Introduction

TAMIKA JACKSON

Issue 5

Dear reader,

We were thrilled that our call for submissions to the fourth issue of Teaching Practice Briefs received such a phenomenal response that we were able to publish two issues. The briefs in Issue IV offered important insights on social justice and multiculturalism – topics that are especially timely and essential in our current educational landscape. Issue V now builds on this momentum by offering a diverse range of teaching innovations that address key topics in counselor education.

Multimedia has proven to be a powerful tool for fostering self-awareness and empathy development in counselors-in-training (Ramsay-Seaner, 2022). In this issue, two of the briefs explore the integration of media and technology in counselor education. Warren and Lupton-Smith propose the use of video discussion as a way to facilitate reflection, while Hallam and Young explore how pop culture media can be incorporated in counselor training.

Given the focus of identity formation in counselor development, Saunders et al. present a valuable teaching assignment designed to shape the professional identity of school counselors, and Jorgensen and Mirghassemi focus on strategies for cultivating research identity in counseling students. The two remaining briefs offer a novel teaching innovation and a new spin on an existing strategy. Forbes introduces the concept of incorporating play

as a non-traditional approach to andragogy and Baraka and Hart offer their adaptation of the Six Thinking Hats method to enhance cognitive complexity in students.

We are deeply grateful for the creativity and ingenuity of our authors and encourage readers to consider how these briefs might be applied in their classrooms. We look forward to sharing more teaching innovations and instructional strategies in Issue VI in 2025, which will focus on addressing microaggressions and promoting inclusion within counselor education settings. Thank you for your continued support and engagement!

Sincerely,
Tamika Jackson
Associate Editor, *Teaching Practice Briefs**

* Are you interested in submitting your own evidence-based counselor education teaching innovation or instructional strategy to a future issue of the *Teaching Practice Briefs*? Visit acesonline.net/TeachingPracticeBriefs to view calls for briefs and corresponding deadlines.

Contents

Researcher Story: An Instructional Strategy to Facilitate Researcher Identity
Maribeth F. Jorgensen and Felicia L. Mirghassemi

Enhancing Counseling Education Through Pop Culture Media: A Novel Approach in Graduate Training
Catherine Hallam and Jennifer Young

“It Helped Me See Myself a Little Bit More as an Equal”: Exploring the Impact of a Teaching Assignment on Shaping School Counselor Trainees’ Professional Identity
Rachel Saunders, Kimberly Farley-Smith, Madison Hollar, & Jenna Alvarez

Teaching Cognitive Complexity with Six Thinking Hats in Counseling Coursework
Mandy Kellums Baraka and Kimberly A. Hart

The Use of Flip Video Discussion to Facilitate Reflection in Experiential Counseling Courses
Jeffrey M. Warren, Helen Lupton-Smith, and Kyla M. Sawyer-Kurian

Playful Pedagogy: A Novel Teaching Innovation in Counselor Education
Lisa K. Forbes

Researcher Story

An Instructional Strategy to Facilitate Researcher Identity

Researchers have identified that faculty need to use strategies to facilitate students' researcher identities (RI) during training (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a; Limberg et al., 2020). The first author created a teaching strategy, Researcher Story (RS), for faculty to use during counseling research courses and in other research training contexts (e.g., research mentorship). The RS is framed within RI theories (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a; Limberg et al., 2020) and invites authors (e.g., students, practitioners, faculty) to develop and share their personalized narratives about who they are as researchers. In this teaching brief, these counselor-researchers provide a description of RS teaching strategy, ways to evaluate its effectiveness, and ideas for future research.

Author Note:
Maribeth F. Jorgensen https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3131-8591
Felicia L. Mirghassemi https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0578-7207
We have no known conflicts of interest to disclose.
Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Maribeth F. Jorgensen, Sam Houston State University, 1932 Bobby K Marks Drive, Huntsville, TX 77340. Email: mxj040@shsu.ed

MARIBETH F. JORGENSEN AND FELICIA L. MIRGHASSEMI

Department of Counselor Education, Sam Houston State University

KEYWORDS

researcher story, researcher identity, counselor research training environment

Researcher Story: An Instructional Strategy to Facilitate Researcher Identity

Identity development and counseling practices are at the core of many professional and accreditation standards. For example, the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs [CACREP] (2023) guide curriculum at both the master's and doctoral level of counselor training to ensure students graduate with basic competence and a sense of professional identity related to their chosen specialty (e.g., school counseling, clinical mental health counseling, counselor education). Counselor professional identity (CPI) development is a process of coming to know and follow professional practices, and an integration of interactions with others, self, and one's professional community. Researchers have indicated that CPI development starts at the beginning of a students' training program and continues throughout their career (Auxier et al., 2003; Gibson et al., 2010; Moss et al., 2013).

Like CPI, Jorgensen and Duncan (2015a) found similar results related to the development of the researcher dimension of overall CPI. They defined research identity (RI) as layered (see Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a for more), and involving the degree of interest, engagement, and relationship students and practitioners have with research. Further, they found aspects of RI can start prior to counselor training (e.g., during undergraduate training), meaning it may be important for counselor educators training both master's and doctoral students to examine historical, present, and future contexts of RI. One way counselor educators can facilitate this exploration is by asking students to write and tell stories about who they are as researchers (i.e., researcher story [RS]). As stated by Denborough (2014), "Who we are and what we do are influenced by the stories that we tell about ourselves" (p. 3).

COUNSELOR RESEARCH TRAINING

Gelso (1993, 2006) began exploring research training environment (RTE) ingredients within psychology training programs so faculty could target certain behaviors and interventions during teaching and other research experiences. Specifically, Gelso (1993, 2006) identified 10 RTE ingredients that could impact student research self efficacy and research outcomes such as productivity, interest, and engagement. Gelso's (1993, 2006) RTE includes ingredients such as faculty demonstrating that all research is flawed, modeling research, discussing the integration of research and practice, teaching students to look inward for research ideas, and positively reinforcing research behaviors. While all 10 ingredients are important, there may be some that are more effective than others in facilitating certain research outcomes. In fact, Gelso and colleagues (2013) found that four ingredients seem to have the greatest impact: (a) faculty modeling research, (b) facilitating an understanding that research is a socially connected process, (c) teaching that all research is flawed, and (d) providing positive reinforcement of research behaviors.

Relatedly, within counselor research training, there may be some ingredients to leverage that are informed by RI theories within counseling (Limberg et al., 2020; Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a; Limberg et al., 2020). Limberg and colleagues (2020) and Jorgensen and Duncan (2015a) conducted qualitative grounded theory studies to operationalize the concept and theory of RI. With counselor education doctoral students, Limberg and colleagues (2020) described RIas the following: ". . .*a formative process of identifying as a researcher that is influenced by the program design, level of research content knowledge, experiential learning of research, and research self-efficacy*" (p. 497). They found their doctoral participants' RIs were fostered by receiving external validation, faculty helping them discover their research interest, faculty sharing what they do as researchers, and faculty providing mentorship.

At the master's level, Jorgensen and Duncan (2015a) found that counseling students and practitioners conceptualize RI within their broader CPI. Specifically, they described that RI is observed through attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors around research, influenced by internal characteristics (e.g., interest in research, research self efficacy) and external factors (e.g., faculty messages, courses, peers), and is experienced on a continuum and can change and grow. Similiar to Limberg and colleagues (2020), Jorgensen and Duncan found RI in master's students is a developmental process that never ends. Given findings in studies on RI within counseling (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a; Limberg et al., 2020), the first authoridentified positive reinforcement, modeling, making research a socially connected process, and providing opportunities for students to look inward (e.g., find their interests) as ingredients to cultivateand used these to inform the RS strategy.

While these ingredients can and need to be infused regularly and in multiple contexts throughout counselor training, a starting point might be to focus on encouraging them in research courses. In fact, to promote research engagement, both Jorgensen and Duncan (2015a) and Limberg and colleagues (2020) suggested there needs to be more intentional instructional design at the program level to facilitate RI. Limberg and colleagues (2020) stated, "When asked how they [counselor education doctoral students] would describe RI, many were unable to articulate what RI is, asking for clarification or remarking on how they had not been asked to consider this before" (p. 494). Additionally, students need time and experiences in their program, and to be invited to define and take ownership of who they are as researchers (i.e., their RI). This notion falls in line with Jorgensen and Duncan's (2015a) findings, as well as suggestions by Jorgensen and Umstead (2021) regarding a need to address RI through more robust and experiential master's level research training. As indicated by Jorgensen and Umstead (2021), students' experiences in research methods courses can set the stage for continued engagement with research the rest of their program, post graduation, and during doctoral studies. Therefore, interventions during earlier developmental levels might be helpful so students can cultivate a desire to engage with, consume, and conduct research with clients and in other professional roles.

Relatedly, Jorgensen and colleagues (2023) utilized a narrative approach and had counseling students write letters to share how they experienced their counseling research methods courses. They found in the letters that some participants had early and negative research experience and had turning points in their course that renewed their connection with research

and positively impacted their journey of growing as a researcher. Jorgensen and colleagues suggested a need for counselor educators to have students write a RS during research methods courses, including entries about past experiences with research, insights students have had about research, others who have helped them develop as researchers, and so on. Jorgensen and colleagues described that having students construct their researcher stories could help them become more self aware of past and present feelings and thoughts about research and ultimately facilitate students taking ownership of knowing themselves as researchers.

Researcher Story Strategy

Given the previous literature described (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a; Jorgensen et al., 2023; Jorgensen & Umstead, 2021; Lamar & Helm, 2017; Limberg et al., 2020), the first authoridentified a need to design a specific instructional strategy to guide counseling students in conceptualizing who they are as researchers as a part of better knowing themselves as researchers and growing their RIs. The first author designed the RS instructional strategy to include elements of RI theories, including: (a) research is a socially connected process, (b) students' need to look inward, (c) faculty modeling of research behaviors, and (d) faculty providing positive reinforcement (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a; Limberg et al., 2020). Further, the first author applied suggestions from previous researchers (Jorgensen et al., 2023) to use storying.

The RS has primarily been employed within master's counseling research courses given findings on the importance of early engagement with research to instill RI from the onset of CPI (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a, 2015b). These counselor-researchers acknowledge it is critical to develop doctoral researchers within the counseling profession, and CACREP (2023) standards have historically reinforced an emphasis on related skills and knowledge at this training level. However, to further achieve this goal and also to promote more engagement with and production of research by counselors in the field, scholars have suggested counselor education programs identify ways to bolster research training earlier and at the master's level (see Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a, 2015b; Jorgensen & Umstead, 2020).

This practice is key, as researchers have found that master's-level counselors and practitioners might not connect with research, see the applicability of it, engage with scholarship, or use scholarship to inform their clinical work (Belser & Mason, 2021; Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a, 2015b; Peterson et al., 2016; Steele & Rawls, 2015). To that end, Wester and colleagues (2006) found that 32% of counselors reported they do not read data-driven research. Scholars have found that when clinicians reported not using outcome research to inform clinical decisions, it was due to lack of access, not understanding findings, and seeing results not being applicable (Belser & Mason, 2021; Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a, 2015b; Steele & Rawls, 2015). Ultimately, focus on the preparation of master's level counselors might allow for earlier RI development

and more research behaviors when students graduate and enter the field or when they pursue doctoral level training.

Since Spring of 2023, these counselor-researchers have implemented thirteen iterations of the RS. They have used the RS in nine master's level counseling research methods courses; two doctoral dissertation courses; one doctoral counseling research internship; and one doctoral qualitative inquiry course. Through these iterations, they have refined and operationalized the RS in a way that others can use in various research contexts. Next, these counselor-researchers will share about the RS in context of an in-person master's counseling research methods course. However, this intervention can easily be adjusted to fit other master's courses, doctoral-level courses, program orientations, workshops with faculty, and other course formats.

BEGINNING OF THE COURSE

The RS strategy should be employed at the beginning of the course, with instructors providing a framework prior to the first class so students can come prepared to discuss the start of their RS. The framework includes a rationale for the intervention, instructions, and prompts to which students can respond. Faculty should share a general overview and rationale for the RS strategy. We recommend using an informal and conversational tone to promote research as accessible and socially connected. While we provide examples to follow, we encourage faculty to alter them in ways that fit best for their course. For example, they may change the rationale to include a discussion of this article as opposed to a story about their own clinical work and using narrative theory in practice. Regardless of alterations, it is key for faculty to be detailed with the introduction of this intervention so students understand expectations and can thus engage with the process in a meaningful way. Instructions may include the following components:

1. This week and next will be our "warm up" weeks to think about our previous research experiences, beliefs, attitudes, stories, and so on. I've learned through conducting and reading research on researcher identity development (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a; Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015b; Limberg et al., 2021; Umstead, 2019) that it's important to reflect on how we think and feel about research at the start of our research experiences. As we all prepare for the first class, I'd like us to think about how we can come together as researchers to co-create this learning process and together build a researcher community. To set the stage, I'd like you to bring the initial pages of your researcher story – a story about who you are as a researcher. I will bring snippets from my researcher story as well. To me, it is a story about who I am as a researcher. Specifically, I refer to myself as a counselor-researcher. My researcher story is composed of various memories, moments, experiences, beliefs, people and so on that make up who I am as a counselor-researcher. Please keep reading to learn more…
2. Why a researcher story? Well, this idea came to me because I utilize narrative theory in my own clinical practice. I see the power of story in helping people take ownership

of how they see themselves, their identities, strengths, and areas for needed growth. Similar to the way in which you are discovering your story as a counselor, you also have a story as a researcher. My hope is as you tell your researcher story during this class, you will take ownership of seeing yourself as a researcher. Research is key to our work in the counseling profession so I hope this helps nurture the researcher within each of you.

After instructions and rationale for the RS strategy are shared, instructors will want to offer the prompts that students can use as they write their RS. Instructors can adjust the order of the prompts and separate any that include multiple components to avoid asking compound questions. In order to minimize feelings of overwhelm, it is important for instructors to emphasize to students that this is the start of their RS, and there will be many chances to add content during the semester. The prompts include the following:

1. Tell me about early experiences that helped you see (or not see) yourself as a researcher?
2. What moments since those early experiences fueled(or hindered) your story as a researcher?
3. What insights have you had over time about yourself as a researcher?
4. Tell me about people, practices, or anything else that have helped you grow as a researcher.
5. What are some of your other identities that intersect with your researcher identity?
6. What are your beliefs about research?
7. What are your feelings about research?
8. What are your attitudes toward research?
9. What are research topics of interest that you think could be explored and would directly impact clients?

These prompts allow students to reflect on a variety of aspects of their journey, mentoring and modeling they have experienced, and the impact of others in their communities as a part of constructing their researcher stories. Further, they are asked to reflect on research experiences they had prior to the course, which Jorgensen and colleagues (2024) described as helpful to faculty facilitating student openness and connection to research. Also, some of the prompts invite students to think about their research interests and how those interests can be directly applied in their future clinical work, which can help them link research and practice. Instructors will want to invite students to share about their researcher stories during the first class. Faculty should aim to facilitate social connection (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a; Limberg et al., 2020) and peer modeling by engaging students in small group discussions about their RS, after which students can then share to the larger group.

Additionally, as scholars have demonstrated (see Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a; Gelso 1993; Limberg et al., 2020), it is key for faculty to model research behaviors and share about their own research experiences through their personal RS. While the developmental level of faculty

differs from those of master's students, faculty modeling and sharing their own story can give students a vision and normalize the early experiences with research, as well as continued engagement, difficulties, celebrations, the impact of mentors, and so on. Here is an example of what the first author has shared in her research courses:

> *Here is a snippet of my researcher story. My researcher story started way back when I was a kid as I spent hours each week in the public library because my Grandma Carol was the director of the library in my hometown. I read and engaged with books -- often autobiographies. I was curious and loved to hear peoples stories (hence narrative theory being my theoretical orientation). I conducted my first informal study in middle school to examine the effects of chewing gum on test scores. It wasn't published☺. The leader of that group was affirming of me as a researcher. In middle and high school I played sports and often researched the opponents so I could prepare for games. Then fast forward to college – my psychology professors were extremely research focused and I did studies with a few professors and even published a study. I also presented at a few national conferences. It was a blast. My master's counseling program was more practitioner focused and that was a time when I felt stagnate as a researcher. Then in my PhD program I had a cognate area of research and statistics and that reconnected me with my researcher story. My qualitative phenomenological dissertation on researcher identity development also fueled my passion. I loved my dissertation topic and have stayed in that same research area since then. There are so many people and researchers who have affirmed me as a researcher – my Grandma Carol, my middle school research group leader, a professor in my undergrad, a professor in my PhD, colleagues, and several amazing women researchers in my field that I greatly admire. I love research and how it fuels curiosity and more questions. And connects with my identities such as counselor, educator, supervisor, athlete, and woman – to name a few! I conduct, publish, and present research in the areas of researcher development, grief and bereavement, and law and ethics in practice. I care about conducting research that is socially valid and can be directly applied with clients and other intended audiences such as counseling students and counselors. I believe my most socially valid research area is grief and bereavement with a focus on death and non-death losses. I'll share more of my researcher story during the semester and cannot wait to read your stories.*

THROUGHOUT THE COURSE

To continue student engagement with their RS and looking inward (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a; Limberg et al., 2020), instructors will need to do regular and consistent check-ins throughout the course. These check-ins can be brief, but are important to facilitating reflection and nurturing of students' RI and how they are coming to know themselves as researchers. During a 16-week semester, the first author does "throughout-the-course" checkpoints during weeks four, eight, and twelve. This practice allows for students to integrate new learning, connection to particular topic areas, faculty and peer modeling, and research behaviors such as constructing a program evaluation or research proposal. During the check points, faculty

also want to create time in class to ask students reflection questions and have discussion about their RS to integrate the social connection piece (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a; Limberg et al., 2020). Questions might include the following:

1. Check in with your researcher story and write about what new insights you've had about who you are as a researcher.
2. Describe what content you have added to your researcher story since we last talked about it.

Faculty should provide personalized feedback to students as a part of positively reinforcing students' RIs as well as helping to facilitate students' own internal affirmations. Faculty should take notes while students share so they can remember unique parts of their students' RS and bring that up in written and verbal feedback to each student. Instructors can involve themselves in these check points by sharing about their own research through their RS.

Faculty can also overlap engagement with RS and teaching research methods. For example, when teaching about phenomenology, the first author has students record responses to interview questions aimed at exploring their RS and then has them explore themes in their own stories. This process facilitates self assessment of RI and can help students turn inward and affirm changes they see in themselves as researchers. Below are example questions students can respond to as a part of engaging with a phenomenological method:

1. Research Question: How do counselors-in-training describe their lived experiences of constructing their researcher story in their counseling research methods course?"
2. Start the recording and respond to these questions:
   - Tell me about what it was like for you when you first started writing your researcher story?
   - What image(s) do you get when you think of your researcher story?
   - Who are the people you think of in your researcher story?
   - What are the main experiences you think of in your researcher story?
   - What changes in your researcher story do you notice as you reflect on when you first started your researcher story at the beginning of this semester?
   - What would you like to tell other counseling students about your researcher story?
   - What would you like to tell practicing counselors about your researcher story?
   - What would you like to tell clients about your researcher story?
   - What else would you like to say about your researcher story that I have not asked about?

END OF THE COURSE

Instructors need to think about how to do a "cool down" period of the research course and mark the ending of the research time with their students. The official marking of the ending phase of class mimics the closing of a counseling relationship, in which a counselor goes

through specific steps to prepare clients for end-of-services and develop action plans to continue change and growth. The first author has found that drawing these parallels between counseling and research experiences helps students further integrate research and practice.

