to apply to people with both congenital and acquired disabilities. This theory proposes that there are three domains within a person: work personality, work competencies, and work goals, and these domains work together.

For persons with acquired disabilities, this means that the initial impact of disability on work adjustment results from the interaction of established work competencies with the functional limitations resulting from the disability, the specific job tasks of the current or desired position, and the possibilities for job modification. (Szymanski & Hershenson, 1998, p. 347) Some of the books listed in the resources list are especially helpful for use in the career course.

There are many ways to incorporate disability knowledge and activities into the career course. One way would be to have the person who handles job accommodation requests at the university speak about the accommodation process and what is involved in requesting and receiving job accommodations. Along with this activity, students can review the website, Job Accommodation Network, (www.askjan.org) to learn more information about the law and accommodations. Another option would be to have students interview a person with a disability or chronic illness about their life and how their disability or chronic illness has impacted their career path and career decision making and then write a paper summarizing the person's experiences and what they learned.

Diversity/Multicultural Course

The diversity/multicultural course may be the easiest course for incorporating disability content, given that this course focuses on different aspects of identity and ability level is a part of a person's identity. In this course, instructors can include a whole unit on disability.

Some concepts that instructors can incorporate include: the history of the disability rights movement, person-first versus disability-first language, models of disability, ableism, ableist microaggressions, recognizing and avoiding ableism, and inspiration porn. The instructor could use a movie or TV show that features authentic characters with disabilities, both visible and invisible, as a foundation for a discussion about different disability types portrayed and also have a discussion or unit about how disability is portrayed in the media. Examples of these types of movies and TV shows are listed in the resources section.

To learn more about the history of disability rights, students can watch the documentary, *Crip Camp*, and/or Judy Heumann's TED Talk (listed in resources) and discuss what they learned. Alternatively, they can read a book about the history of disability rights (suggestions are listed in the resources) and write a report. Another assignment option is to have students pick a movie or TV show to watch that features a character with a disability and write a reflection about how disability stereotypes were either reinforced or broken by that character. The instructor can give a lesson on inspiration porn and ableism, what those concepts are, how they exist in society, and have the class watch Stella Young's TED Talk (listed in resources).

Practicum/Internship

In the practicum and internship courses, instructors should discuss the accessibility of students' sites for individuals with disabilities. For example, they can explore with students: Does the site intake form ask about disability status? Is the technology used at the site accessible? Is the office location accessible? Does the office use scented candles or air freshener that may bother someone with allergies? Do the counselors-in-training and other counselors at the site assume the person is coming in for a disability-related issue if they indicate they have a disability on the intake paperwork? When looking at the evaluation tool used to evaluate practicum and internship students, is there a component to evaluate competence in working with individuals with disabilities?

Students should also be encouraged to seek out experiences working with individuals with disabilities during their practicum and internship experiences. If the university has an inclusive post-secondary education program for students with intellectual disabilities or a program for students with autism, instructors can consider developing a partnership with those programs and setting up group counseling for those students that can be led by practicum or internship students and supervised by a faculty member. If these programs do not exist at the university, instructors can consider reaching out to the disability services office and see if they have noticed a need for a specific type of group and offer that type of group with practicum/internship students leading and being supervised by a faculty member.

Disability-Related Counseling Competencies

The American Rehabilitation Counseling Association Task Force on Competencies for Counseling Persons with Disabilities released the Disability-Related Counseling Competencies in 2018. Counselor educators can use the guidance in this document to incorporate the suggestions and competencies into their curriculum where appropriate and as they see fit. This guide

contains five sections with competencies that cover a variety of contexts and activities that fall within the work of a counselor. The five sections are: Understanding and Accommodating the Disability Experience; Advocacy for PWDs and Support of their Self-Advocacy; The Counseling Process and Relationship; Testing and Assessment; and Working with or Supervising PWDs in School, Employment, Community, and Clinical Settings.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND FOSTERING INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

When making a concerted effort to include education on counseling individuals with disabilities, a traditionally marginalized group, into the counselor education curriculum, this effort for inclusion sends the message that the program values preparing counselors to work with all types of clients. Additionally, including education on counseling individuals with disabilities also sends the message that all types of students are valued in the program and may help students with disabilities, especially those with invisible disabilities, feel respected and comfortable in the program. Oftentimes diversity is presented in terms of racial and ethnic diversity, gender, and social class, and while these types of diversity are certainly important, it is also critical to include other types of diversity, such as ability types.