To model storying, instructors should provide time at the end of the course for students to reflect on how they have changed as researchers during the course by going back to their RS. These counselor-researchers invite students to revisit and share their responses to the initial prompts and identify changes with the class. In addition to going back to their RS, other activities could involve students writing letters, poems, or songs in which they are invited to reflect on the changes they have noticed in their RS during the course (DeCino & Waalkes, 2020). To leverage the ingredients of social connection, positive reinforcement, and looking inward (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a; Limberg et al., 2020), the first author also writes brief letters to each student and infuses aspects of their researcher stories. Here is an example of a fictitious letter that is similar to one she has written:

> *Dear [Student name]*
>
> *I noticed your research interest of grief and bereavement grew during this semester as you told your researcher story. I also saw this link with photovoice methodology and it sounds like that is how you see yourself collecting data with future clients. Neat and so glad you discovered this about yourself during this chapter of your researcher story. Thank you for asking questions, supporting your peers in their exploration, and for spreading the word that we need to use research to inform the work we do with clients.*
>
> *This marks the end of this chapter in your researcher story, but keep writing your story. Thank you for being an inspiration in this chapter of my researcher story!*
>
> *Take care counselor-researcher,*
>
> *[faculty name]*

Fostering Reflexivity and Inclusive Learning Environments

The RS teaching strategy provides an opportunity for students to exercise reoccurring reflexivity throughout the semester. Encouraging these intrapersonal skills across counseling training courses reinforces the integration of counselor and researcher identities. Additionally, the open-ended prompts promote an inclusive learning environment that allows students an opportunity to incorporate their intersecting identities into their RS. Further, instructors can utilize RS drafts composed by students early in the semester to gain insight into any potential gaps from previous research courses, which can be targeted early in the semester by instructors to support student efficacy and success. Ambrose and colleagues' (2010) first learning principle highlights the impact of students' previous knowledge to their learning journey. The RS framework addresses this

learning principle in multiple ways by encouraging students to pull from their prior knowledge, challenge preconceived beliefs, and integrate a new narrative. This personalized infusion strengthens authenticity, ownership, and accessibility of research concepts.

Ethical Considerations

The RS teaching strategy upholds the ethical responsibility of counselor educators to honor the diverse cultures and abilities of students by encouraging the inclusion of their previous knowledge and experiences (American Counseling Association [ACA], 2014; Section F.11.b). Giving students opportunities to share, discuss, and bear witness to peer researcher stories honors the diverse lived experiences of student counselor-researchers. This social connectedness also promotes students' engagement with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds, reinforcing clinical skills necessary for multicultural competence (e.g. self awareness, empathy for others' narratives, perspective-taking) (ACA, 2014; Section C.2.a). Finally, it is worth noting that the RS teaching strategy is inclusive of various counselor educator theories and styles. Thus, it is important for faculty to reflect authenticity when presenting instructions, rationale, and when sharing their RS.

Evaluation of Effectiveness

To evaluate the effectiveness of the RS teaching strategy, faculty could gather qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods data. Faculty could do pre-and-post measures using the *Research Identity Scale* ([RIS] Jorgensen & Schweinle, 2018) or the short form of the *Professional Identity Scale* ([PISC] Woo & Henfield, 2015). This data could help researchers determine if using the RS helps facilitate identity shifts in counseling students that relate to research. Faculty could hold a focus group in class, using the qualitative questions listed above, to examine effectiveness of the RS strategy. Faculty could also use those same example questions to conduct individual interviews with students. Additionally, faculty could conduct a content analysis of journal entries and other documents students may submit as a part of their RS.

Implications

The implications of the RS teaching intervention could be long lasting for counseling students given they can continue to add to their RS over their career lifespan. This connects with

Jorgensen and Duncan's (2015a) and Limberg and colleagues' (2020) findings that RI is an ongoing process and the RS is one way for that to continue beyond training. Construction of one's RS can give life to the internal thoughts and feelings students, future counselors, and counselor educators have about research. Importantly, the constructing of ones RS also provides space for students to broach and discover how their cultural identities drive their RI and the research they consume and conduct (Jones & Welfare, 2017). Further, students' RS gives faculty insight on how to engage in more personalized ways with each student.

The RS teaching intervention brings a unique and important approach to master's level research courses by emphasizing an exploration of the process of engaging with research, as opposed to exclusively examining content knowledge. This process-oriented approach affords counselor researchers an organizational framework to integrate new research knowledge into future practice, reinforcing their understanding and application of culturally sustaining research for counseling practice identified in the Research and Program Evaluation CACREP (2023) standards. Potential long-term implications could be that it encourages more practitioners to participate more fully in counseling research initiatives because they have a framework of understanding its significance. The hope of this ethical implication is that with greater accessibility and awareness, counselors and counseling researchers can work together to identify multiple ways to monitor and evaluate treatment/program efficacy (American Counseling Association, 2014; Section C.2.d).

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

There are unanswered questions and limitations related to there being no published data on the effectiveness of the RS strategy. The first author has used the RS in nine research courses and in one research mentorship experience and the second author has used it in three research courses; however, currently, only anecdotal data exists. Additionally, of the 12 courses, nine were master's level counseling research methods courses. Therefore, formal study is needed, not only with master's counseling students, but also doctoral students to examine if there are differences across developmental levels. Further research can also help faculty better understand how to adjust the prompts and ongoing engagement strategies.

FUTURE DIRECTION FOR PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

There is a plethora of future studies that could be conducted on the RS teaching strategy. Faculty could conduct a study to examine the effects of RS strategy on outcomes such as RI, research self-efficacy, and overall CPI. Faculty could do this by conducting an experimental study by employing the RS teaching strategy in one of their reseach courses and not their other course – keeping as many other conditions as similar as possible. Faculty could conduct a single-case design within research experiences of fewer students (e.g., research mentorship, dissertation) by gathering the baseline RI (see Jorgensen & Schweinle, 2018 for more details on evaluation) and/or CPI (see Woo & Henfield, 2015 for more details on evaluation) employing

the RS strategy and measuring RI and/or CPI, and so on. Several qualitative studies could be conducted using methodologies such as photovoice, phenomenology, or narrative to explore the experiences of students in classes in which the RS teaching strategy was used.

References

American Counseling Association. (2014). *2014 ACA code of ethics*. https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/ethics/2014-aca-code-of-ethics.pdf?sfvrsn=55ab73d0_1

Ambrose, S. A., Bridges, M. W., DiPietro, M., Lovett, M. C., & Norman, M. K. (2010). *How learning works: Seven research-based principles for smart teaching.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Auxier, C. R., Hughes, F. R., & Kline, W. B. (2003). Identity development in counselors-in-training. *Counselor Education and Development, 43*, 25-38. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6978.2003.tb01827.x

Belser, C. T., & Mason, E. C. M. (2021). A preliminary investigation of school counselors' attitudes and behaviors toward research and professional information seeking. *Professional School Counseling, 25*(1). https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X211042844

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs. (2023). *2024 CACREP Standards*. https://www.cacrep.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/2024-Standards-Combined-Version-6.27.23.pdf

DeCino, D. A., Waalkes, P. L., & Givens, J. (2020). Reflective practice: Counseling students' letter's to their younger selves in practicum. *Teaching and Supervision in Counseling, 2*, 24-34. https://doi.org/10.7290/tsc020103

Denborough, D., (2014). *Retelling the stories of our lives: Everyday narrative therapy to draw inspiration and transform experience*. W.W. Norton & Company.

Gelso, C. J. (1993). On the making of a scientist-practitioner: A theory of research training in professional psychology. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 24*, 468-476.

Gelso, C. J. (2006). On the making of a scientist–practitioner: A theory of research training in professional psychology. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*, 3–16. https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/1931-3918.S.1.3

Gelso C. J., Baumann, E.C., Chui, H.T., Savela, A.E. (2013). The making of a scientist-psychotherapist: The research training environment and the psychotherapist. *Psychotherapy, 5*, 139-149. https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/a0028257

Gibson, D. M., Dollarhide, C. T., & Moss, J. M. (2010). Professional identity development: A grounded theory of transformational tasks of new counselors. *Counselor Education & Supervision, 50*(1), 21-38. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6978.2010.tb00106.x

Jones, C. T., & Welfare, L. E. (2017). Broaching behaviors of licensed professional counselors: A qualitative inquiry. *Journal of Addictions and Offender Counseling, 38*(1), 48-64. https://doi.org/10.1002/jaoc.12028

Jorgensen, M. F., DeCino, D. A., Umstead, L. K. (2023). "Don't psych yourself out, you got this!": Master's counseling students' narratives about their counseling research methods course. *Journal of Counselor Leadership and Advocacya*

Jorgensen, M. F., & Duncan, K. (2015a). A grounded theory of master's-level counselor research identity. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 54*, 17-31. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6978.2015.00067.x

Jorgensen, M. F., & Duncan, K. (2015b). A phenomenological investigation of master's- level counselor research identity development stages. *The Professional Counselor, 5*(3), 327-340. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6978.2015.00067.x

Jorgensen, M., & Schweinle, W. (2018). The research identity scale: Psychometric analyses and scale refinement. *The Professional Counselor, 8*, 21-28.

Jorgensen, M. F., & Umstead, L. K. (2020). Developing a signature pedagogy in master's research training. *Teaching and Supervision in Counseling, 2*(2), 53-61, https://doi.org/10.7290/tsc020207

Lamar, M. R., & Helm, H. M. (2017). Understanding the researcher identity development of counselor education and supervision doctoral students. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 56*(1), 2–18. https://doi.org/10.1002/ceas.12056.

Limberg, D., Newton, T., Nelson, K., Barrio Minton, C. A., Super, J. T., & Ohrt, J. (2020). Research identity development of counselor education doctoral students: A grounded theory. *The Professional Counselor; 10*(4), 488–500. https://doi.org/10.15241/dl.10.4.488.

Moss, J., Gibson, D., & Dollarhide, C. (2013). Professional identity development: A grounded theory of transformational tasks of counselors. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 92*(1), 3-12. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.2014.00124.x

Peterson, C. H., Hall, S. B., & Buser, J. K. (2016). Research training needs of scientist-practitioners: Implications for counselor education. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 55*(2), 80-94. https://doi.org/10.1002/ceas.12034

Sexton, T. L., & Whiston, S. C. (1996). Integrating counseling research and practice. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 74*(6), 588–589. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.1996.tb02297.x

Steele, J. M., & Rawls, G. J. (2015). Quantitative research attitudes and research training perceptions among master's-level students. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 54*(2), 134-146. http://doi.org/10.1002/ceas.12010

Wester, K. L., Mobley, K., & Faulkner, A. (2006, September). *Evidence-based practices: Building a bridge between researchers and practitioners.* Orlando, Florida: Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision.

Woo, H. & Henfield, M. (2015). *Professional Identity Scale in Counseling (PISC)*: Instrument development and validation. *Journal of Counselor Leadership and Advocacy, 5*(2), 93-112. https://doi.org/10.1080/2326716X.2018.1452078

Enhancing Counseling Education Through Pop Culture Media

A Novel Approach in Graduate Training

This article explores the innovative use of popular culture (pop culture) media, specifically documentary series, in graduate counseling education to bridge theory and practice. It presents a comprehensive method for simulating counseling sessions in the classroom, aiming to enhance students' case note writing and diagnostic skills. The use of docuseries as an educational tool allows students to practice diagnosing and treatment planning in realistic scenarios. This approach increases engagement and understanding of complex concepts and the development of practical skills. It prepares students for professional challenges, demonstrating the effectiveness of integrating pop culture in educational settings for enhanced learning experiences.

CATHERINE HALLAM AND
JENNIFER YOUNG

College of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Grand Canyon University

KEYWORDS
diagnostic skills, clinical documentation, media-based learning

ACES
ASSOCIATION FOR COUNSELOR EDUCATION AND SUPERVISION

Enhancing Counseling Education Through Pop Culture Media: A Novel Approach in Graduate Training

In the rapidly evolving landscape of education, the incorporation of pop culture and media has emerged as a significant tool for enhancing learning experiences across various disciplines. Incorporating popular culture media into graduate counselor education offers a novel approach to bridge theory and practice. This Teaching Practice Brief provides instructors with a comprehensive method to conduct an in-class activity using a documentary series to simulate counseling sessions in the classroom. The purpose of the activity presented is to enhance students' proficiency in writing case notes and to develop their diagnostic skills within an educational context using media-derived information. The innovative use of popular culture media like docuseries has shown to significantly enhance engagement and understanding of complex concepts and development of practical skills. This approach enriches the educational experience, preparing students for the challenges and complexities of their future professional roles as counselors (Nittoli & Guiffrida, 2018; Toman & Rak, 2000).

POP CULTURE AS AN EDUCATIONAL TOOL IN COUNSELOR EDUCATION

The innovative use of pop culture and media in education has been explored in various fields, emphasizing the increasing role of technology in learning (Baños, 2007; Higgins & Dermer, 2001; Shepard & Brew, 2005). The use of pop culture elements for education has been shown to achieve increased student engagement and effective communication of concepts in the classroom when successfully integrated into teaching and learning processes (Brown, 2014; Collins, 2012). Research highlights the importance of engaging students meaningfully through relevant contemporary resources, such as pop culture media, and adapting teaching practices to meet the diverse needs of adults in the classroom. Popular culture can be leveraged to explain complex concepts in the classroom (Koch & Dollarhide, 2000; Nasiruddin et al., 2013; Shen, 2015; Winings, 2007).

Research also supports the integration of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) into counselor education coursework to enhance critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and the application of theory to practice (Stewart, 1998; Hou, 2014). Through PBL, case studies may be used in counselor education to engage students and prepare them to successfully navigate practical scenarios in counseling (Carone, 2018). The use of media in education may offer valuable insights into the complex concept of therapeutic alliance. Utilizing pop culture media in the classroom may serve as effective tools to help students develop empathy and conceptualize clinical cases (Banõs, 2007).

Teaching Innovation

In counselor education, the pivotal areas of best practice documentation and diagnostic proficiency are essential. Traditionally, the fundamental concepts of documentation are imparted through hands-on experience during practicum or internship phases (Hansen, 2003). However, developing diagnostic skills poses a significant challenge for many counselors in training, particularly in grasping the complexities of formulating diagnoses after initial client sessions (Kress et al., 2005). This gap in understanding warrants further exploration to enrich the knowledge base of counselors-in-training before they encounter their first clients. Although role-playing exercises are beneficial, they often lack the intricacy of real-world counseling scenarios. The way clients narrate their stories or process their emotions is not adequately mirrored in standard role-play activities within counselor education.

To address this discrepancy in real-life situations, the use of multimedia documentary series in educational settings presents a promising avenue. These series typically encapsulate the essence of a genuine counseling session, lasting approximately 45-60 minutes per episode, and portray clients' stories in a fragmented manner akin to actual client disclosures in therapy. These docuseries are valuable resources for counseling students, offering real-world examples of the multifaceted issues they may encounter in their professional practice. By engaging with themes of complex trauma, criminal behavior, family dynamics, and manipulation, students can develop critical skills in case conceptualization, ethical decision-making, and diagnostic practice.

Watching series like *Dirty John* and *The Staircase*, students observe in-depth portrayals of individuals experiencing domestic abuse, manipulation, and intense familial strain. These scenarios provide rich material for practicing accurate case note documentation and informed diagnostic decision-making, particularly around disorders like narcissistic personality disorder, post-traumatic stress, or depression. These series allow students to dissect the psychological factors driving behavior, assess the impact of these conditions on relationships, and refine their ability to make precise, clinically sound diagnoses. Additionally, ethical decision-making is a core competency in counseling, and docuseries, such as *The Keepers* and *Wild Wild Country*, bring to light the ethical dilemmas that arise in cases involving trauma, abuse, and institutional betrayal. Through these narratives, students are prompted to reflect on key ethical issues—client confidentiality, mandated reporting, and the delicate role counselors play in advocating for justice. These scenarios demand a deep consideration of ethics, particularly when working with vulnerable populations or navigating power dynamics within institutions, helping students think critically about the balance between client care and professional responsibility.

Understanding trauma and its long-term effects is crucial for any counselor, and series like *The Keepers* and *Don't F**k with Cats* illustrate the far-reaching consequences of trauma on individuals and communities. These narratives allow students to see how trauma can manifest in varied ways, affecting mental health, behavior, and relationships. They also provide insight into trauma-informed care, a fundamental approach for working with clients who have experienced significant emotional and psychological harm (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014). Counseling students can apply this knowledge to assess trauma responses in clients and utilize diagnostic tools like PTSD or complex trauma-related diagnoses. The family dynamics portrayed in *The Act* and *The Staircase* offer rich material for understanding how power imbalances, manipulation, and secrets can shape mental health within a family system. These series allow students to explore patterns of behavior in family systems, consider the unique challenges of family therapy, and recognize how issues like gaslighting or emotional abuse can have long-term effects on both individuals and the family unit.

While docuseries like *Don't F**k with Cats* and *The Family* provide a deep dive into personality disorders such as narcissism and psychopathy, they also illustrate how these conditions can drive criminal behavior and retaliation. These cases sharpen students' diagnostic skills, helping them differentiate between personality disorders and other mental health issues. Moreover, these series encourage students to consider the ethical and clinical implications of working with individuals who exhibit manipulative or harmful behaviors, reinforcing the importance of careful, nuanced clinical practice. By engaging with these docuseries, counseling students gain the ability to apply their theoretical knowledge to realistic scenarios, sharpen their diagnostic acumen, and navigate the ethical complexities they will face in practice. The insights gained from these narratives are invaluable in preparing students for the emotional, behavioral, and ethical challenges that await them in their professional careers.

Employing docuseries as an educational tool enables students to hone their diagnostic skills based on the information presented in each episode, rather than relying solely on their pre-existing knowledge. This approach is particularly instructive in cases where students might prematurely assign a diagnosis without sufficient evidence from the client's symptoms. For instance, in the first episode of the *Gypsy Rose* docuseries, students familiar with the case may hastily diagnose Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) for Gypsy Rose, despite the lack of adequate symptomatic evidence. This scenario underscores the importance of adhering strictly to DSM criteria, based on the client's disclosures, rather than the counselor's interpretations.

Such series facilitate practical skills in data collection for intake and process notes, allowing students to practice notetaking and goal setting based on the client's shared information and needs, rather than the students' assumptions. An illustrative example from the second episode of the *Gypsy Rose* series highlights this point; despite Gypsy Rose revealing her history of substance abuse and addiction, students might overlook the necessity for a relapse prevention plan, focusing instead on her childhood trauma. This overlooks the potential correlation between the trauma and substance abuse,

underscoring the need for comprehensive treatment planning, including relapse prevention strategies. This method not only deepens students' understanding of the DSM but also fosters valuable discussions between instructors and students.

Objective

The objectives of this Docuseries Diagnosis Assignment are to enhance counselor training in several key areas. First, it enables students to practice diagnosing individuals in realistic scenarios, utilizing multimedia documentary series that mirror actual counseling sessions. This approach aids in applying diagnostic criteria based on the clients' narratives. Second, the assignment improves students' skills in goal-setting and clinical documentation, aligning with the gradual disclosure of information typical in counseling relationships.

This assignment aims to increase student awareness of the importance of focusing on the client's experiences within the counseling environment, rather than being influenced by the counselor's personal interpretations. Students learn to base their assessments and decisions on the clients' actual words and disclosures. Lastly, the assignment provides insight into the dynamic nature of treatment planning, teaching students to develop and adapt treatment plans as new client information emerges, thereby understanding the importance of patience and attentiveness in therapy.

Introduction to Docuseries and Clinical Documentation

The Docuseries Diagnosis Assignment should be introduced after students have received lectures on diagnosis, Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) usage, treatment planning and documentation best practices. The initial lecture should emphasize the importance of closely listening to the client's words, which form the basis for diagnosing and clinical documentation. Instructors must stress the significant impact a diagnosis can have on a patient's life and medical outcomes, highlighting proper diagnosing as a crucial component of holistic patient care (Murphy, 2016; Sanson et al., 2017). Illustrations of ethical dilemmas that counselors may face when their documentation does not align with the patient's reported experiences are crucial to demonstrate the potential harm to patients and the grave consequences of inaccuracies in clinical documentation and diagnosing.

Before implementing the assignment, instructors should briefly introduce the supporting documents found in Appendix A, outlining each document's key elements, and addressing any student queries. Preparatory instructions must include a detailed review of these document elements and a trigger warning about the potentially distressing content in the docuseries. This content may include references to sexual, physical, or mental abuse, child abuse, domestic and sexual violence, racial slurs, substance abuse, and other real-world traumas. A discussion about the portrayal of these real-life traumas in the docuseries is crucial, along with the provision of appropriate support resources in line with university policies.

Following the disclosure and document overview, instructors should introduce the chosen docuseries, such as the *Gypsy Rose* documentary, although any docuseries fitting the earlier-described criteria is suitable. The instructor should describe the client profile featured in the

series and the type of counseling scenario it represents, be it individual, family, or couples counseling. Instructors have the flexibility to assign individual students or student groups to specific clients within the docuseries. This teaching tool is designed for maximum creativity and adaptability, allowing educators to tailor it to their students' specific needs and areas for enhancement. This section of the article introduces this innovative teaching tool and guides instructors on its effective implementation.

Instructions for Class Activity

In this classroom activity, following a review of the relevant disclosures and documents, instructors are to select the first episode of the chosen docuseries for intake purposes, with each subsequent episode serving as material for progress notes. Instructors will distribute either digital or physical copies of an intake, treatment plan, and progress note documents to individual students or student groups. Instructors will also describe the counseling context (individual, family, or couple) and specify the focus individual for the series. Once a student or group is assigned a specific counseling type or individual, this assignment remains constant throughout the activity. Instructors will play the selected episode in its entirety during class. Upon the episode's conclusion, students will be allotted 10-15 minutes to complete their documentation. This mimics the real-world scenario where counselors often have limited time to complete their notes between sessions.

Activity Example

Instructors can use the following example of Episode 1 as a model for using this technique. The process can be repeated for each additional episode/session using the progress note template. The instructor ought to facilitate discussions after each episode and follow the subsequent pattern.

In-Class Activity Steps: Based on the Prison Confessions of Gypsy Rose Blanchard.

Instructor Instructions: In today's class, we will be viewing the first episode of *Prison Confessions of Gypsy Rose Blanchard*, a docuseries centered on the real-life case of Gypsy Rose Blanchard. Please be aware that this series may contain discussions of sexual, physical, or emotional abuse of a child, along with explicit mentions of drug abuse, sexual abuse, medical abuse, and explicit language, among other potentially disturbing content. If you find yourself affected by any of the content, please know that you are permitted to step out of class to care for your well-being. You may also speak with me privately if you wish to discuss an alternate assignment. Our campus offers access to the counseling center at no additional cost, and I encourage you to seek further support, if needed.

As we engage with this docuseries, consider it a series of counseling sessions with Gypsy Rose Blanchard as your client. Keep in mind that, while some of you may be familiar with this case, only the information from the docuseries is to be used in your clinical documentation. I will also complete clinical documentation throughout each episode to monitor this. After each episode, we will have a debriefing session to discuss diagnoses, treatment plans, progress evaluations, and the content of your progress notes. You and your partner will have 15 minutes after each episode to complete the clinical document provided by the instructor.

You will be working in pairs today, focusing on individual counseling with Gypsy Rose Blanchard. This team approach will enhance your consultation skills and allow for verification of information, given the extensive details presented in the episodes. Ensure that you and your partner coordinate at the end of each episode to discuss the diagnosis and treatment plan. For our first episode, your task is to create a treatment plan that includes an initial diagnosis, goals, objectives, and discharge criteria. Use only the information from the first episode of the docuseries for this document and complete your clinical documentation using the treatment plan document provided by the instructor. Remember, you will have only 15 minutes to complete your documentation before we reconvene for the debrief. While watching "Episode 1," utilizing subtitles will foster an inclusive learning environment and can also improve students' ability to capture all the detailed information, as each episode of the docuseries contains numerous details. Instructors should complete the treatment plan while watching the first episode following the same instructions as the student.

Class Discussion. After students finish filling out the treatment plan, they are encouraged to share the challenges they encountered during the process. They will also discuss their chosen diagnosis and assess whether they gathered sufficient information. This exchange should take place within a structured classroom discussion, led by the instructor who also shares insights from their own intake document and diagnosis. This discussion serves two main purposes: to acknowledge the difficulty of the process and to normalize the apprehension commonly experienced by counselors-in-training when engaged in clinical documentation. The class discussion provides an opportunity for instructors to identify areas of weakness in students' clinical documentation abilities. The immediate feedback given during this discussion helps instructors gauge whether students are improving their active listening skills. Additionally, it allows instructors to pinpoint any students who may need extra support in clinical documentation and offer them additional resources before they begin working with real-world clients.

Discussion After Episode One. Instructors should allow 15 minutes for pairs to finalize their treatment plans. After this time, they can ask students to share their treatment plans. For each group, instructors should inquire about the chosen diagnosis and note these diagnoses on the whiteboard. Once all groups have shared their diagnoses, the instructor will disclose the diagnosis they have determined to be most accurate. This will be followed by a guided discussion led by the instructor, explaining the reasoning

behind the correct diagnosis, and conducting a thorough walkthrough of the DSM-5-TR diagnostic criteria for each diagnosis mentioned.

For example, if Student Group B diagnoses Gypsy Rose with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), citing her experiences of trauma from medical staff and her mother, as well as her current imprisonment, the instructor can present their diagnosis. In this instance, the instructor might diagnose Gypsy Rose with F43.9 unspecified trauma and stressor-related disorder, explaining the rationale behind this decision. They would elaborate that, while Gypsy Rose recounted her fear for safety under her mother's control, experiences of being coerced into feigning illness, social isolation, and a troubled father-daughter relationship, she did not exhibit symptoms commonly associated with PTSD, such as nightmares, avoidance of the event, negative outlook on life, or increased startle response. Furthermore, despite mentioning sexual abuse by her grandfather, there was no expressed fear of death during these traumatic events. Gypsy Rose also discussed a lack of social awareness and confusion about appropriate social behavior due to her traumas, along with reported physical, sexual, and emotional abuse from her immediate caregivers.

Instructors will use this example to demonstrate the application of diagnostic criteria, ensuring that students understand the complexities involved in arriving at an accurate diagnosis. This process aids in enhancing students' comprehension of clinical diagnosis and the practical use of the DSM-5-TR. The same process will be repeated for the goals and objectives, providing the instructor with an opportunity to offer detailed examples of goals and objectives for complex real-world situations.

Evaluation of Effectiveness and Suggested Resources for Assessment

The instructor's use of their treatment plan or progress notes serves as a critical tool for evaluating and measuring the clinical documentation skills of their students. This approach not only facilitates classroom discussions but also allows for the identification of students who may demonstrate weaker clinical documentation skills. For those students, particularly those struggling to gather pertinent information or missing key details from the episodes or sessions, it is recommended that they rewatch the relevant episode or session. Additionally, documenting while reviewing a transcript of the entire episode can be beneficial. This exercise enables students to capture overlooked details and learn to identify key information within the typical 45–60-minute duration of an episode. To further support these students, the instructor can provide additional resources. For challenges related to understanding case dynamics and diagnostic criteria, *Diagnostic Essentials of Psychopathology: A Case-Based Approach* by Hammond (2021) is an excellent resource. For those needing assistance in goal setting

and treatment planning, *The Complete Adult Psychotherapy Treatment Planner (*6th ed.) by Jongsma Jr. et al., (2021) is recommended. These resources aim to enhance the students' understanding and practical skills, thereby improving their overall clinical documentation capabilities.

Implications

While the Docuseries Diagnosis Assignment offers a highly adaptable and versatile instructional tool for counselor education, it is essential to address the multicultural and social justice implications that arise from using popular media in the classroom. Counseling students bring diverse, intersecting identities, including their cultural, racial, gender, and socioeconomic backgrounds, which can influence how they relate to and engage with the media presented. Incorporating docuseries can privilege certain groups while unintentionally marginalizing others, depending on how these narratives reflect or fail to reflect diverse life experiences.

For example, a docuseries like *Dirty John*, which focuses on an affluent white family dealing with manipulation and abuse, may unintentionally privilege students who come from similar backgrounds or have more familiarity with these types of family dynamics. This narrative may not fully resonate with students from different racial or socioeconomic backgrounds, who might have vastly different experiences of abuse, manipulation, or family dynamics, potentially leading to a limited understanding of how these issues manifest in diverse communities. Similarly, *The Staircase*, with its focus on a white, upper-middle-class family caught in a high-profile legal battle, may not address the intersectional realities faced by racially marginalized or low-income individuals who often encounter systemic inequities in the legal system that can compound their experiences of trauma and stress.

The absence of diverse representation in series like *The Act* or *The Keepers*—which focus on White protagonists—could convey implicit messages about which experiences are deemed "typical" or worthy of analysis in mental health contexts. These portrayals might unintentionally marginalize students from underrepresented groups by not reflecting their lived experiences or by overlooking how factors such as race, ethnicity, and social class play crucial roles in family dynamics, trauma, and mental health. To promote inclusivity, instructors can make deliberate choices to incorporate docuseries that reflect a wider range of cultural and social experiences. For example, *Wild Wild Country* provides an opportunity to discuss cult dynamics and trauma within a racially diverse community, while also examining how systemic power and cultural manipulation intersect. *Murder Among the Mormons* explores themes of faith, deception, and identity within a religious minority group, offering perspectives that challenge more mainstream narratives and allowing students to engage with the cultural nuances that influence mental health in religious or marginalized communities.

Instructors should also encourage critical discussions about how the cases depicted in these docuseries may reinforce or challenge dominant cultural narratives. For instance, in *The Keepers*, students can explore how institutional betrayal and sexual abuse are portrayed, while also reflecting on how race, gender, and socioeconomic status might alter the course of justice and healing in less privileged communities. By integrating conversations around privilege, power, and oppression, students can gain a more nuanced understanding of how their own intersecting identities might influence their perception of clients' experiences and diagnoses.

To further promote inclusivity, instructors might allow students to select or suggest docuseries that resonate with their cultural backgrounds or lived experiences. For example, students from underrepresented communities could choose media that highlight stories of systemic racism or immigration struggles, which are often missing in mainstream docuseries. This approach ensures that the diversity of student experiences is reflected in the classroom materials, reinforcing that no single narrative or cultural perspective dominates counseling practice. This method encourages students to apply a critical, culturally responsive lens when completing their case notes. They can reflect on how factors like race, socioeconomic status, or cultural identity may have influenced the client's presenting issues or the way family dynamics play out, as seen in series like *The Family* or *Don't F**k with Cats*, which explore the psychological effects of manipulation and control within power structures. By engaging with these stories critically, students learn to consider how multicultural identities intersect with clinical practice, diagnosis, and ethical decision-making.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

The incorporation of an innovative instructional tool in counselor education represents a significant shift towards a more dynamic, inclusive, and student-centric pedagogical approach. This tool emphasizes the necessity of adaptability, relevance, and active student participation in higher education. As counselor educators adopt this approach, they enter a sphere of teaching that enhances both efficacy and satisfaction for educators and learners alike.

To further enrich counselor education, a focus on integrating pop culture as an educational resource is recommended. The use of pop culture helps educators stay connected with contemporary societal dynamics, ensuring that academic instruction remains relevant and informed by the broader social context. This approach is not just confined to traditional classroom settings but extends to hybrid learning environments, suggesting a need for research into versatile tools that are effective both in-person and online.

This method underscores the importance of a more experiential educational experience, where theoretical knowledge is applied to real-world scenarios. The growing popularity of online learning necessitates innovative teaching techniques to engage students effectively. As noted by Saleh et al. (2013), the challenge for instructors and institutions is to engage students in online learning as effectively as in face-to-face instruction.

Embracing Problem-Based Learning (PBL), as discussed by Carone (2018), offers a practical, instructional method used in post-secondary education to help students apply knowledge in

real-world settings. PBL has been shown to be as effective as traditional teaching strategies in acquiring factual knowledge (Carone, 2018). Moreover, students educated through PBL demonstrate superior clinical application skills compared to those taught by conventional methods. This method also enhances problem-solving, critical reasoning, and long-term retention more effectively than traditional methods alone.

This instructional tool, along with the adoption of PBL and the integration of pop culture into counselor education, can significantly enhance the learning experience, providing students with a more comprehensive, engaging, and applicable education that is well-suited to the demands of the modern world and the evolving field of counseling.

References

Banõs, J. E. (2007). How literature and popular movies can help in medical education: applications for teaching the doctor-patient relationship. Medical Education Oxford, 41(9), 918. https://doi:10.1111/j.1365-2923.2007.02829.x

Brown, B. (2014). Public health education using pop culture and media. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 2, 231. http://dx.doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2014.00231

Carone, S. (2018). A problem-based learning case study in rehabilitation counselor education. *The Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision*, *10*(1). Retrieved from http://respository.wcsu.edu/jcps/vol10/iss1/3

Collins, K. (2012). Strategies for using pop culture in sport psychology and coaching education. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, *83*(8), 20–31. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07303084.2012.10598824

Hammond, C. (2021). *Diagnostic essentials of psychopathology: A case-based approach*. SAGE Publications, Incorporated.

Hansen, J. T. (2003). Including diagnostic training in counseling curricula: Implications for professional identity development. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, *43*(2), 96–107. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6978.2003.tb01834.x

Higgins, J. A., & Dermer, S. (2001). The use of film in marriage and family counselor education. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 40*(3), 182–192). http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6978.2001.tb01251.x

Hou, S.-I. (2014). Integrating problem-based learning with community-engaged learning in teaching program development and implementation. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, *2*(1), 1–9. http://dx.doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2014.020101

Jongsma Jr., A. E., Peterson, L. M., & Bruce, T. J. (2021). *The complete adult psychotherapy treatment planner*. John Wiley & Sons.

Koch, G., & Dollarhide C. T. (2000). Using a popular film in counselor education: "good will hunting" as a teaching tool. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, *39*(3), 203–210. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6978.2000.tb01232.x;

Kress, V. E. W., Eriksen, K. P., & Rayle, A. D. (2005). The DSM-IV-TR and culture: Considerations for counselors. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, *83*(1), 97.

Murphy, J. F. (2016). A correct diagnosis is of increasing importance. *Irish Medical Journal, 109*(1), 324.

Nasiruddin, M., Halabi, M., Dao, A., Chen, K., & Brown, B. (2013). Zombies- a pop culture resource for public health awareness. *Emerging Infectious Diseases*, *19*(5). http://dx.doi.org/10.3201/eid1905.AD1905

Nittoli, J. M., & Guiffrida, D. A. (2018). Using Popular Film to Teach Multicultural Counseling: A Constructivist Approach. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, *13*(3), 344–357. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2017.1340216

Saleh, S. M., Asi, Y. M., & Hamed, K. M. (2013). Effectiveness of integrating case studies in online and face-to-face instruction of pathophysiology: a comparative study. *Advances in physiology education*, *37*(2), 201–206. https://doi.org/10.1152/advan.00169.2012

Sanson, G., Vellone, E., Kangasniemi, M., Alvaro, R., & D'Agostino, F. (2017). Impact of nursing diagnoses on patient and organizational outcomes: A systematic literature review. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, *26*(23–24), 3764–3783. https://doi.org/10.1111/jocn.13717

Shen, Y. (2015). Cultivating multiculturally competent counselors through movies. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, *10*(2), 232–246. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2014.959679

Shepard, D. S., & Brew, L. (2005, January 1). Teaching theories of couples counseling: The use of popular movies. *Family Journal*, *13*(4), 406–415. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1066480705278470

Stewart, J. B. (1998). Problem-based learning in counsellor education. *Canadian Journal of Counselling*, *32*(1), 37–49.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2014). *Trauma-informed care in behavioral health services* (Treatment Improvement Protocol Series No. 57). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. https://www.samhsa.gov/

Toman, S. M., & Rak, C. F. (2000). The use of cinema in the counselor education curriculum: Strategies and outcomes. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, *40*(2), 105–114. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6978.2000.tb01242.x;

Winings, K. (2007). Five invaluable resources for young adult religious education. *Religious Education*, *102*(2), 224–232. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00344080701285493

Appendix A

This appendix provides the treatment plan and case notes referred to in the paper. These materials are designed for a master's level counseling class activity, where students engage in practical documentation exercises, specifically through case notes and treatment planning. For this activity, students will observe a selected miniseries episode, identify presenting issues, and develop a treatment plan, followed by weekly progress notes documenting the fictional client's progress. The objective is to reinforce students' competencies in clinical documentation and treatment planning within a simulated therapeutic setting.

TREATMENT PLAN TEMPLATE

Client Information

Name _____

Date of Birth (you can look this up online) _____

Case Number (make this up) _____

Presenting Problem: What is the current issue being presented in the first episode of this docuseries? Do not use information that is not discussed in the first episode, even if you know it to be true from pop culture. Description of the main issues or concerns prompting treatment:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Goals and Objectives

Short-term and long-term goals the client wishes to achieve (What is the client's goal with their presenting issues? Do they want to do something different with their life? Do they need to get off a substance? Are they having relationship or interpersonal issues?)

Measurable and specific objectives for each goal (Use SMART goal language here for your goals and objectives.)

Intervention Strategies (How will you help the client achieve these goals? ; i.e., mindfulness, CBT, ACT techniques)

Goal 1

_____
_____
_____

Objective for Goal 1

_____
_____
_____

Therapeutic interventions for Objective 1 (Techniques and methods to be used in addressing the presenting problem)

[ ] Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) Techniques [ ] Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) [ ] Mindfulness Practices

[ ] Interpersonal Relationship Skills [ ] Skill Development [ ] Substance Abuse Skills

[ ] Communication Skills [ ] Boundary Setting Skills [ ] Advocacy Skills

[ ] Self-Esteem Development Skills [ ] Confrontation Techniques [ ] Symptom Management

[ ] Emotional Regulation Skills [ ] Stress Management Techniques [ ] Problem-Solving Skills

[ ] Anger Management Techniques [ ] Coping Mechanism Development [ ] Grief and Loss Processing

[ ] Trauma-Focused Interventions (TIC) [ ] Self-Care and Wellness Planning [ ] Social Skills Training

[ ] Assertiveness Training [ ] Motivational Interviewing [ ] Play Therapy Techniques

[ ] Family Systems Therapy [ ] Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) [ ] Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) Skills

[ ] Psychoeducation [ ] Relaxation Techniques [ ] Narrative Therapy

[ ] Art/Music Therapy Techniques [ ] Group Therapy Participation [ ] Crisis Intervention Skills

[ ] Psychoanalytic Techniques [ ] Other: [_____]

Frequency and Duration of Treatment (How often are you meeting with your client, and how long do you think this issue will take to resolve?)

Frequency [ ] Weekly [ ] Bi-weekly [ ] Monthly [ ] As Needed

Duration [ ] 1 Month [ ] 3 Months [ ] 6 Months [ ] 12 Months

Progress Evaluation (How will you evaluate progress on this goal and objective?)