It is also important to discuss the intersectionality of multiple diverse identities in counseling coursework, including the intersection of identities like disability, socioeconomic status (SES), and racial/ethnic diversity that are often present. It is important to acknowledge that there is an intersection between certain disability types, such as intellectual and developmental disabilities and lower SES, often due to lower paying wages and lack of competitive integrated employment opportunities (Wehman et al., 2018). Furthermore, some cultures view the concept of disability differently than the traditional Western/American idea of disability, and it is important to take these views into consideration when working with individuals and families (Al-Aoufi et al., 2012; Goodrich, 2014; Zhang, 2017). Certain disabilities or chronic illnesses are more prevalent in White/ European-American communities and other disabilities are more prevalent in Black/African-American or other racial or ethnic groups, and this racial disparity impacts the types of attention and treatments that are given to those disabilities or conditions (Shaw et al., 2012). Scholars who study intersectionality have debated whether people with memberships in multiple marginalized identities experience more discrimination than those with one marginalized identity, and thus they may experience proportionately more discrimination the more marginalized identities they hold (Shaw et al., 2012). For example, Black women living with a chronic pain condition are often significantly neglected and underserved in the medical community (Chinn et al., 2021), which may reflect their multiple intersecting and marginalized identities.

AUTHOR REFLEXIVITY

It is the hope of the authors that by including instruction on disability in counseling courses and teach counselors-in-training how to appropriately and competently counsel individuals with disabilities, the inclusion of this type of content in the counselor education curriculum will create a more welcoming and inclusive classroom environment. However, the authors recognize that some students will be uncomfortable with some topics, especially those topics that are unfamiliar or that bring up their privilege in a way that causes them to examine and confront it. Ableism can be uncomfortable for many people as can inspiration porn (Brooks, 2019; Harder et al., 2019) Additionally, many counselors-in-training may believe that they will not encounter clients with disabilities or feel uncomfortable working with these types of clients, and confronting this belief can be difficult for some (Alvarado Parkway Institute, 2019). Counselor educators need to be aware of and prepared that these types of resistance may come up from counselors-in-training. This type of resistance should be discussed, examined, and confronted just as any other type of resistance towards working with a particular client population or discussing sensitive topics would be, but it should be addressed and not ignored.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

There are many resources available to help instructors and faculty incorporate disability content and knowledge into their curriculum and classes. Some resources recommended by the authors are provided here in this resource list. This list is not meant to be all inclusive.

- Crip Camp [Movie] (use in Lifespan/Diversity course)
- *Temple Grandin* [Movie] (use in Lifespan/Skills course)
- CODA [Movie] (use in Lifespan/Skills course)
- *The Peanut Butter Falcon* [Movie] (use in Lifespan/Skills course)
- *Atypical* [TV series] (use in Lifespan/Skills course)
- *Love on the Spectrum* [TV series] (use in Lifespan/Skills course)
- *Wonder* [Movie] (use in Lifespan/Skills course)
- *Speechless* [TV series] (use in Lifespan/Skills course)
- “I’m Not Your Inspiration, Thank You Very Much” [TED Talk] by Stella Young <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8K9Gg164Bsw>
- “Our Fight for Disability Rights and Why We’re Not Done Yet” [TED Talk] by Judy Heumann <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ABFpTRIJUuc>
- *Group Work with Persons with Disabilities* by Bauman and Shaw [Book] (use in group counseling course)

- Understanding psychosocial adjustment to chronic illness and disability: A handbook for evidence-based practitioners in rehabilitation by Chan, DaSilva Cardoso, and Chronister [Book] (use in Lifespan/Diversity course)
- Chapin, M., McCarthy, H., Shaw, L., Bradham-Cousar, M., Chapman, R., Nosek, M., Peterson, S., Yilmaz, Z., & Ysasi, N. (2018). Disability-related counseling competencies. American Rehabilitation Counseling Association.
- No pity: People with disabilities forging a new civil rights movement by Shapiro [Book] (use in Diversity course)
- *Disability, Society, and the Individual*. (3rd ed.) by Smart [Book] (use in Lifespan/Diversity course)
- Career development, employment, and disability in rehabilitation: From theory to practice by Strauser [Book] (use in career class)
- Work and disability: Contexts, issues, and strategies for enhancing employment outcomes for people with disabilities (3rd ed.) by Szymanski and Parker [Book] (use in career class)

EVALUATION OF EFFECTIVENESS AND ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING

The process of evaluating the effectiveness of instructional strategies should be an ongoing process. A variety of methods can be used to assess or evaluate the effectiveness of strategies used in the classes to assess student learning. If allowed at the institution, modify formal course evaluations to include a component about disability content-specific instruction and its usefulness for students. Conduct informal evaluations through anonymous check-ins and informal focus groups conducted mid-semester in courses to assess the interest and engagement of students, as well as desire for new learning for the remainder of the semester. During a counseling skills course, use of clients with disabilities in role plays and case studies can assist in evaluating students' skill level and preparedness in working with this type of client. In practicum and internship, include disability knowledge in evaluations and observations of skills. These are simply some suggestions for evaluation of effectiveness of the instructional strategy; counselor educators are encouraged to examine their own programs and find evaluation strategies that work within the structure of their programs.

ASSESSMENT TOOLS/METHODS USED

Counselor educators can use a specific assessment to assess students' self-perceived level of competence to work with people with disabilities. The Counseling Clients with Disabilities Survey (CCDS) (Strike et al., 2004) is a 60-item scale that "measures self-perceived competence in the areas of self-awareness, knowledge, and skills, and it is based on the premise that disability is an aspect of diversity" (Deroche et al., 2020, p. 190). A higher score equates

higher levels of perceived self-competence. Instructors can give this assessment to students at the beginning of the program and repeated at the end of each semester or as often as the program sees fit to measure improvement in competence of students to work with individuals with disabilities. Ideally, scores would improve on the CCDS each semester or each time it is taken after the initial time it is taken.

Implications

There is still much more work to be done to prepare future counselors and counselors-in-training to be better prepared to work with individuals with disabilities while they are in practicum and internship and after they graduate from their counselor education programs. Ideally, counselor educators will foster a sense of lifelong learning in students so that they continue to engage in professional development and training after they graduate and become professional counselors. Most licensing boards require continuing education to maintain counselor licensure, so counselor educators can encourage students to seek out trainings and professional development opportunities that can provide additional knowledge, skills, and ideas for working with individuals with disabilities.

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Existing research focuses on the deficits in training counselors to work with individuals with disabilities, as well as counselor educators feeling that their programs do not spend enough time on disability-related content and issues (Feather & Carlson, 2019; Rivas & Hill, 2018; Strike et al., 2004; Stuntzer & Hartley, 2014). However, there is a lack of research that gives guidance on how to better train counseling students on how to work with individuals with disabilities. A study conducted by Deroche and colleagues (2020) found that disability-related life experience and completion of a multicultural counseling course with the integration of disability content predicted disability competence. The results from this study suggest that these two components could impact disability competence in a positive way. Counselor education programs could consider how to integrate exposure to individuals with disabilities in a positive, natural way into their program, as well as how to integrate more disability-related content into their multicultural course in a way that feels natural to their individual program.

There are certainly limitations to the recommendations in this teaching brief. The ideas and suggestions contained in this brief come from the authors' own experiences, both personal and professional, but are not yet fully grounded in research. The authors hope that they and others will conduct studies in the future that test their ideas in practice and allow future publications grounded in research. Additionally, the authors recognize that there may be many other ideas and suggestions about incorporating disability into counselor education that others may think of that are not included here.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

As stated previously, there is a significant need for research that provides evidence-based or research-based practices to support disability knowledge and competence for counselors in counselor education training programs. Future research needs to be conducted to evaluate how to best integrate this type of knowledge into the existing counselor education curriculum and standards. The 2024 CACREP standards have more disability-related content required in the standards than in previous iterations, but there is still room for improvement. Counselor educators have an ethical obligation to prepare counselors-in-training to work with individuals with disabilities. The American Counseling Association Code of Ethics provides guidance in this area. Section F.7.c, titled *Infusing Multicultural Issues/Diversity*, states that “counselor educators infuse material related to multiculturalism and diversity into all courses...for the development of professional counselors” (p. 14). Disability is one component of diversity and multiculturalism and therefore, counselor educators must follow this instruction to include material on this topic into courses. Section C.5, *Nondiscrimination*, states that “counselors do not condone or engage in discrimination against prospective or current clients...based on... disability...” (p. 9). Counselor educators must prepare future counselors to follow the code of ethics for the profession, including this component of nondiscrimination, by educating counselors-in-training on how to appropriately work with clients with disabilities so they will feel prepared when a client with a disability comes to them seeking services. The disability population is ever-growing and is the only minority group one can join at any time (Davis, 2022). Because of this fact, all counselors need to be prepared to work with this population confidently and competently.

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