_____
_____
_____
_____

Goal 2

_____
_____
_____

Objective for Goal 2

_____
_____
_____

Therapeutic interventions for Objective 2

[ ] Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) Techniques [ ] Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) [ ] Mindfulness Practices

[ ] Interpersonal Relationship Skills [ ] Skill Development [ ] Substance Abuse Skills

[ ] Communication Skills [ ] Boundary Setting Skills [ ] Advocacy Skills

[ ] Self-Esteem Development Skills [ ] Confrontation Techniques [ ] Symptom Management

[ ] Emotional Regulation Skills [ ] Stress Management Techniques [ ] Problem-Solving Skills

[ ] Anger Management Techniques [ ] Coping Mechanism Development [ ] Grief and Loss Processing

[ ] Trauma-Focused Interventions (TIC) [ ] Self-Care and Wellness Planning [ ] Social Skills Training

[ ] Assertiveness Training [ ] Motivational Interviewing [ ] Play Therapy Techniques

[ ] Family Systems Therapy [ ] Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) [ ] Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) Skills

[ ] Psychoeducation [ ] Relaxation Techniques [ ] Narrative Therapy

[ ] Art/Music Therapy Techniques [ ] Group Therapy Participation [ ] Crisis Intervention Skills

[ ] Psychoanalytic Techniques [ ] Other: [_____]

Frequency [ ] Weekly [ ] Bi-weekly [ ] Monthly [ ] As Needed

Duration [ ] 1 Month [ ] 3 Months [ ] 6 Months [ ] 12 Months

Progress Evaluation (How will you evaluate progress on this goal and objective)

_____
_____
_____
_____

Goal 3

_____
_____
_____

Objective for Goal 3

_____
_____
_____

Therapeutic interventions for Objective 3

[ ] Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) Techniques [ ] Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) [ ] Mindfulness Practices

[ ] Interpersonal Relationship Skills [ ] Skill Development [ ] Substance Abuse Skills

[ ] Communication Skills [ ] Boundary Setting Skills [ ] Advocacy Skills

[ ] Self-Esteem Development Skills [ ] Confrontation Techniques [ ] Symptom Management

[ ] Emotional Regulation Skills [ ] Stress Management Techniques [ ] Problem-Solving Skills

[ ] Anger Management Techniques [ ] Coping Mechanism Development [ ] Grief and Loss Processing

[ ] Trauma-Focused Interventions (TIC) [ ] Self-Care and Wellness Planning [ ] Social Skills Training

[ ] Assertiveness Training [ ] Motivational Interviewing [ ] Play Therapy Techniques

[ ] Family Systems Therapy [ ] Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) [ ] Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) Skills

[ ] Psychoeducation [ ] Relaxation Techniques [ ] Narrative Therapy

[ ] Art/Music Therapy Techniques [ ] Group Therapy Participation [ ] Crisis Intervention Skills

[ ] Psychoanalytic Techniques [ ] Other: [_____]

Frequency [ ] Weekly [ ] Bi-weekly [ ] Monthly [ ] As Needed

Duration [ ] 1 Month [ ] 3 Months [ ] 6 Months [ ] 12 Months

Progress Evaluation (How will you evaluate progress on this goal and objective, discuss methods for measuring progress through assessment, etc.?)

_____
_____
_____
_____

Additional Notes (Any other relevant information or observations?)

_____
_____
_____
_____

Discharge Criteria (How will you know when treatment is complete?)

_____
_____
_____
_____

Signature of Clinician _____

Date _____

PROGRESS NOTE TEMPLATE

Objective

This exercise is designed to help you gain practical experience in writing progress notes using either the SOAP or DAP format. You will find below a series of sample progress notes. Your task is to choose one of the two formats (SOAP or DAP) and rewrite these samples accordingly.

Instructions

Select a Format: Begin by choosing either the SOAP (Subjective, Objective, Assessment, Plan) or DAP (Data, Assessment, Plan) format for your progress notes.

Use only the information provided in the current episode of the docuseries you are watching; do not use outside information even if you know it to be true.

SOAP Case Notes Template

Subjective (S):

Description of the client's current condition from their perspective.

Key client statements or expressed concerns.

Client's feelings, thoughts, and perceptions.

This is what the client said happened or how they stated they are feeling.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Objective (O):

Observable facts or symptoms, including behavior, appearance, and speech.

Results from assessments.

Relevant clinical data (ex. Client appeared sad based on crying during session while discussing their mother's illness).

These are things you can observe in the room or on the docuseries screen that you personally saw; you have the justification for what you write here, and it has to be true and observed by you during the episode. No outside information here.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Assessment (A):

Clinical judgments based on the subjective and objective information.

Potential diagnoses or issues identified.

Progress or changes in condition since the last visit.

Progress Evaluation:

Goal 1

[ ] Maintained [ ] Progressing [ ] Regressed [ ] Not Addressed [ ] On Hold

Goal 2

[ ] Maintained [ ] Progressing [ ] Regressed [ ] Not Addressed [ ] On Hold

Goal 3

[ ] Maintained [ ] Progressing [ ] Regressed [ ] Not Addressed [ ] On Hold

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Plan (P)

Proposed course of treatment.

Modifications to current treatment.

Follow-up requirements (appointments, assessments).

Client goals and objectives: (Will they remain the same, or do they need to be adjusted based on new information?)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

DAP CASE NOTES TEMPLATE

Data (D):

Relevant information about the client's issues or situation.

Details from the client's history or background.

Observations made during the session.

This section is the Subjective and Objective portion of SOAP notes together.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Assessment (A):

Clinician's interpretation of the data.

Diagnosis or identification of the main problems.

Client's strengths and weaknesses regarding the issues.

Progress Evaluation:

Goal 1

[ ] Maintained [ ] Progressing [ ] Regressed [ ] Not Addressed [ ] On Hold

Goal 2

[ ] Maintained [ ] Progressing [ ] Regressed [ ] Not Addressed [ ] On Hold

Goal 3

[ ] Maintained [ ] Progressing [ ] Regressed [ ] Not Addressed [ ] On Hold

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Plan (P):

Immediate and long-term treatment plans.

Therapeutic techniques or interventions to be used.

Goals and objectives for future sessions.

Recommendations for client self-care or activities outside of sessions.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

"It Helped Me See Myself a Little Bit More as an Equal"

Exploring the Impact of a Teaching Assignment on Shaping School Counselor Trainees' Professional Identity

The purpose of this brief is to share a teaching strategy that examines the role of a school counselor through the lens of a principal by asking school counselor trainees (SCT) to conduct a one-on-one interview with a school administrator. This teaching strategy provides SCT with opportunities to gain insight into how school counselors can collaborate with school administrators to advocate for systemic change and to understand how administrators can impact school counselors' professional identity. We highlight the impact of this assignment on SCT professionals' identity as future school counselors and their role as leaders and collaborators in the school building.

RACHEL SAUNDERS,[1] KIMBERLY FARLEY-SMITH,[2] MADISON HOLLAR,[3] & JENNA ALVAREZ[4]

[1] Department of Counseling, Clemson University

[2] Department of Human Services, Wright State University

[3] Counselor Education and Supervision, University of Cincinnati

[4] Department of Educational Psychology, Miami University

KEYWORDS

Teaching assignment, school counselor trainees (SCT), identity development, administrator interview

ACES ASSOCIATION FOR COUNSELOR EDUCATION AND SUPERVISION

Introduction

The working relationship between school counselors and administrators is a valuable pathway to increase K-12 student achievement and help foster a positive school environment (Geesa et al., 2019). The administrators' perception of the school counselor's role, how the school counselor professionally identifies (guidance vs. school considerations—see Zyromski et al., 2019), and school counselors' ability to advocate for their professional role (see Havlik et al., 2019) are all factors in the collaborative relationship. Unfortunately, both professions may not understand each other's roles and responsibilities within the school setting (Karatas & Kaya, 2015). The misperceptions of the roles and responsibilities of school counselors often result in school counselors fulfilling inappropriate tasks that may not align with the mission and goals of the school and engaging in too many non-counseling duties (Lancaster & Brasfield, 2023), ultimately reducing their effectiveness. Additionally, school counselors who do not fully understand the role of school administrators may lack the knowledge to advocate for program needs, as well as the needs of all students (Lane et al., 2020).

In a study conducted by Havlik and colleagues (2019), school counselors shared that they had to educate teachers and staff within their schools about the professional role of a school counselor and how they worked to educate leaders in positions of power, including building, district, and state administrators. Robinson and colleagues (2019) noted how school counselors who were new to the profession were impacted greatly by whether they received support or resistance from their building administrator to engage as leaders within the school. Because of these challenges, there is a need to bridge the gap between school counselors and school administrators to ensure effective collaboration and support for students.

Preparation programs often emphasize the need for school counselors to be agents of change and serve as leaders within the school. Counselor educators can help bridge the gap by preparing school counselor trainees (SCT) to develop a strong professional identity (Pool et al., 2021; Watkinson et al., 2018) and work collaboratively with school administrators. To help achieve these preparation goals, counselor educators can implement a teaching assignment that requires SCT to interview a school administrator. This teaching assignment provides SCT with the opportunity to develop and strengthen their professional identity, learn how school administrators understand the role of school counselors, and how school counselors can begin to advocate for their role while in their internship placement.

Description of Teaching Strategy

Without the proper knowledge, school administrators may assign inappropriate duties to school counselors that go beyond their responsibilities and therefore, take away their time

and ability to provide direct services to students (Zyromski et al., 2019). As a result, school counselors may not be able to adequately address the complexities of implementing a comprehensive school counseling program (CSCP). To strengthen the role understanding between school counselors and administrators, our teaching strategy requires SCT, who are enrolled in the first semester of their internship, to interview a school administrator. Students are asked to interview an administrator from the same school district as their internship site to examine how the school administrator views the role of the school counselor and how administrators impact the work of the school counselor as aligned with the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) *National Model* (ASCA, 2019). The purpose of this assignment is to provide students with an opportunity to gain insight into how school administrators view the role of the school counselor in the areas of leadership and advocacy, thus bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. The cross-role understanding interaction helps SCT to gain an appreciation of how administrative decisions impact their roles as future school counselors. This teaching strategy customizes the learning experience for each SCT as they learn how different administrators perceive the role of school counselors in various school settings.

APPLICATION TO COUNSELOR EDUCATION

Because of the importance of counselor education programs to train SCT to be effective leaders and collaborators in the school buildings, this interactive instructional strategy prepares students to examine the importance of leadership and collaboration with school administrators through real-world interactions to facilitate learning that provides practical insights that traditional classroom settings may not offer. By involving administrators directly, this teaching strategy is an innovative approach to creating a feedback loop where SCT receive immediate and relevant feedback about their roles from the administrative lens, while simultaneously providing real-time opportunities for SCT to critically evaluate administrative perspectives of school counselors and gain an understanding of how advocacy enhances their role and effectiveness and bridges the theoretical knowledge of the *ASCA National Model* (2019). Furthermore, the teaching strategy assists SCT in understanding diverse student needs and how to advocate for all students effectively. This focus on inclusivity and equity through this teaching strategy fosters more equitable practices within SCT professional practice. Using focus group interviews, this assignment demonstrated its effectiveness in its purpose and provided SCT with a better understanding of their professional identity and the importance of the collaborative relationship between school counselors and school administrators.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is important to address the ethical considerations of this teaching strategy as it aligns with the role of the school counselor. Section A.5. Sustaining Healthy Relationships and Managing Boundaries of the *ASCA Ethical Standards* (ASCA, 2022) highlights the school counselor's role in avoiding inappropriate roles and relationships. This assignment helped SCT to process this

ethical standard with a school administrator during the interview by exploring professional identity and the power dynamics between these two roles, as ASCA emphasizes leadership, advocacy, collaboration, and systemic change among school counselors (Ratts & Greenleaf, 2018).

Regarding the ethical considerations within the classroom, including learning diversity and fostering an inclusive learning environment, the syllabi used for this course included our inclusive classroom policy, teaching methods, and teaching philosophy. For this assignment, we created a pre-assignment for students to submit potential interview questions they wanted to ask their administrator, which allowed us to provide feedback to the students before conducting their interview assignment to ensure the focus of advocacy and identity were addressed in the interview. In line with our teaching practices, the class engaged in a large group post-interview discussion and students were able to confront their own biases and consider how the counselor-administrator dynamic might impact their future role in diverse school settings. Students shared insights highlighting not only the importance of the working relationship between school counselors and school administrators, but the significance of cultural competencies that foster inclusive environments and the importance of advocacy through a social justice lens. Engaging in the large group post-interview discussion, students were able to confront their own biases and consider how the relationship dynamics might impact their future practice in diverse school settings.

It is also important to know the inherent power dynamic between a school administrator and an SCT, so there may be potential nervousness felt by the SCT to ask a school administrator to participate in a required interview as part of an internship assignment. This concern could also be exacerbated when the intersecting identities of both the school administrator and the SCT may widen the power and privilege between the two individuals. To minimize this concern as much as possible, the assignment was also shared with site supervisors in the welcome email from university supervisors/field placement coordinators so site supervisors can help SCT to set this up with the school administrator if additional support is required. SCT were also able to count this assignment as an indirect service on their internship log.

DEMONSTRATED REFLEXIVITY

To increase trustworthiness of the evaluation of the teaching assignments' effectiveness, the focus group interviews were approved the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the first and fourth authors (counselor educators) did not take part in the recruitment or data collection procedures, as we aimed to reduce the power dynamic with the SCT and limit any risk. The first author is a White school counselor educator who served as the instructor of record for the course. The fourth author identifies as a White disabled woman with elementary school counseling experience working with administrators. During the time of focus group interviews, both the first and fourth authors were counselor educators at the institution where they developed the assignment and taught multiple courses in the school counseling program. The second and third authors, who conducted the focus groups, were both White doctoral students where the first and fourth author taught. The focus group interviews were facilitated, recorded, and transcribed by the second and third authors. We also used the large group

discussion time in class to process their interview experiences, both positive and potentially concerning, as some students shared how their administrator never heard of ASCA or was unaware of the appropriate roles of a school counselor.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

To help students complete this assignment with the compounding stress of serving as an intern at a school while also navigating graduate school and other personal responsibilities, it was important to consider the time and labor of the interview assignment. Students were notified within the first week of the course about the need to interview their school administrator. To help with fidelity and implementation, we included the components used on the rubric for assessing student learning (table 1) and shared the discussion questions used to facilitate classroom discussion (table 2) in the following sections.

Evaluation of Effectiveness of Instructional Strategy

As counselor educators, it is important that the work that we ask our students to do is meaningful and has the intended impact that we hope it has, *but how do we always know that?* Given the role confusion many SCT experience (Betters-Bubon et al., 2021) and the lack of understanding of their role by school administrators, we conducted focus groups to explore if the assignment was effective in our intended purposes of supporting SCT professional identity development. The focus groups included participants (N = 8) who were enrolled and completed the school administrator interview assignment as part of the School Counseling Leadership graduate-level school counselor course. We were immersed in the research with our own values – so understanding how those values shape our role in research is important. We utilized a descriptive phenomenological methodology for the focus group interviews, as we sought to make sense of how school counselor trainees developed their professional identity as it relates to their role as school counselors and how the interaction with the school administrator impacted their understanding of both roles. We utilized Charmaz's (2014) approach to coding the focus group interviews and reported our findings in narrative format. We selected this method as we seek to make sense of how school counselor trainees have developed a sense of leadership and collaboration identity as it relates to working with school administrators. After reviewing and coding the interview transcripts by the second and third authors (doctoral students), we were able to illuminate the focus group interviews regarding the impact of the teaching assignment on SCT' professional identity.

SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

Students shared the differences in expectations and knowledge between school counselors and school administrators and the importance of collaboration between the two roles. Specific to the assignment's purpose of strengthening SCT professional identity and increasing SCT knowledge of the role of school counselors and how they can begin to advocate for their role while in their internship, one student shared, "I think it gave me the opportunity to talk to an administrator when I otherwise wouldn't have been able to. They're just way too busy and wouldn't have me scheduled if it wasn't an assignment." Another student shared, "I think for me it helped me see myself a little bit more as an equal…having that conversation in the format that we did helped me see like a more equal relationship with my administrator and even the way that she talked to me wasn't as if I was an intern." A student also commented on how this assignment helped them to better understand the relationship with the school administrator as they thought about their future role as a school counselor, "…thinking about a position for next year, one of the most important things is the principal. Who am I going to work with? That relationship that I'm going to have with that principal. Are they going to give me the tools that I need to develop the program? This assignment made me think about just how important it is."

Assessment Tools Used in Instructional Strategy to Assess Student Learning

To assess student learning most effectively, we utilized two different assessment techniques. First, we formally assessed students through our student learning outcome (SLO) of knowledge key performance indicator (KPI). This KPI involved a rubric that assessed six school-counselor-based components to measure student learning (see Table 1) and used a grading scale of proficient (highest score), competent, novices, or excluded/incomplete (lowest score). We were intentional that these graded components matched the student learning objectives.

To attend to our students' diverse learning styles and promote an inclusive learning environment, we employed various forms of assessment. For example, we informally assessed student learning through classroom large group discussions (see Table 2) where they were asked to engage in peer dialogue to compare their interview findings with each other. Through classroom discussion, students brought their unique experiences to learn from one another related to how administrators perceived the role of school counselors from various grade levels and districts. This included learning how administrators conceptualized the *ASCA National Model* and viewed the role of school counselors to serve as leaders to address the opportunity gap through data and advocacy. Although the classroom discussion was not formally graded, students received participation for engaging in meaningful dialogue with their peers.

Table 1 *Components of Rubric for Teaching Assignment*

	Components of Assignment Rubric Used for Assessment and Grading
1	The student was able to highlight the role of the interviewed school counselor from the perspective of the administrator.
2	The student compared learned information from the interview to the ASCA national model.
3	The student reflected on the administrator's identity and leadership style and the impact a particular leadership style can have on the school counselor.
4	The student examined disposition of the school counselors' professional identity when serving students and collaborating with administrators (i.e. assigned role appropriate task vs. role inappropriate task).
5	The student demonstrated an understanding of how the interviewed administrator supports the school counselor's leadership, advocacy, and collaboration efforts with stakeholders.
6	The student identified areas of personal growth and development in relation to the interview's current understanding of the role of a professional school counselor, the ASCA national model, and behaviors for professional school counselors.
7	The student utilized APA style for format, in-text citations of key documents, and included a reference page.

Table 2 *Discussion Questions*

	Discussion Questions for Small Group or Classroom Discussion
1	How did the school administrator describe the role of the school counselor as a leader within the school structure? Did it align with your views of the role of the school counselor? Why or why not?
2	What aspects of the interview surprised you?
3	Were there aspects of the interview that didn't sit well with you?
4	How did the school administrator explain the role of the school counselor as an advocate for all students?
5	How did the principal describe the role of the school counselor as a leader within the school?
6	What do you believe to be the importance of the ASCA National Model in your role as a school counselor? How did the principal discuss the importance of the ASCA National Model? Did this align with your views of the model?
7	What did the school administrator recommend for establishing your role as a school counselor?
8	What aspects or ideas did your school administrator share that you didn't agree with?
9	What aspects of your school administrator did you enjoy?
10	If you were to get a job at your school tomorrow, would you want to work with your principal? Why or why not?

Discussion & Implications

Counselor educators are in the critical role of preparing SCT to develop a strong professional identity as advocates, leaders, and collaborators within the schools. To facilitate this preparation, counselor educators can utilize this teaching assignment that requires SCT who are enrolled in

their internship course to interview a school administrator within their building. This instructional assignment provides SCT with the opportunity to develop and strengthen their professional identity, learn how school administrators understand the role of school counselors, and explore how school counselors can begin to advocate for their role while in their internship placement. As one student shared in the focus group, they felt more like an equal after getting the opportunity to meet with the school administrator and ask about their understanding of the school counselor's role. It is important that as counselor educators, we provide learning opportunities that are effective in their intended purpose, but more importantly, aid in the growth and development of SCT as leaders and advocates. This teaching assignment also aligns with trends in counselor education by promoting collaboration and equity within schools by emphasizing advocacy skills and contributing to the professional development of counselors. We encourage school counselor preparation programs to integrate this teaching assignment, and the assessment tools used to measure student learning to enhance the professional identity development of SCT and foster the professional collaboration between school counselors and school administrators.

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS AND/OR LIMITATIONS

Various limitations of this teaching assignment must be acknowledged. When evaluating effectiveness, it is important to highlight the potential for social desirability bias when conducting focus group interviews. Additionally, the student feedback captures the immediate reactions of the students but does not provide insights into the long-term impacts of the assignment on students' professional identity growth. Moreover, gaining the insights of school administrators' perspectives on the value of the interviews and how they were influenced on the understanding of school counselor roles could provide a more comprehensive view of the assignment's effectiveness.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

The teaching assignment highlights the importance of collaboration between school counselors and administrators while enhancing SCT professional identity. Students gained insights into effective advocacy skills for systemic change by understanding the impact school administrators can have on a CSCP. Further research is needed to devolve into how the effectiveness of the teaching assignment may vary across different school settings (e.g., urban, suburban, rural) or among administrators with diverse backgrounds and leadership styles. Investigating these factors will provide a deeper understanding of the assignment's overall impact.

References

American School Counselor Association (2022). *ASCA ethical standards for school counselors.* https://www.schoolcounselor.org/About-School-Counseling/Ethical-Responsibilities/ASCA-Ethical-Standards-for-School-Counselors-(1)

American School Counselor Association (2019). ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling programs (4th ed.). *American School Counselor Association.*

Betters-Bubon, J., Goodman-Scott, E., & Bamgbose, O. (2021). School counselor educators' reactions to changes in the profession: Implications for policy, evaluation, and preparation. *Journal of School-Based Counseling Policy and Evaluation, 3*(2), 40. https://doi.org/10.25774/gkr1-j228

Geesa, R. L., Elam, N. P., Mayes, R. D., McConnell, K. R., & McDonald, K. M. (2019). School leaders' perceptions on comprehensive school counseling (CSC) evaluation processes: Adherence and implementation of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model. *Journal of Educational Leadership, Policy and Practice, 34*(1), 25-43. https://doi.org/10.21307/jelpp-2019-002

Havlik, S., Ciarletta, M., & Crawford, E. (2019). "If we don't define our roles, someone else will": Professional advocacy in school counseling. *Professional School Counseling, 22*(1), 1-11. https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X19848331

Karatas, K., & Kaya, I. (2015). An investigation of the perceptions of school administrators

towards the roles and duties of school counselors. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research, 15*(61), 181-198. https://doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2015.61.10

Lancaster, C., & Brasfield, M. W. (2023). School counseling in the aftermath of COVID-19: Perspectives of school counselors in Tennessee. *The Professional Counselor, 13*(2). https://tpcjournal.nbcc.org/tag/school-counselors/

Lane, J. J., Bohner, G. L., Hinck, A. M., & Kircher, R. L. (2020). Current administrative perceptions of school counselors: Kansas administrators' perceptions of school counselor duties. *Journal of School Counseling, 18*(2). http://jsc.montana.edu

Pool, A., Dickens, K. N., Lyons, M., & Herli, B. (2021). Supervision experiences of school counselors-in-training: An interpretative phenomenological study. *Teaching and Supervision in Counseling, 3*(1), 66-77. https://doi.org/10.7290/tsc030107

Ratts, M. J., & Greenleaf, A. T. (2018). Counselor–advocate–scholar model: Changing the dominant discourse in counseling. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 46*(2), 78–96. https://doi.org/10.1002/jmcd.12094

Robinson, D. M., Mason, E. C. M., McMahon, H. G., Flowers, L. R. & Harrison, A. (2019). New school counselors' perceptions of factors influencing their roles as leaders. *Professional School Counseling, 22*(1), 1-15. https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X19852617

Watkinson, J. S., Goodman-Scott, E. C., Martin, I., & Biles, K. (2018). Counselor educators' experiences of preparing preservice school counselors: A phenomenological study. *Counselor Education & Supervision, 57*, 178-193. https://doi.org/10.1002/ceas.12109

Zyromski, B., Hudson, T. D., Baker, E., & Granello, D. H. (2019). Guidance counselors or school counselors: How the name of the profession influences perceptions of competence. *Professional School Counseling, 22*(1), 1-10. https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X19855654

Teaching Cognitive Complexity with Six Thinking Hats in Counseling Coursework

This teaching brief is an explication of adapting The Six Thinking Hats (de Bono, 1985) for creative innovation in counselor education and counselor development of cognitive complexity. Autoethnographic research was implemented to systematically study the authors' processes and outcomes of this andragogical teaching practice. The authors have most frequently integrated The Six Thinking Hats into counseling supervision instructional group seminar courses. We provide steps and instructions for integrating this conceptualization tool into diverse supervisory settings.

MANDY KELLUMS BARAKA[1]
AND KIMBERLY A. HART[2]

[1] School of Psychology, Counseling, and Family Therapy, Wheaton College

[2] Counseling and Higher Education, Northern Illinois University

Author Note:
Mandy Kellums Baraka ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2357-0957
We have no known conflict of interest to disclose.
Correspondence for this article should be directed to: Mandy Kellums Baraka 501 College Ave; PCFT M219, Wheaton, IL 61087. E-mail: mandy.kellums@wheaton.edu

KEYWORDS
Six Thinking Hats, andragogy, cognitive complexity

Teaching Cognitive Complexity with Six Thinking Hats in Counseling Coursework

This teaching practices manuscript is a delineation of integrating The Six Thinking Hats (de Bono, 1985; Li et al., 2008) as a creative and innovative andragogical modality for teaching critical conceptualization practices, enhancing critical reflective skills, and supporting cognitive complexity among students of counseling. Within the field of counseling and counselor education, imperatives for critical and ethical decision-making are daily practice necessities for safeguarding client welfare and preserving the longevity of counseling as a self-governing profession (ACA, 2014; CACREP, 2023). Cognitive complexity, defined as an "ability to absorb, integrate, and make use of multiple perspectives" (Granello, 2010, p. 92), is a vital capacity supporting counselor acumen and increasing counselor efficacy. Counselor acumen requires skillfulness in critical reflection and reflexivity (Lambie et al., 2018; Tate et al., 2014). The initial educational preparation of professional counselors, across counseling specializations, includes core knowledge as well as regional and topical foci to provide the most efficacious services possible (CACREP, 2016; 2023).

In adopting this andragogical strategy, authors refined the language of the six hats through contemporary adaptations more aligned to multicultural social justice competencies and ethics of the counseling profession. De Bono's (1985) original Six Thinking Hats roles and functions were designed for problem-solving within the business industry. We recognized how de Bono's original book, *The Six Thinking Hats* (1985), was very business-focused and contained some language not aligned to counseling contexts. These Six Thinking Hats are summarized below with modifications that emphasize each hat's role using de Bono's originally named hat colors for reference:

- Data Hat (White Hat) – gathers objective data, facts, and client details
- Feelings Hat (Red Hat) – focuses on subjective data, emotions and feelings, potential areas of countertransference
- Protection Hat (Black Hat) – identifies cautions for counselor and client, areas to protect, ethical concerns
- Strengths Hat (Yellow Hat) – highlights positive aspects, constructive thoughts
- Creativity Hat (Green Hat) – elicits new ideas, generates creative thoughts for clinical work
- Process Hat (Blue Hat) – oversees and facilitates the processing of the other hats, providing summaries

Without ascribing meaning or motivation to de Bono's original work, we recognized that the way people spoke in the 1980s is not reflective of the more humanistic and holistic view of persons and views of interpersonal roles in current counseling paradigms. For example, while

de Bono originally deemed the black hat as the critical thoughts role with power to shoot-down other ideas and potentially shut-down cross-dialog between other hats, a shift in the hat's focus is beneficial in counseling work. In counseling conceptualization, we highlight the power-with, versus power-over, of the black hat as it adds thoughts for client protections and ethical concerns. Reframing the black hat as Protection Hat, can promote powerful conversations with and among other hats regarding client and counselor wellbeing and the therapeutic relationship. Before explicating this andragogical practice, readers may benefit from a brief introduction to foundational scholarship related to the Six Thinking Hats as a developmental approach.

Literature Summary

As a tool for increasing productivity in problem-solving processes, The Six Thinking Hats (de Bono, 1985) served the function of differential identification and stratification. Using the hats, teams of business professionals could discuss problems and identify solutions by de-fusing fused constructs and illuminating under-emphasized influences. Roughly four years later, de Bono's work emerged in counseling scholarship, on the client intervention side, as a named approach for supporting counselors' conceptualization-refinement and decision-making by promoting reflection, creativity, and adaptive imagination (Gelatt, 1989). In the early 2000s scholars began to discuss the use of The Six Thinking Hats in a range of settings across the globe (Al Jarrah, 2019; Karadag et al., 2009; Li et al., 2008; Moucessian, 2020; Overholser, 2013). Both Overholser's (2013) and Moucessian's (2020) research highlighted perspective-taking as an important emphasis and contribution through the integrated use of The Six Thinking Hats. Authors reflected on two themes of "broadened considerations" and "enhanced participant engagement" that seem to emerge as direct outcomes and/or implications from the collection of reviewed scholarship.

By dividing into six role-based cognitive processes, The Six Thinking Hats are a structured metaphorical framework for individual, paired, and group conceptualization (de Bono, 1985; Kivunja, 2015). When considering learner readiness (Knowles, 1980; Taylor & Baltrinic, 2018) and supervisee development (Stoltenberg et al., 1998), there was no empirical data through which scholars denoted boundaries of utility for introducing the six hats. Mitchell and Butler (2021) named The Six Thinking Hats a useful supervisory intervention approach for Level 2 counselors (a reference to Stoltenberg et al,.1998 Integrative Developmental Model) to support efficiency, organization, collaboration, critical reflection, and cognitive processing depth within supervisory groups. Below, we outline the innovative andragogical strategy that emerged from existing literature and our autoethnographic study of this teaching practice with practicum and internship-level students of counseling.

Andragogical Strategy

As we think about andragogical approaches, utilizing the six hats in client conceptualization work is a modality for facilitating intervention-planning opportunities. As a procedural lesson, once students begin to grasp the role of each hat and how the hats work together, procedural collaboration in learning unfolds. Engagement with the hats, across stages of utilization, includes opportunities for each emerging counselor to cultivate increased perspective-taking practices, and in turn, develop cognitive complexity (Castillo, 2018). Next, we describe instructional stages of inviting students to theoretically consider "What does it take for me, personally, conceptually, cognitively, and emotionally to focus on the hat on my head?" In the following section, we introduce instructional stages of implementing the six thinking hats, describing the overall process for instructors and students. We share descriptions of materials needed to facilitate the andragogical strategy and include ethical considerations and limitations for using the six hats in counselor education.

INSTRUCTIONAL STAGES

Just as one might consider stages of group processes, we offer stages of instruction for utilization of The Six Thinking Hats: Invitation > Acculturation > Cultivation > Integration. *Invitation* is the stage in which the hats are introduced. During this stage, we describe, as thoroughly as possible, each hat and perspectives each hat brings to client conceptualization. Following hat introductions, students are encouraged to identify questions and statements each hat might contribute. Additionally, we invite students to consider which hats seem natural for them, and which hats will take more work for students to wear.

During the Acculturation stage, students are beginning to make sense of each hat, discovering hats that may be aligned with their natural inclinations or pre-existing strengths. It is in this stage we have students select a hat to wear during group client conceptualization, leaving one student to share their client case. In this stage students begin the practice of group deliberation and perspective-taking. Following a brief client introduction by one student counselor, hat-wearing students are then invited by the Process Hat-wearing instructor/facilitator to dialog with the counselor and with one another. A sample dialogue flow might be a) Process Hat dialoguing with counselor presenter, b) Data Hat making observations and inquiries, c) live data streaming of counselor video recording, d) Feelings Hat offering disclosures, e) Strengths Hat sharing exclamations, f) Protection Hat stating declarations, g) Creativity Hat providing feedback, and h) Process Hat providing a summary. As time permits, at the end of the scheduled consultation conversation, the counselor presenter may benefit from briefly recapping their main takeaways gleaned from the six hats discussion and asking any of the six hats any lingering direct questions.

Throughout the Acculturation stage, we tend to notice heightened student anxiety regarding asking questions or making statements that may venture outside of their particular hat's domain. Though this anxiety tends to taper off as students continue to engage in hat use. It is also common in the Acculturation stage for instructors to be intentional in helping reframe questions or comments to align with particular hats and include additional examples for students to learn what might be shared from their hat's perspective.

The *Cultivation* stage is observed as one of rich discoveries and risk taking for learners. In the Cultivation stage, instructors spend less time redirecting students as their contributions, without a set formula, begin to be more aligned with their corresponding hat. Students are able to see how the hats collaborate and begin to speak with one another. As dialogue in the Cultivation stage shifts, instructors, wearing the Process Hat, begin to ask counselor presenters which hat they would like to hear from first, and what hats they might like to speak to one another. The Cultivation stage is where students wearing the Feelings Hat, for example, takes time to name what is coming up for them as well as feelings expressed by the counselor and from the client. In this stage, students start to garner insights from one another and from themselves by their willingness to focus on wearing their assigned or selected hat.

When individual students and supervision groups emerge into the *Integration* stage, instructors can relinquish their macro-Process Hat and share their micro-Process Hat. Once students have integrated the six hats into their solidified skill set, they begin to take ownership of consultations, and instructors can take on more of a professional participant role. As this occurs, instructors can provide feedback to counselor presenters in the form of personal experience and insight. Simultaneously, instructors will observe less need to attend to consultation discussion structures and less redirecting of students' contributions aligned with hats they are wearing. The Integration stage is where meaningful feedback for participants can be shared the majority of consultation time, as all participants have an integrated knowledge of each hat, how each hat relates to one another, and fluid utility of each hat. Integration is what students carry with them after class groups terminate. Students may choose to implement the hats into self-supervision or teach it to other colleagues.

MATERIALS

The following text is a narrative instructional guide like what we provide to students as part of the Invitation stage. We have found giving printed handout reminders to students has been useful. Students are encouraged to keep the guide close-by during supervision sessions, taking ownership of its information, personalizing and adding notes as beneficial.

The *Data Hat* focuses solely on knowledge-gathering, data collection, and historical accounts. This hat considers, "What do we know?" and seeks out missing demographic information, such as concrete facts and figures. The Data Hat listens for information gaps and presents clarifying questions to assist the client consultation (e.g., "How many sessions have you had? What are differential diagnoses for this client?, Does this client have a stable home life?").

The *Feelings Hat* acknowledges and legitimizes emotions. This includes the emotional experiences of the client, counselor, and the Feelings Hat wearer. The Feelings Hat gives voice to affective emotions and physiological sensations that were stimulated for them during client conceptualization discussions. The Feelings Hat asks, "What's coming up for you…?" and shares their observations (e.g. "I noted a sense of sadness in your voice.") and wonderings about client emotionality during sessions (e.g., "I would feel uncomfortable in that situation."). The Feelings Hat is not expected to give reason or justification for subjective feelings. This hat offers reflective space to explore counselor personalization, such as countertransference. The Feelings Hat can be intentionally subjective, does not have to be neutral, and may present as the opposite of the objective Data Hat.

The *Protection Hat* identifies cautions, potential problems, challenges, and/or risks for the client and counselor. These could be related to treatment directions taken with the client and even foundations of how the client conceptualization narrative is presented. The Protection Hat asks about ethical concerns, treatment concerns, barriers, or areas of potential harm in the client's life. This could include, though is not limited to, important historical experiences impacting the current state of the client, systemic structures of oppression, and counselor countertransference considerations. The wearer of the Protection Hat is helping to illuminate potential gaps in critical considerations or limitations to the current client conceptualization including what may be injurious to the client/counselor processes.

The *Strengths Hat* looks for strengths in the client and counselor relationship. The Strengths Hat shares constructive attributes of the counselor's approach as well as positives, benefits, advantages, and strengths (i.e., client and counselor). This hat communicates evidence of hope and feasibility, recognizes supports, and encourages considerations about positive outcomes of what could happen based on existing counselor and client ways of being. The Strengths Hat addresses reframing opportunities and stimulates visions and dreams, with questions such as, "Where do you see hope?"

Most often during the Invitation and Acculturation stages, The Creativity Hat wearer, shares after other hats have spoken. The *Creativity Hat* is the hat that concretely initiates discussions about and responses to consultation inquiries. This hat is most encouraged to 'think outside the box.' This Creativity Hat represents ideas and works to cultivate new options for a counseling direction. Creativity Hats asks, "What haven't you considered before?" Wearing the Creativity Hat involves brainstorming and free association to explore new theoretical lenses and intervention approaches. The Creativity Hat is not expected to know more but actively works to consider and stimulate discussion about new possibilities, alternatives, ideas, and concepts.

The *Process Hat* is responsible for making connections, keeping other hats engaged, giving overviews, stimulating dialogue among hats, and helping identify conclusions. Depending on the instructional approach and stage, The Process Hat asks counselor presenters which hat they need to hear from most. Other Process Hat prompts to the group or individual hats could include, "What is the conclusion?", "Is there anything else that needs to be addressed?", and "How does everything fit together?"

Within this andragogical practice, course instructors are often wearing a macro-Process Hat during early instructional stages, and instructors may be the only Process Hat wearers. However, as students move into the Cultivation and Integration phases of utilizing the Six Hats —as well as knowledge and comfort with having shared power in classroom processes— students discover they can wear the micro-Process Hat with increased ease and efficacy.

Additional materials we share have included wearable "hats" (e.g., small and large-sized plastic bowl hats, mini-fascinators, neckties, tiaras, glasses, etc.) and laminated paper hats of variable styles in which students can choose to hold or place in front of them as a reminder to self and others where their consultation focus is during each client consultation discussion. During virtual supervision sessions, each participant is asked to replace their name with the hat name they are using during consultation.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Adaptation of the hats as a conceptualization tool is important modeling. One such modification for group member needs may arise regarding visual needs. Labeling and adding braille to any wearable hats and/or laminated hat handouts for colorblind or visually impaired students can help bridge barriers. Another example of a collaborative modification from Baraka's experience was with a visually impaired student who did not read Braille. The instructor and student collaborated to select objects to represent each of the different hats' domain of focus. The pairing of hat function with objects provided students a strengthened connection beyond the verbal assignments of hat colors and roles while learning this conceptualization framework. Similarly, broaching classroom discussions regarding how racism-based colors have been used to stereotype, degrade, and marginalize people is an important acknowledgement we make during the Invitation stage to differentiate the purpose of color-association as a memory support mechanism. Instructors can make color re-association choices before the Invitation stage with students. However, we have found that broaching the conversation has been sufficient differentiation practices to eliminate potential racism-based triggering for students.

Studying Effectiveness

In implementing this theoretically-sound andragogical strategy, we also sought to study the efficacy of our implementation, as described herein. Research on the utilization of The Six Thinking Hats (de Bono, 1985; Li et al., 2008) in counseling is limited; and to date, no other scholars had explored counselors' use of the Six Hats within group supervision. Adjacent to this andragogical autoethnographic study, we conducted an exploratory multiple case study on uses of The Six Thinking Hats with four different groups of master's-level practicum counselors enrolled in two different CACREP-accredited counselor education programs in the

midwestern United States: This article includes methods of studying the teaching strategy utilized for that study.

As teachers consistently engaged in researcher roles, autoethnography (Ellis et al., 2010; Poulos, 2021) was a clear study design choice for our andragogical innovation work. Embarking on an autoethnographic journey, required intentional documentation (Ellis et al., 2010; Poulos 2021) during each phase of our individual, and paired, course preparation and instructional delivery. While the andragogical strategy of our evolved six hats was implemented during three semesters of four master-level practicum group supervision seminar courses, the study of our strategy occurred in the waking hours and sometimes the attempting-to-sleep hours each day between November 2021 and December 2023. We sought mutual Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval once student participant data collection for the multiple case study of the Six Hats utilization was designed. However, at both of our institutions, autoethnographic research was considered exempt from requiring IRB approval. As such, the timeframe between study design to autoethnographic data collection was relatively instantaneous.

DATA AND ANALYSIS

Intentional and rigorous autoethnographic study requires researcher commitment, mindfulness, and intrapersonal attunement (Poulos, 2021). Our data collection included recordings of our planning and processing conversations before and at the end of each semester, individual written and verbal reflective journaling, field notes (e.g., notations made in the margin of a printed syllabus; a stack of notecard reminders that guided weekly supervision sessions). For example, while walking to a local coffee shop, after a departmental meeting in which one of us presented on The Six Thinking Hats use in higher education classrooms, a colleague's questions regarding the oppressive undertones of the Black Hat prompted a critically reflective voice note to the other as part of data collected and ongoing dialogue of formative instructional refinements to the Six Hats as an andragogical strategy. Also, artifact analysis (i.e., six hats student handout, client presentation guide sheets, and course syllabi) was conducted in tandem to reflect on our anecdotal observations of student responses to instructional artifacts. We used open coding analysis (Poulos, 2021; Rabinovich & Kacen, 2013) to analyze each component of data we collected. Intercoder reliability (O'Connor & Joffe, 2020) was used to glean trustworthy conclusions about these autoethnographic study outcomes.

TRUSTWORTHINESS

Where inter-rater reliability can be a concern in many quantitative studies, the trustworthiness of our autoethnographic study was strengthened by having more than one researcher-participant with whom to engage and corroborate fidelity of self-member checking (Ellis et al., 2010). In conducting this autoethnography, we employed integrated processes of self-member checking at regular intervals of data collection processes. This was an asset to the credibility of implications, being able to self-code and cross-code data collected by and from

each other. It was our experience, observation, and hope that readers will be able to confirm transferability of our study outcomes.

OUTCOMES

Counselor Educator supervisors of master's-level practicum counselors use various informal, formal, formative, and summative evaluation processes as a part of effective andragogical practices (Borders & Brown, 2005; Knowles, 1980; Taylor & Baltrinic, 2018). We discovered that when integrating the Six Hats as an andragogical approach, supervisors, simultaneously functioning as evaluating educators, can be more effective evaluators when engaged in real-time reflexivity and integrating action-based teaching principles. This translates to supervisors functioning as an intermediary between the concrete structures of the six hats and the abstract manifestation of student utilization during experiential supervisory lessons. Instructional supervisors serve as both a macro- and meta-Process Hat wearer within classroom processes (Baraka & Hart, 2023). Instructors are facilitating a supervisory process while teaching a supervisory process (metamodeling; Borders & Brown, 2005). In real-time, educators can evaluate efficacy of instruction through observations of student-counselors' persistence and engagement with the Six Hats as well as observed fluidity, ease, and depth of processing content across various hats. From study outcomes, we noted that, within any given course semester, opportunities for students to wear each hat for a minimum of two instances was sufficient to support instructor evaluation of instructional efficacy. Of course, the more objectively concrete evaluation metrics are at the outset of implementing any teaching strategy, the more effective and accurate the instructor evaluation can be (Knowles, 1980; Malott et al., 2014; Tate et al., 2014).

Assessing Student Outcomes

Evaluation of teaching strategy efficacy and assessment of student learning are related parallel processes, though not synonymous, and are not always correlated. Several counselor dispositions and skills related to personalization, conceptualization, intervention, and ethics are assessed throughout counselor education programs (CACREP, 2016; CACREP, 2023). The mode of assessment for practicum courses is heavily based on observable implementation with clients and students' articulation of thinking during consultation and supervisory experiences (CACREP, 2023; Tate et al., 2014). Assessment developers and teacher education theorists (Knowles, 1980; Lambie et al., 2018; Tate et al., 2014) warned that the more objective and specific an assessment tool is designed at the outset, the more distinct feedback can be communicated.

Based on existing literature (Al Jarrah, 2019; Kivunja, 2015; Li et al., 2008; Mitchell & Butler, 2021), implementation of The Six Thinking Hats aligned well for assessing student perspective-

taking, collaboration, cognitive complexity, and depth of critical thinking. We found that implementation of the Six Hats could also support some related constructs of student assessment, such as demonstrating vulnerability, contributing to *brave spaces*, and facilitating safe spaces in learning environments. As described above, a consistent and clear foundation of learner expectations for engaging in respective learning experiences and engagement with aligned assessment mechanisms (e.g., practice demonstrations, reflective writing prompts, conceptualization reports, clinical documentation) is paramount for establishing appropriate and useful assessment methods. Specific recommendation for student assessment tools is beyond the scope of this brief; nevertheless, the considerations above are essential for effective assessment of counseling student outcomes.

Implications and Delimitations

We hypothesized that this andragogical practice can be beneficial for both novice and advanced counselor educators. We recognize that what was inventive and innovative in 1985 remains useful in the 21st century for counseling supervisors with evolved adaptations discussed in this article. One specific adaptation to note is how supervisors or instructors seeking to use the Six Hats as a supervisory tool can best approach it by decentering the questions. For example, in our adaptation, the Data Hat is not the one who brings the problem or question of focus, which was part of de Bono's (1985) framework, but rather the person, pair, or group looks together at client conceptualizations. We have found that this approach allows for more collective engagement in conceptualization. This also provides a space for a more collaborative voice to emerge as each counselor, no matter the number of participants, knows how they can contribute and what is being asked of them within the scope of conceptualization conversations.

We recognized early in using the Six Hats that student comprehension processes evolved at different paces. Even though we sought to be as explicit as possible with explanations of each hats' focus, we were able to use the hats as both a benchmark and a guide throughout supervision. Utilizing the hats gave us, as instructors, visible tools to note when a student had difficulty moving beyond Data Hat content or found it challenging to identify Feelings Hat responses to client sessions. The hats were helpful for illuminating insights into what more formal supervisory work might be needed with students and were concrete examples of what kinds of assistance students might need in further developing skills.

FUTURE STUDY

As we consider areas for future study, limited literature on the uses of The Six Thinking Hats as a client conceptualization tool warrants further exploration in counselor education beyond supervision. Introducing the hats as a conceptualization tool in assessment or mental health

disorders courses could introduce students to its use in diagnosis and treatment planning. More specifically, research questions focused on interpersonal processing of the hats would provide insight as to how emerging counselors are making connections to hats during each instructional stage outlined in this brief. Additionally, studies that explore questions such as What do counselors need to effectively wear the Process Hat?, What is my immediate/natural hat inclination?, and How does the shared language of the Six Hats foster more accurate client conceptualization conversations within group practice? could provide further evaluation of the intricacies and effectiveness of the Six Hats as a supervisory tool used in counselor education classrooms.

References

Al Jarrah, H. Y. (2019). Six thinking hats: An analysis of the skill level of Jordanian vocational education teachers and the extent of skill application. *Space and Culture, India*, *7*(1), 170–185. https://doi.org/10.20896/saci.v7i1.470

American Counseling Association [ACA]. (2014). *ACA code of ethics*. https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/2014-code-of-ethics-finaladdress.pdf

Baraka, M.K., & Hart, K. (2023, October 11-15). Andragogical vehicle for enhancing client conceptualization during supervision: Engaging counselors in building cognitive complexity. [Conference session] Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Conference, Denver, CO, United States. https://web.cvent.com/event/f86c3e23-70ea-4c45-adc6-c55333143926/websitePage:118a665a-c9f5-4bba-9407-11934078d49c

Borders, L. D., & Brown, L. L. (2005). *The new handbook of counseling supervision.* Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Castillo, J. H. (2018). Cognitive complexity in counseling and counselor education: A systematic and critical review. *The Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision, 11*(1), Article 3. Retrieved from https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/234958341.pdf

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs [CACREP]. (2016). *2016 CACREP standards*. https://www.cacrep.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/2016-Standards-with-citations.pdf

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs [CACREP]. (2023). *2024 CACREP standards*. https://www.cacrep.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/2024-Standards-Combined-Version-6.27.23.pdf

de Bono, E. (1985). *Six thinking hats.* Penguin.

Ellis, C., Adams, T. E., & Bochner, A. P. (2010). Autoethnography: An overview. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *12*(1), Article 10. https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-12.1.1589

Gelatt, H. B. (1989). Positive uncertainty: A new decision-making framework for counseling. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 36*(2), 252–256. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.36.2.252

Granello, D.H. (2010). Cognitive complexity among practicing counselors: How thinking changes with experience. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, *88*(1), 92–100. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6978.2000.tb01237.x

Karadag, M., Sarıtaş, S., & Erginer, E. (2009). Using the 'six thinking hats' model of learning in a surgical nursing class: Sharing the experience and student opinions. *Australian Journal of Advanced Nursing, 26*(3), 59–69. https://doi.org/10.37464/2009.263.1764

Kivunja, C. (2015). Using de Bono's six thinking hats model to teach critical thinking and problem solving skills essential for success in the 21st century economy. *Creative Education, 6*(3), 380–391. https://doi.org/10.4236.ce.2015.63037

Knowles, M. S. (1980). *The modern practice of adult education: From pedagogy to andragogy*. Association Press.

Lambie, G. W., Mullen, P. R., Swank, J. M., & Blount, A. J. (2018). The counseling competencies scale: Validation and refinement. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development, 51*(1), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/07481756.2017.1358964

Li, C.-S., Eckstein, D. G., Serres, S., & Lin, Y.-F. (2008). Six thinking hats for group supervision with counseling interns. *Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences, 2*(2). https://kentuckyaces.weebly.com/uploads/5/6/2/9/56299209/six_thinking_hats_for_supervision_with_interns.pdf

Malott, K. M., Hall, K. H., Sheely-Moore, A., Krell, M. M., & Cardaciotto, L. (2014). Evidence-based teaching in higher education: Application to counselor education. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 53*(4), 294–305. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6978.2014.00064.x

Mitchell, M. D., & Butler, S. K. (2021). Acknowledging intersectional identity in supervision: The multicultural integrated supervision model. *Multicultural Counseling and Development, 49*(2), 101–115. https://doi.org/10.1002/jmcd.12209

Moucessian, A. M. (2020). *Why are we settling? Indigenous cultural safety education for counsellors in Ontario* [Dissertation, Queen's University]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses. https://www.proquest.com/docview/2524413979

O'Connor, C., & Joffe, H. (2020). Intercoder reliability in qualitative research: Debates and practical guidelines. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 19*. https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406919899220

Overholser, J. C. (2013). Guided discovery: Problem-solving therapy integrated within the Socratic method. *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy: On the Cutting Edge of Modern Developments in Psychotherapy, 43*(2), 73–82. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10879-012-9229-1

Poulos, C. N. (2021). *Essentials of autoethnography*. American Psychological Association.

Rabinovich, M., & Kacen, L. (2013). Qualitative coding methodology for interpersonal study. *Psychoanalytic Psychology, 30*(2), 210–231. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0030897

Stoltenberg, C. D., McNeill, B., & Delworth, U. (1998). *IDM supervision: An integrated developmental model for supervising counselors and therapists*. Jossey-Bass.

Tate, K. A., Bloom, M. L., Tassara, M. H., & Caperton, W. (2014). Counselor competence, performance assessment, and program evaluation. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development, 47*(4), 291-306. https://doi.org/10.1177/0748175614538063

Taylor, J. Z., & Baltrinic, E. R. (2018). Teacher preparation, teaching practice, and teaching evaluation in counselor education: Exploring andragogy in counseling. *Wisconsin Counseling Journal, 31*, 25-38.

The Use of Flip Video Discussion to Facilitate Reflection in Experiential Counseling Courses

Counselor educators can utilize video discussion tools such as Flip Camera in Microsoft Teams for Education to enhance the delivery of instruction, especially in online learning. This versatile tool can facilitate connection, engagement, and self-awareness among counselors-in-training. When students engage in mock counseling demonstrations in experiential courses, instructors can offer video discussions as an extension for reflection of skill development. This teaching practice brief details the application of Flip as a tool for self-reflection as students practice counseling skills and prepare for the demands of practicum and internship. While the use of video discussion in experiential coursework is promising, researchers are encouraged to study its effectiveness.

JEFFREY M. WARREN, HELEN LUPTON-SMITH, AND KYLA M. SAWYER-KURIAN

Department of Counseling and Higher Education, North Carolina Central University

KEYWORDS

counselor education, video discussion, reflection, self-awareness, counselors-in-training

Author Note:
Jeffrey M. Warren https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2496-2581
Helen Lupton-Smith https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6045-5478
Kyla M. Sawyer-Kurian http://orchid.org/0009-0008-4890-3299

We have no known conflict of interest to disclose. Correspondence concerning this practice brief should be addressed to Jeffrey M. Warren, H. M. Michaux, Jr. School of Education Building, 700 Cecil Street, Durham, NC 27707. E-mail: jeffrey.warren@nccu.edu

The Use of Flip Video Discussion to Facilitate Reflection in Experiential Counseling Courses

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2024a) outlined a foundational curriculum that equips counselors-in-training (CITs) with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for the provision of effective counseling services. Within accredited counselor education programs, the curriculum is typically embedded in coursework dedicated to each area (e.g., Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice). While some courses are more didactic in nature, others are highly interactive. For example, a course(s) that addresses the standards within the Counseling Practice and Relationship area (CACREP, 2024a) warrants extensive experiential practice. During their induction to the active provision of counseling in these courses, it is important for students to feel connected and supported by their instructor and peers (Snow et al., 2018). Equity in course content, assignments, engagement, and support, as well as student learning outcomes, should exist regardless of the course modality (i.e., in-person or online; ACES Technology Interest Network, 2017). Consistent, quality course and program delivery are especially important since many programs that pivoted to online instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic continue in this format today (CACREP, 2024b). Instructors are encouraged to explore innovative strategies to foster the growth and development of CITs.

Innovation and creativity that fosters CIT awareness, support, and engagement is central to effective preparation (Warren & Schwarze, 2017; Warren et al., 2023). Shepard and Brew (2013) suggested that students are more satisfied with their counseling experiences when creative activities are employed. More recently, Sacco and Amende (2021) reiterated the role creative self-reflection through music, metaphor, photovoice, and video play in advancing the professional practice of CITs. Similarly, Villarreal-Davis et al. (2021) described an art-based activity and writing collages, along with pictured miniatures and mindfulness as viable options for fostering reflection and connection in online counselor supervision. These and other creative self-reflection strategies, such as video discussion, can facilitate student engagement, connection, and heighten insights.

Today, it remains salient to advance innovation of reflective practices through technology, especially in online learning environments. In experiential-based online courses that cover counseling skills and techniques, for example, video discussion is a novel and viable activity that can support student development and familiarize them with field placement expectations. Flip (formerly Flipgrid; Microsoft, 2024) is one example of a video discussion tool that counselor educators can embed in online experiential courses to foster engagement, while developing skills through reflection and preparing students for the invasive nature of practicum and internship.

VIDEO DISCUSSION AS AN INNOVATIVE INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY

According to Lohmann and Boothe (2020), video discussion tools help to facilitate asynchronous discussions in an online format. Flip is a user-friendly, no-cost video discussion tool housed within Microsoft Teams for Education (MTE) that offers a safe, engaging space for students and instructors to exchange video and audio messages. MTE is an expansive app with built-in artificial intelligence (AI) tools that can be integrated into learning management systems such as CANVAS (Instructure, 2024). It includes accessibility features and supports the use of screen readers for those "whose vision loss prevents them from seeing screen content or navigating with a mouse" (Freedom Scientific, n.d., para. 1). MTE is free to eligible students and faculty for download at https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/education/products/teams. Set-up may require instructors to contact their university's IT department.

Once an instructor has an MTE account, they can create a class team followed by a Flip video recording assignment. Instructors can use Flip's built-in features and visuals to enhance the recordings. When posted, students can access the assignment, record messages, and offer comments to their peers' recordings, dependent upon the settings and structure of the assignment. As needed, both students and instructors can record and re-record their videos prior to posting. The Microsoft Education YouTube Channel offers step-to-step instructions for establishing and completing a Flip assignment within MTE (see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7dk-pQVZynU). Rutgers University also provides detailed instructions for instructors and students for using Flip within MTE (see https://idt.camden.rutgers.edu/2024/07/18/using-flip-with-microsoft-teams/).

IMPLEMENTING FLIP IN A COUNSELING SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES COURSE

Embedding technology, such as Flip, in coursework requires planning with intention to ensure alignment with course goals and student learning outcomes. A counseling skills and techniques course provides an opportunity for CITs to learn and demonstrate the skills associated with counseling interviews through mock counseling sessions. Emphasis is often placed on applying techniques through role-play and practicing skills in and outside of class. As a practice–oriented course, major emphasis is placed on applying counseling techniques, considering multicultural issues, and analyzing counseling style and performance through reflection and self-evaluation. Flip can play a vital role in fostering skill development, self-awareness, and preparation for the practicum and internship experiences.

For instructors who aim to use Flip for students to reflect and enhance self-awareness during the development of counseling skills and techniques, it is important to take several steps. In this case, video discussion can serve as a culminating activity that follows experiential activities, such as mock counseling sessions. Sufficient time for planning and preparation is necessary to ensure logistical matters are addressed prior to the semester's outset. For example, instructors can prepare to communicate directly with individual students via video discussion throughout the course. Instructors should confirm the format of the assignment and ensure

that expectations and instructions are manageable, reasonably developed, easy to navigate, and readily available in the course syllabus. Explaining matters such as confidentiality, how to handle ethical concerns, appropriate verses inappropriate video discussions, and privacy (see https://privacy.commonsense.org/privacy-report/Flip) at the outset of the course can provide CITs with the confidence to successfully use Flip.

For video discussion assignments submitted directly to the instructor rather than classmates, students are more likely to confidently share their thoughts and feelings. Instructors should dedicate time each week or as the video discussions are due to view them and offer a response. Timely and intentionally crafted video responses are key to fostering engagement, connection, and growth amongst students, especially in online learning. If students receive delayed or no feedback on their video discussions, the impact on learning is diminished. While video discussions are a great tool for scaffolding and preparing students for practicum and internship experiences, it is important to not create additional stressors due to poor planning, during an already potentially stressful period in the student's development. By completing the planning and preparation phases of implementation, at the outset of the semester the instructor can seamlessly detail the use of Flip to promote reflection and skill development. An overview of the assignment is provided.

Mock Counseling and Video Discussions with Flip

At the beginning of the semester, students are randomly paired with classmates. In these dyads, one student will serve as a mock counselor for the semester, while the other is a mock client. The pair will meet virtually outside of class each week for 30 minutes with the counselor practicing skills and techniques with the client. While the sessions are not recorded, the counselor will record and submit a video discussion via Flip reflecting on the counseling session.

The instructor will post a reflective prompt each week in MTE. Students are expected to record a short, confidential video discussion (3-minute maximum) reflecting on their skill development and respond to the prompt. Students will only complete the weekly video response for the dyad in which they served as the counselor. The instructor will view each student's video discussion post and provide feedback in a video discussion via Flip. Students will receive full credit for the assignment by participating in all required dyad sessions and completing the weekly video discussions. All video discussions are due by 11:59 p.m. on the night before class. Students are encouraged to watch the Flip tutorials embedded in the Canvas shell. Ten points are awarded for the successful submission of each video discussion.

Video Discussion Prompts

Instructors should develop video discussion prompts that mirror the developmental process of students learning and practicing counseling skills and techniques. An astute instructor connected to students' needs may also utilize Flip as a tool to discuss impending field placement site options and answer related questions. Specific video discussion prompts on these topics can establish a space for discussion, or instructors can simply address the concerns as they arise organically during students' reflections.

While examples are offered, instructors are encouraged to develop or modify the prompts based on student need and class discussion. Given the flow and natural progression of a course that focuses on skill development, some prompts lend themselves more readily to various phases of practice.

Examples from the beginning of mock sessions:

- *Prompt*: As we begin the semester, describe your level of comfort when using basic attending skills. Additionally, share your ideal practicum placement.
- *Prompt:* Please describe your use of nonverbal attending and encouragers in this week's session. Additionally, discuss your use of questions and share examples. Were they mainly open-ended, closed-ended, or leading?

Examples from the mid-point of mock sessions:

- *Prompt:* Provide some examples of your use of paraphrasing in your mock session, overall accuracy, and consistency of this skill.
- *Prompt:* On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being "not strong" to 5 being "strong," rate your use of reflection of feelings in the session and explain why you rated it that way.

Examples from the closing of mock sessions:

- *Prompt:* Three more mock counseling sessions remain. As you conclude the counseling relationship, what is important to remember during the termination process?
- *Prompt:* As we wrap up the semester, reflect on the skills you are most confident about and the ones you want to intentionally focus on as you enter practicum.

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF FLIP AS A TEACHING INNOVATION

The inclusion of video discussion in course assignments is a viable way to enhance instructional delivery in counselor education, especially as part of online learning. Flip's design and functions offer instructors a tool readily available to support student development. Set-up of account, assignments, prompts, and recording discussions within MTE are straight-forward, intuitive, and efficient. Over several semesters, we have used Flip as a tool to promote CIT reflection, self-awareness, and growth. We have monitored the tool's effectiveness through instructor observation and anecdotal feedback provided by students. In evaluating the effectiveness of video discussion as a teaching innovation, the use of Flip is a viable option.

Incorporating Flip in the online course has helped to foster connection and enhance the instructor-student relationship. Students have reported that their connection to the course instructor was strengthened, and that Flip offered a safe space to voice concerns, insecurities, and receive specific feedback. The video discussion, when shared directly with the course instructor, is confidential while our responses to students are supportive, non-judgmental, and personalized to meet developmental needs. As the semester progresses, Flip appears

to facilitate students' ability to outwardly express their thoughts and feelings through guided reflection. We have not experienced great hesitation or resistance from students participating in Flip video recordings. Student characteristics, however, do appear to dictate the level of initial comfort with the tool and the length of recordings. We anticipate similar student experiences and outcomes when Flip is incorporated into an in-person class. While we have not experienced working with students whose second language is English, instructors should consider modifications to Flip video recording assignments when appropriate.

We surmise that using Flip during the development of counseling skills and techniques models the value and utility of technology in counseling and counselor supervision, whether in online or in-person courses. The use of Flip for student reflection and growth as part of skill and technique development aligns with the recommendations for active and engaged online learning advanced by the *ACES Teaching Initiative Taskforce Best Practices in Teaching in Counselor Education* (Wood et al., 2016), *ACES Guidelines for Online Learning in Counselor Education* (ACES Technology Interest Network, 2017) as well as CACREP (2023). At this juncture, there is limited formal evaluation on the effectiveness of video discussion tools such as Flip as an instructional aid in counselor education and supervision. This is an area which warrants further exploration beyond conceptual considerations.

ASSESSING STUDENT DEVELOPMENT VIA FLIP

We use Flip as a tool to promote reflection and self-awareness as a component of counseling skill development. Students receive credit for completing each video discussion. However, the contents of the video discussion are not considered when awarding points for the assignment; doing so could serve as a barrier to the reflective process and hinder instructor support and student development. The central goal of video discussion is to provide a safe and supportive space for students to openly reflect on their development, including their thoughts and feelings.

Utilizing Flip as a tool to reflect on skill development and counseling practice also offers instructors an opportunity to assess specific learning objectives and outcomes that emerge from the 2024 CACREP (2024a) standards. For example, instructors can assess the following student learning outcomes (SLOs) based on students' video discussions:

1. Students will describe the use of counselor characteristics, behaviors, and strategies that facilitate effective counseling relationships during mock counseling sessions.
2. Students will engage in self-evaluation and increase self-awareness through reflection of their use of counseling skills and techniques to improve effective counseling practice.

Flip allows an instructor to informally gauge student growth and ensure reflections are developmentally appropriate. Instructors should remain supportive, help to normalize students' experiences, and engage in empathic challenges when needed. For example, an instructor may help to normalize feelings of anxiety and critical self-talk that stem from demonstrating a set of skills for the first time while being recorded. Constructive or challenging feedback

may include posing a question to encourage a student to reflect at a deeper level about the feelings they are experiencing. Through Flip, instructors can provide ongoing informal and indirect supervision that fosters the development of professional behaviors, counseling skills, and self-awareness. Instructors are encouraged to consider other uses of Flip's functions, including embedding it within in-person classes, dependent upon student learning outcomes and course assignment.

As a tool for assessment, Flip also offers an additional data point for programs to consider when determining a student's readiness for field work. According to the American Counseling Association's (ACA, 2014) Code of Ethics (F.6.b.), counselor educators are charged with gatekeeping and remediation. Video discussions, especially when used to complement asynchronous coursework, provide an opportunity for student observation; it allows instructors the opportunity to become more familiar with students as they approach fieldwork. For example, during our program's Mid-Program Review/Evaluation, which occurs prior to a student entering the practicum experience, program faculty collectively assess each student's knowledge, skills, and disposition. Instructor impressions of students' development and level of reflection, as evidenced by the Flip video recordings, are considered and utilized to determine readiness. These data are also available to help identify areas of support and to inform remediation plans for targeted student growth and development.

IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTION

During the COVID-19 pandemic, counseling programs rapidly moved to delivering programs by distance and integrated digital technology. "With a new understanding of and appreciation for digital delivery, programs are seeking to make permanent changes that were made in the interim during the pandemic" (CACREP, 2024b, para. 1). With an increase in counselor education programs moving toward online formats, the use of technology and digital tools that facilitate learning and skill development will continue to grow.

The use of video discussion tools, such as Flip, presents an effective and innovative opportunity for promoting student growth and development in counselor preparation. Given the challenges of online learning, especially in counselor training, instructors can use video discussion tools to help circumvent disconnection, lack of engagement, and isolation (Wood et al., 2016). Additionally, video discussion tools can facilitate strong relationships between students and the instructor, expose students to technology in counseling, and prepare them for clinical supervision. These aspects are vital for growth and development as a professional counselor.

Flip serves as a prelude to and helps scaffold the developmental process of becoming a counselor. Video discussions used as a means for guided reflection can promote skill development, enhance professional behavior, increase self-awareness, and help students reflect on their personal style of counseling. These areas of focus in counselor preparation are necessary for counselor effectiveness. The use of video discussion to guide reflection mirrors clinical supervision and desensitizes students to more formal video recordings or direct observation typically required during practicum and internship. Embedding video

discussions within experiential-based coursework can help students find comfort in being recorded, normalizes giving and receiving feedback, invites self-reflection, and encourages students to seek support. As a result, Flip has the potential to allay fears or trepidation related to the impending fieldwork.

Flip appears adaptable to any course within a counselor training curriculum. Additionally, Flip's utility may extend beyond reflective video discussions. For example, instructors could design Flip assignments that require students to record skill demonstrations. However, video discussion that emphasizes reflection seems to lend itself to experiential courses, including practicum and internship. The use of video discussion is a viable option for counselor education doctoral programs as well. It is important for programs to model instructional innovation through technology in the training of future counselor educators (CACREP, 2024a). Flip could serve as a tool for doctoral students to reflect upon their own clinical growth and their efforts to strengthen clinical supervision or instructional delivery.

Future directions for research on video discussion using Flip and related tools are vast. Given the evolving shift toward digital delivery of courses and programs, instructors will need "relevant preparation in relation to digital delivery of courses they teach" (CACREP, n.d., Standard 1.BB). Instructors will likely continue to use digital tools like Flip due to their accessibility and ease of use. As such, future research should explore how to best train and support instructors and doctoral students in using these tools effectively to facilitate CIT growth and development. As counselor preparation evolves, these tools will be "used to facilitate regular and substantive interaction or engagement among students and between students and instructor(s)" (CACREP, 2023, Digital Delivery section).

Counselor educators are encouraged to engage in research to better understand and substantiate the effectiveness of video discussion tools such as Flip. Qualitative investigations can focus on students' experiences with video discussion as a tool for reflection in experiential courses. A better understanding of the ways in which students engage with this technology can drive additional innovation and application of such tools. Additionally, assessing outcomes of students who engage in reflection through video discussion compared to those who participate in alternative creative strategies (e.g., photography) or traditional assignments (e.g., journaling) is warranted.

Further consideration for the development and use of discussion prompts may lead counselor educators to refine how guided reflection occurs. Relatedly, determining the dosage of Flip or the degree to which it is used across a semester and the length of time allotted for each recording (i.e., 30 seconds to 10 minutes) for guided reflection or other means can lead to better implementation practices. Of course, an initial study may comprise an analysis of a set of recorded reflections and instructor feedback shared through Flip. These findings can unveil the nature of students' thoughts and feelings while reflecting on their counseling skill and technique development. Similarly, instructor responses provided via Flip also can yield rich data related to the developmental nature of the support students receive. An alternative inquiry into students' reflections upon their reflections could yield interesting findings related to counselor development. In this instance, researchers could design a study in which internship students

rewatch their video discussions via Flip and reflect on their growth as a counselor over time. Doing so could offer counselor educators a greater glimpse into developmental processes and changes in self-awareness that occur as students matriculate toward program completion.

It is evident that video discussion tools, such as Flip, can enhance the delivery of instruction in counselor education programs. There are many options for embedding video discussion and related tools in course assignments. Flip seems especially pertinent as a tool for fostering connection, engagement, and self-awareness in online courses and is a viable option to facilitate guided reflection among students working to develop counseling skills and techniques. Counselor educators are encouraged to consider the use of Flip to support student development as they engage in experiential exercises and transition toward practicum and internship. Also, this area of inquiry is ripe for study and can lead to further teaching innovations with technology.

References

American Counseling Association. (2014). *ACA code of ethics*. https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/ethics/2014-aca-code-of-ethics.pdf

ACES Technology Interest Network. (2017). *ACES guidelines for online learning in counselor education*. https://acesonline.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/ACES-Guidelines-for-Online-Learning-2017.pdf

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs. (n.d.). *Standards for* digital delivery update report.

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs. (2023). *Glossary of digital learning terms*. https://www.cacrep.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Revised-Glossary-of-Digital-Learning-Terms-February-2023.pdf

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs. (2024a). *2024 CACREP standards*. https://www.cacrep.org/for-programs/2024-cacrep-standards/

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs. (2024b). *Digital delivery of programs statement*. https://www.cacrep.org/for-programs/digital-delivery/#digital-delivery-substantive-change-report

Freedom Scientific. (n.d.) *JAWS*. https://www.freedomscientific.com/products/software/jaws/

Lohmann, M. J., & Boothe, K. A. (2020). Developing asynchronous online discussion boards to increase student engagement and learning. In A. W. Thornburg, D. F. Abernathy, & R. J. Ceglie (Eds.), *Handbook of research on developing engaging online courses* (pp. 134-151). IGI Global. http://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-2132-8

Instructure. (2024). Canvas. https://www.instructure.com/canvas

Microsoft. (2024). Flip. https://info.flip.com/en-us.html

Sacco, K. K., & Amende, K. E. (2021). Use of creative means for expressive self-reflection among counselors-in-training. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health, 16*(3), 360–373. http://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2020.1776185

Shepard, D. S., & Brew, L. (2013). Creating space for connection: Creativity in the classroom. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health, 8*(4), 444–455. https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2013.849579

Snow, W. H., Lamar, M. R., Hinkle, J. S., & Speciale, M. (2018). Current practices in online counselor education. *The Professional Counselor, 8*(2), 131–145.https://doi.org/10.15241/whs.8.2.131

Villarreal-Davis, C., Sartor, T. A., & McLean, L. (2021). Utilizing creativity to foster connection in online counseling supervision. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health, 16*(2), 244–257.http://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2020.1754989

Warren, J. M., & Schwarze, M. A. (2017). Exploring internship experiences of counselors-in-training through Pinterest: A consensual analysis. *Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision, 9*(2), Article 2. https://research.library.kutztown.edu/jcps/vol9/iss2/2/

Warren, J. M., Schwarze, M., & Lupton-Smith, H. S. (2023). Supporting counselors-in-training: A toolbox for doctoral student supervisors. *Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision, 17*(5), Article 9. https://research.library.kutztown.edu/jcps/vol17/iss5/9/

Wood, S. M., Baltrinic, E. R., Minton, C., Cox, J., Kleist, D., Lingertat-Putnam, C., Merino, C., Osterlund, L., Perjessy, C., Rodriguez, & Sheely, A. (2016). *ACES teaching initiative taskforce best practices in teaching in counselor education report 2016.* https://acesonline.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/ACES-Teaching-Initiative-Taskforce-Final-Report-2016.pdf

Playful Pedagogy

A Novel Teaching Innovation in Counselor Education

Counselor educators have an important task in training competent counselors who can provide effective therapy to a diverse and complex caseload. However, traditional lecture-based teaching is often at odds with desired student learning outcomes. Therefore, it is important to explore and embrace alternative pedagogies because our efficacy as counselor educators has a direct impact on the quality of care our graduates will provide their future clients and students. In this teaching brief, I present a case for playful pedagogy as a powerful alternative mode to education that creates an environment that is conducive to connection, belonging, student engagement, and brain-based learning leading to deeper, more meaningful learning.

LISA K. FORBES

Counseling Program, University of Colorado Denver

Author Note:
Lisa K. Forbes https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0673-3059
The author has no known conflicts of interest to disclose.
Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Lisa K. Forbes, University of Colorado Denver, 1380 Lawrence Street Center, Suite 1115, Denver, CO, 80204.
Email: lisa.forbes@ucdenver.edu

KEYWORDS
playful pedagogy, play in learning, play-based learning, student engagement.

ACES ASSOCIATION FOR COUNSELOR EDUCATION AND SUPERVISION

Playful Pedagogy: A Novel Teaching Innovation in Counselor Education

Counselor educators have an important task in training and graduating competent counselors who can provide effective and nuanced therapy to a diverse and complex caseload. However, traditional teaching practices in higher education are arguably outdated and often at odds with desired student learning outcomes. It is generally well-known that increasing student motivation and active engagement are vital precursors to deep and meaningful learning (Konopka et al., 2015). However, despite this knowledge, many educators still struggle to divert their teaching practices away from the traditional sage-on-the-stage, lecture-based approach where students tend to be passive recipients of knowledge (Brockliss, 1996; Freeman et al., 2014; Hsu & Malkin, 2011). It behooves counselor educators to explore and embrace alternative pedagogies because educating future counselors has a more profound impact than simply preparing students to pass our courses and licensure exams. That is, becoming a more effective educator is not only essential to provide a better learning experience for students, but it also has ethical implications because our ability to train competent, deeply knowledgeable, and flexible counselors have a direct impact on the quality of care that our graduates will provide their future clients and students. Therefore, counselor educators should consider the limitations of the traditional modes of education and embrace alternative pedagogies that can more dynamic and effective in train competent counselors.

Neuroscience researchers have suggested that rigid and static learning environments, such as lecture-based teaching, do not appeal to the brain, tend to extinguish students' natural curiosity, and limit a student's ability to learn (Brown, 2009; Jansen & McConchie, 2020; Tang, 2017). A more valuable learning experience is generated when the environment creates optimal brain states for learning (Tang, 2017; Taylor & Marienau, 2016). Educators can support brain-based learning by eliciting certain neurotransmitters that are involved in learning (i.e., dopamine, norepinephrine, acetylcholine, and oxytocin) which strengthen neuroplasticity (Jansen & McConchie, 2020; Tang, 2017; Wang & Aamodt, 2012). The presence of these neurotransmitters increases students' motivation, attention, memory, concentration, urgency, and interpersonal trust - all vital aspects of learning (Jansen & McConchie, 2020; Tang, 2017; Wang & Aamodt, 2012). Environments that are most conducive to producing these positive neurotransmitters are those that allow for joy, pleasure, excitement, positive mood, surprise, novelty, and social interaction (Jansen & McConchie, 2020; Tang, 2017; Wang & Aamodt, 2012). However, when you compare this type of pro-learning environment with our traditional modes of education (e.g., lecture-based teaching), it becomes clear that formal teaching approaches may be counterproductive to learning (Tang, 2017). Given this contrast, in this teaching brief, I present a case for playful pedagogy as a powerful alternative mode to education that may hold considerable merit for counselor educators.

The counselor education literature has relatively few examples of play-based learning beyond the traditional role-play intervention. Although limited in examples, this literature may provide some direction and understanding of playful pedagogy in counselor training programs. Most of the play-based examples in the counselor education literature are singular interventions intended to teach a certain skill. For example, more than 30 years ago, Barak (1990) used The Empathy Game to teach and enhance students' empathy skills. Kim and Lyons (2003) utilized games to teach multicultural competency. Swank (2012) also adapted popular games (i.e., Jenga, Jeopardy, etc.) to foster discussions and create unique assessment activities. Bell et al. (2014) utilized play as a creative approach to impart psychoeducation and self-reflection. Anderton and King (2016) enhanced students' empathy for various populations through a video game. These examples demonstrate how play can be used to teach a specific concept, but they do not describe how those playful interventions fit within the professor's underlying pedagogical philosophy.

A more recent study took a more macro-level look at counseling students' experiences of learning when play was utilized as a foundation to the course (Forbes, 2021). In this study, Forbes (2021) provided a more holistic understanding and rationale for the application of playful pedagogy beyond singular interventions. While singular play-based interventions to teach a concept are meaningful, in this teaching brief, I suggest the use of a more holistic and comprehensive philosophical playful teaching approach.

Description of Playful Pedagogy

A holistic, playful pedagogy is an uncommon and non-traditional approach to adult education that transforms the learning environment to connect and engage students and change their association to learning (Forbes, 2021). Play is deeply inherent to humans and a basic human need (Brown, 2009) that generates a plethora of positive outcomes yet is often an untapped resource in adult learning (James & Nerantzi, 2019). However, when play is included in the learning environment, a powerful learning process ensues (Brown, 2009). Play reduces students' stress and fear promoting well-being, joy, and motivation to engage in learning which deepens and enhances the learning outcomes (Forbes, 2021; James & Nerantzi, 2019). Play generates feelings of joy, novelty, excitement, and surprise which produce important neurotransmitters involved in learning (Wang & Aamodt, 2012). Play awakens student engagement and establishes an environment built on trust and connection encouraging experimentation, risk-taking, and creativity (Brown, 2009; James & Nerantzi, 2019). Overall, playful pedagogy is not just a play activity but a philosophy to teaching that maintains a belief in the power of play to reduce students' barriers, create a connected learning community leading to motivated students who deeply engage and participate in their learning (Brown, 2009; Forbes, 2021).

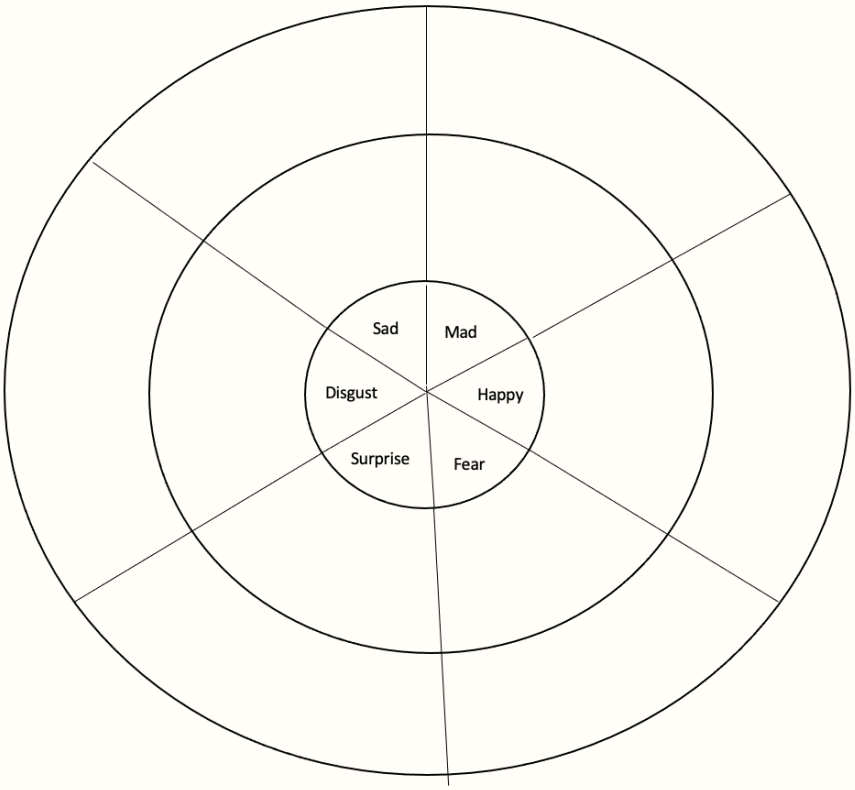
ESTABLISHING AN ENVIRONMENT CONDUCIVE FOR DEEP LEARNING

Playful pedagogy extends beyond typical role-plays and singular activities and provides a deeper philosophy and approach to teaching. Moreover, playful pedagogy is not just what the instructor does but who the instructor is. That is, the instructor embodies play as a way of being, avoiding rigidity, reducing intimidating hierarchies, and simply not taking oneself too seriously (Forbes & Thomas, 2022). Embodying playfulness and flexibility are important aspects of the powerful learning process that ensues when play is utilized because play establishes a safe and inclusive learning environment - aspects that are vital as a foundation to learning (Forbes & Thomas, 2022; Marzano, 2017). Another often overlooked component of creating an environment for thorough learning is producing joy, excitement, and social connection. In Playful pedagogy, playful icebreakers are intentionally utilized to create a classroom environment built on trust, emotional ease, and connection between students and instructor (James & Nerantzi, 2019). Icebreakers in adult learning are often excluded or minimally used for various reasons, some being fear and a misconception that icebreakers reduce "rigor" or waste precious learning time needed to meet extensive learning outcomes (James & Nerantzi, 2019). Playful pedagogy is not only about teaching content, but also about establishing an environment that facilitates student success so that the learning can be deepened and accelerated. Similar to Carl Rogers' person-centered belief that clients will self-actualize if given the "right" environment (Rogers, 1951), playful pedagogy also asserts that establishing an environment built on relational safety is an essential aspect of effective learning, which traditional pedagogies often struggle to cultivate. Therefore, by simply spending a little time on play, even when it is seemingly irrelevant to the content (i.e., such as icebreakers), educators can teach more deeply in less time because students will have an increased openness, motivation, and ability to learn (Brown, 2009). Once an environment is created where students are relaxed, connected, and motivated to engage, play can be harnessed as creative and hands-on approaches to teaching important content.

EXAMPLES OF PLAYFUL PEDAGOGY IN TEACHING CONTENT

Games for Active Learning. Play can be games or competitions, but play can also be "playing with" teaching norms to design learning that is more novel, flexible, and innovative (Forbes & Thomas, 2022). For example, instead of simply providing students with a completed feeling wheel, the instructor can turn the feeling wheel handout into a game where students are given a blank feelings wheel (see Figure 1) with only the primary feelings printed on the inner concentric circle. Then, student groups compete against each other (or race against the clock) to complete their own feeling wheels by brainstorming synonyms for each of the primary feelings. This allows students to engage with the feeling wheel and actively expand their feeling word vocabulary. Without active engagement, students tend to non-critically view the feeling wheel and tuck it away in a binder.

Figure 1
Blank Feelings Wheel



A More Novel Case Study. Instead of a typical and obligatory case study, playful pedagogy encourages instructors to re-design the case study to be more novel and engaging. One example of a more playful approach to the case study intervention can be designing it based on a popular children's book such as *Giraffes Can't Dance*. This book tells a story of a giraffe who gets ridiculed because he is different from all the other animals. The client, then, is a giraffe and the client's background information are based on real facts about giraffes turned into reasons why one might seek counseling services. After listening to a reading of the children's book, in small groups, students are tasked to conceptualize this "client" through various theoretical lenses to make sense of the presenting problem and develop a treatment plan for this client's care. Student groups share their conceptualization and treatment plan from their unique theoretical lens. The students are given an example of how a single case can be conceptualized and treated in different ways from different therapeutic lenses. Not only is this type of playful case study more fun and engaging, but students' minds are also freed from the psychological confines of "getting it right" because no one has ever counseled a giraffe before. Play reduces the pressure and in-the-box thinking which often serves as a barrier to creativity and depth in learning. When we are allowed to get outside of reality, we are no longer limited by the box that often confines us. While this example of a case study is fun and playful, it also remains serious learning in that it adequately engages students in necessary skills of becoming a counselor.

Playful Framing of Discussions. Those who believe that heavy lecture-based teaching leads to passive students may implement small group discussions as an intervention to better engage students in learning. Oftentimes, educators design thought-provoking discussion questions only to find their students half-heartedly participate in the conversations. Playful pedagogy can take a typical and often viewed as obligatory small group discussion and create a novel framing, getting students genuinely excited and invested in the conversation. This playful framing can happen without changing the discussion question(s) or the desired outcome of the small group conversations yet can increase student participation. For example, the instructor can add a playful element and novelty by turning a group discussion into a Martian mission. The instructor can create an introduction video of a "Martian" (i.e., the instructor) calling the other Martians (i.e., the students) to engage in a mission to help Earthlings solve some of their deepest problems (i.e., the problem is the issue to be discussed). Students step into the role of helpful Martians who are sent to Earth to examine and research a specific Earthing problem then they must report back to Mars (i.e., the instructor) what they found and how to think about and or solve the problem. This example of playful overhaul is initially silly in presentation, but the conversation remains serious and in-line with the original purpose of the small group discussion. However, when turned into something more novel and playful, students find a sense of joy, excitement, and interest in the discussion that they may not have had otherwise. This type of play is another way for students to escape reality to take a different perspective on the issue and escape in-the-box thinking.

Playfully Redesigning Assignments. Counselor educators must demonstrate that students are reaching certain learning outcomes through various assessment measures. Some of the assessments that we assign students might be signature assignments of a course or program and unable to change, but many assignments are available for a playful re-design. For example, some accreditation and licensure bodies require students to know and understand various counseling agencies/bodies, the minimal training/supervision guidelines for licensure, and best practices promulgated by the counseling associations. This type of knowledge is dry and often experienced as busy work by students. Instead of a multiple choice exam or short paper assessing the students' understanding of this knowledge, an instructor utilizing playful pedagogy might create a digital escape room where, as students explore the counseling association's website, they must use the information within the website to solve clues in order to "unlock" a series of locks that eventually help them escape the room (i.e., answering all of the necessary questions and demonstrating they have explored the counseling association's website). This type of activity is based in play, is more fun and novel, and yet achieves the same desired learning outcomes as a traditional and boring assignment. Examples of how to create a digital escape room can be found on the website, YouTube.com. The above examples are just a few of the possibilities designed through playful pedagogy. Below are resources that contain a plethora of other examples.

CLASSROOM DIVERSITY AND FOSTERING INCLUSIVITY

Although there is no found research on playful pedagogy and diversity and inclusion, the general play literature suggests that play is inviting, disarms people, and leads to deeper

connections, communication, and interpersonal trust (Brown, 2009). Considering that many marginalized students often feel excluded from the learning environment and struggle to find a sense of belonging (Hussain & Jones, 2021), play can include and connect all learners. Playful pedagogy enhances inclusiveness in the classroom by reducing power structures and hierarchies which help to marginalize certain students. Playful pedagogy, as a teaching philosophy, disrupts the norms and status quos of formal learning that often disadvantages certain students. Playful pedagogy challenges educational structures to consider alternative and more inclusive forms of learning and assessment (Forbes, 2021; James, 2022). For example, instead of traditional forms of assessment (i.e., high stakes testing, formal and extensive papers, etc.), playful pedagogy gives students more freedom to direct their own education and demonstrate their learning in a way that is meaningful to them rather than a predetermined box that is typically not designed for all students to be successful (Marzano, 2017). Indeed, additional exploration and research is needed in this area but the current literature on play and playful pedagogy suggest considerable promise for a more culturally responsive approach to education.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Although the field of playful pedagogy is in its infancy, those seeking information, guidance, and examples of play-based learning can look to various articles, books, and professional groups on the topic. Some articles on play-based learning include Playful learning (Langan & Smart, 2018); Playful learning in higher education: Developing a signature pedagogy (Nørgård et al., 2017); The process of playful learning in higher education: A phenomenological study (Forbes, 2021); Playful learning: Events and activities to engage adults (Whitton & Moseley, 2019).

Some helpful books on the topic of play are *Play* (Brown, 2009), *Play Matters* (Sicart, 2014), *The Play Ethic* (Kane, 2008); *Play, Playfulness, Creativity, and Innovation* (Bateson & Martin, 2013); and *Playful Rebellion* (Ware, 2022). Books more related to play in teaching are *The Playful Classroom* (Dearybury & Jones, 2020); *Play and Learning in Adulthood* (Whitton, 2022); *Fully Engaged* (Matera & Meehan, 2021); *The Professors at Play Playbook* (Forbes & Thomas, 2022); *The Power of Play in Higher Education* (James & Nerantzi, 2019); and *The Value of Play in Higher Education* (James, 2022).

Lastly, some professional groups and platforms providing support and guidance are: The Playful University Platform, The Professors at Play, InnoPlayUK at the University of Exeter, and The Playful Learning Association. Each of these groups focus on playful learning in higher education and provide webinars, dialogue, resources, blogs, books, and community for those interested in playful approaches to teaching. While there are articles, books, and groups explaining the premise and examples of playful pedagogy, an important understanding is that play is not formulaic. Playful pedagogy is not just one thing, and it will translate differently for each educator, therefore, adopting a playful pedagogy (beyond an understanding and belief in the power of play) is a personal exploration and practice in creativity.

Evaluation of Effectiveness

Evaluating effectiveness in teaching is an elusive and arguably context-specific and value-laden concept (Skelton, 2005). Currently, there is no single agreed upon evaluation of teacher effectiveness (Goe et al., 2008). Evaluating effectiveness depends on what educators determine to be an important variable to measure. Although evaluating teacher effectiveness is broad and subjectively determined, several studies have examined and highlighted the effectiveness of play-based learning. For example, one study indicated that playful learning increased learner autonomy where students could create their own path to learning (Cruaud, 2018). Another study (Pavlou, 2020) found games in learning fostered students' autonomy, agency, and collaboration. In Forbes' (2021) study, because of play-based learning, students described being more interested in the content, more willing to be vulnerable and take risks and as a result, they reported the learning was more memorable, meaningful, and personal. Jensen and Rørbæk (2022) examined playful pedagogy and teacher preparation and defined effectiveness with five principles which identify quality teaching, 1) being experimental and taking an iterative approach to teaching, 2) actively engaging and facilitative rather than instructive, 3) creating learning opportunities that create meaningful connections between context and students' pre-existing understandings, 4) creating learning that is socially interactive and co-created, and 5) designing learning that is exciting and creates positive emotions. Jensen and Rørbæk (2022) found the use of playful pedagogy was positively associated with these principles of teaching effectiveness. Although further research is needed regarding evaluation of teacher effectiveness and playful pedagogy, the current literature suggests teacher effectiveness and a play-based approach are correlated.

Assessment of Student Learning

Playful pedagogy places a primary emphasis on designing teaching to elicit an environment that is conducive to developing positive mood states, connection and belonging, engagement, and supporting brain-based learning (Forbes & Thomas, 2022; Tang, 2017). Therefore, the established procedures that counselor educators already have for assessing students' learning need not change. Referring to the literature cited above, researchers found that because of play-based learning, students experienced positive outcomes and more meaningful learning experiences (Forbes, 2021; Goe et al., 2008; Jensen & Rørbæk, 2022; Pavlou, 2020; Skelton, 2005). More research can be conducted regarding designing unique assessment measures for student learning because of playful pedagogy. However, another aspect of adopting a playful pedagogy is that a playful philosophy encourages designing alternative and more innovative assessments for students to more freely, creatively, and personally demonstrate their learning. Especially in a field such as counselor education, one could argue the current

and common assessment measures (e.g., multiple choice exams, APA-style research papers) do not adequately prepare students to become effective counselors. Those who approach teaching from a playful mindset might suggest the field of counselor education reconsider our assessments of student learning to better evaluate their actual learning (i.e., rather than rote memorization) and design assessments that better reflect and develop the necessary skills needed of a practicing counselor. No found literature discusses such alternative assessments, therefore remains a topic to explore further.

Implications

The benefits and the power of play in learning are clearly documented (Brown, 2009; Forbes, 2021; James & Nerantzi, 2019; Sicart, 2014; Ware, 2021). Play has considerable promise as a foundational teaching philosophy for counselor educators that can more effectively excite, motivate, and engage students in a meaningful and purposeful learning community which aids in deepening learning. However, much remains unknown about playful pedagogy partly because this approach is relatively new within adult learning. Another potential reason that playful pedagogy is uncommon and underutilized in adult learning is due to misunderstanding, personal fear, and or incorrect societal narratives regarding play. Play, itself, is difficult to define because it is not just one concept, and it is highly subjective, leaving considerable room for misinterpretation (Brown, 2009; Sicart, 2014). In addition, there is a societal narrative that suggests play is childish, trivial, and a waste of time (Brown, 2009), therefore, adult educators tend to reject play in higher education and teaching (James & Nerantzi, 2019). When the societal narrative tells adults that play is childish or unprofessional, it makes an approach like playful pedagogy seem radical or reckless (Forbes & Thomas, 2022). However, play is not just for kids, and it has documented power in the adult learning process if educators become more open to play and learn the essence of playful pedagogy. With more understanding, practice, and research/publications, playful pedagogy will continue to gain legitimacy and a more robust evidence-base.

Though the current literature suggests efficacy of playful pedagogy, the field can work to develop better evaluation and assessment measures for playful teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes. Future research can develop assessment methods to quantitatively determine the efficacy of playful pedagogy not only for students' graduate school learning but also how that learning then impacts the quality of the therapeutic services provided to their future clients. Additional research is needed to develop a more robust understanding of play in adult learning and add additional examples specifically for counselor educators to adopt and create their own playful approach. Playful pedagogy has considerable promise for training future counselors, but it also can create joy in teaching for instructors and positively change students' association to learning - both reasons enough to become a playful educator.

References

Anderton, C.L., & King, E.M. (2016). Promoting multicultural literacies through game-based embodiment: A case study of counselor education students and the role-playing game oblivion. *On the Horizon,* 24(1), 44-45.

Barak, A. (1990). Counselor training in empathy by a game procedure. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 29, 170–178.

Bateson, P., & Martin, P. (2013). *Play, playfulness, creativity and innovation.* Cambridge University Press.

Bell, H., Limberg, D., Jacobson, L., & Super, J.T. (2014). Enhancing self-awareness through creative experiential-learning play-based activities. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 9(3), 399-414.

Brockliss, L. (1996). *A history of the university in Europe*. Cambridge University Press.

Brown, S. (2009). *Play: How it shapes the brain, opens the imagination, and invigorates the soul*. The Penguin Group.

Cruaud, C. (2018). Learner autonomy and playful learning: Students' experience of a gamified application for French as a foreign language. *ALSIC: Apprentissage Des Langues Et Systèmes d'Information Et De Communication*, 21.

Dearybury, J. & Jones, J. (2020). *The playful classroom: The power of play for all ages.* Wiley

Forbes, L.K. (2021). The process of playful learning in higher education: A phenomenological study. *Journal of Teaching and Learning*, 15(1), 57-73.

Forbes L.K. & Thomas, D. Eds (2022). *The professors at play playbook*. Carnegie Mellon ETC Press.

Freeman, S., Eddy, S. L., McDonough, M., Smith, M. K., Okoroafor, N., Jordt, H., & Wenderoth, M. P. (2014). Active learning increases student performance in science, engineering, and mathematics. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences - PNAS, 111*(23), 8 410-8415. doi:10.1073/pnas.1319030111

Goe, L., Bell, C., & Little, O. (2008). *Approaches to evaluating teacher effectiveness: A research synthesis.* National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.

Hussain, M., & Jones, J. M. (2021). Discrimination, diversity, and sense of belonging: Experiences of students of color. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 14*(1), 63–71. https://doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000117

Hsu, A., & Malkin, F. (2011). Shifting the focus from teaching to learning: Rethinking the role of the teacher educator. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research, 4*(12), 43.

James, A. (2022). *The use and value of play in higher education: A study.* Independent scholarship supported by The Imagination Lab Foundation.

James, A., & Nerantzi, C. (2019). *The power of play in higher education: Creativity in tertiary learning*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Jansen, E., & McConchie, L. (2020). *Brain-based learning: Teaching the way students really learn.* (Third ed.). SAGE Publications.

Jensen, H., & Rørbæk, L.L. (2022). Smoothing the path to practice: Playful learning raises student happiness and confidence in future roles among student teachers and student ECE teachers. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 74, 101156.

Kane, P. (2005). *The play ethic: A manifesto for a different way of living.* Macmillan UK.

Kim, B. S. K., & Lyons, H. Z. (2003). Experiential activities and multicultural counseling competence training. *Journal of Counseling and Development,* 81, 400–408.

Konopka, C.L., Adaime, M.B., & Mosele, P.H. (2015). Active teaching and learning methodologies: Some considerations. *Creative Education*, 6 (14), 1536-1545.

Langan, A.M., & Smart, F. (2018). Playful learning. *Research in Learning Technology*, 26, 1-5. Doi: 10.25304/rlt.v26.2079

Marzano, R. J. (2017). *The New Art and Science of Teaching*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

Matera, M. & Meehan, J. (2021). *Fully engaged: Playful pedagogy for real results.* Dave Burgess Consulting, Inc.

Nørgård, R.T., Toft-Nielsen, C., & Whitton, N. (2017). Playful learning in higher education: Developing a signature pedagogy. *International Journal of Play*, 6(3), 272-282.

Pavlou, M. (2020). Game-informed assessment for playful learning and student experience. *The Journal of Classics Teaching*, 21(41), 42-51.

Rogers, C. (1951) *Client-centered therapy: Its current practice, implications, and theory.* Houghton Mifflin.

Sicart, M. (2014). *Play matters.* MIT Press

Skelton, A. (2005). *Understanding teaching excellence in higher education: Towards a critical approach.* Routledge.

Swank, J.M. (2012). Using games to creatively enhance the counselor education curriculum. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 7(4), 397-409. Doi: 10.1080/15401383.2012.740365

Tang, Y. (2017). *Brain-based learning and education: Principles and practice.* Academic Press, an imprint of Elsevier.

Taylor, K., & Marienau, C. (2016). *Facilitating learning with the adult brain in mind: A conceptual and practical guide.* Jossey-Bass.

Wang, S., & Aamodt, S. (2012). Play, stress, and the learning brain. *Cerebrum*. 2012, 12.

Ware, G. (2022). *Playful rebellion: Maximize workplace success through the power of play.* Gary Ware.

Whitton, N. (2022). *Play and learning in adulthood: Reimagining pedagogy and the politics of education.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Whitton, N. & Moseley, A. (2014). *Playful learning: Events and activities to engage adults.* Routledge.