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## Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision Volume 2, Number 1

Bill McHenry

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Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision Volume 2, Number 1

# The Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision

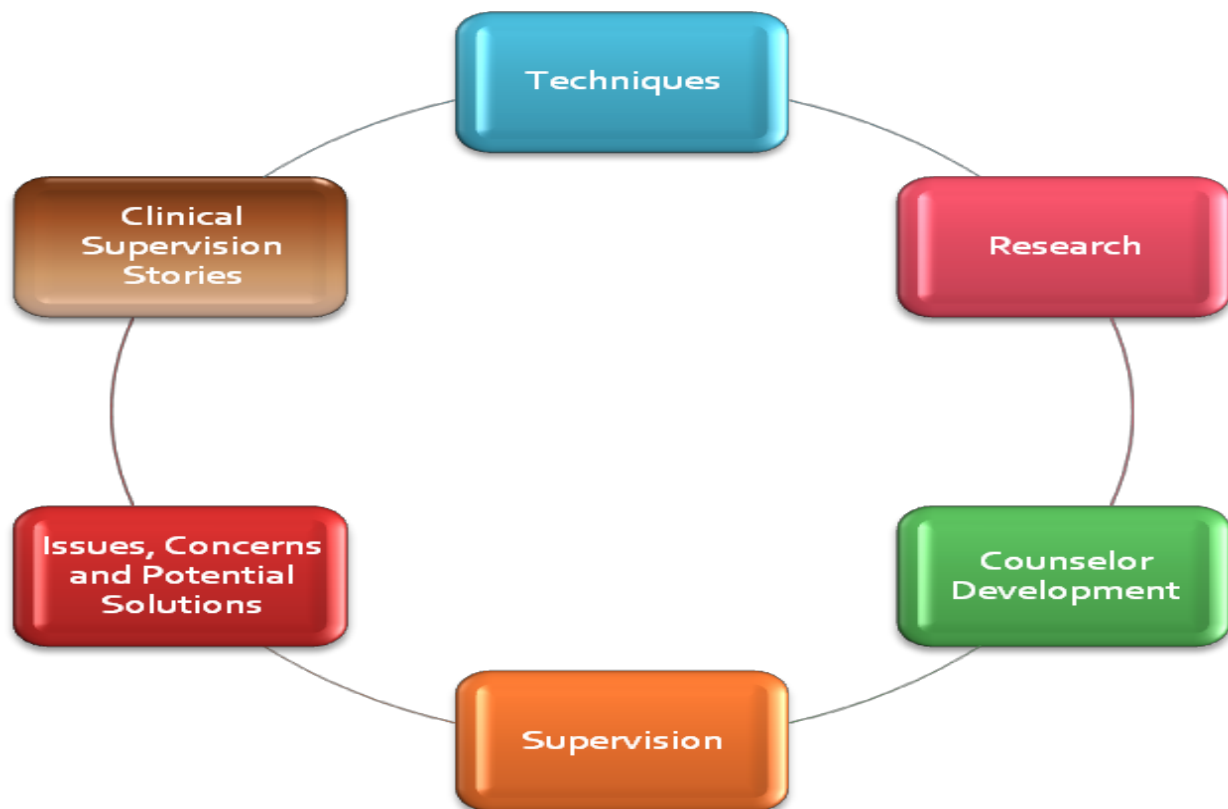
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The mission of the *Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision* is to provide a high quality platform for research, theory and practices of counselor educators, counselor supervisors and professional counselors. We believe the journal chronicles current issues, concerns and potential solutions that enable counselors to continue to grow and develop as practitioners, educators and human beings. The journal publishes high-quality articles that have undergone a thorough and extensive blind peer-review.

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# The Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision

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January, 2010   Volume 1   Number 2

## Editorial

Bill McHenry

## Featured Articles

### ***Perceptions of Doctoral Level Teaching Preparation in Counselor Education***

Stephanie F. Hall  
Diana Hulse

### ***Multicultural Counselor Training: Assessment of Single-Course Objectives and Pedagogical Strategies***

Krista M. Malott  
Tina R. Paone  
Cleborne Maddux  
Terri Rothman

### ***An Existential-Gestalt Approach to Clinical Supervision***

Jerry Novack

# Editorial

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Welcome to the second edition of the Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision. We are most assuredly up and running.

To date 14 manuscripts submitted. Seven (50%) have been accepted for publication. Of the remaining seven, we are working with authors in revising several manuscripts prepared for either publication (if the manuscript was accepted with revisions) or resubmission (if we have asked the author(s) to revise and resubmit). Our current acceptance rate (including manuscripts that have been both accepted and accepted with revisions) is 71% (10/14).

One of our primary goals in starting this journal was to expedite the turn-around time in both review and publication of manuscripts and articles. To this end, we have provided feedback to authors on their manuscript submission(s) in an average of only 2 1/2 months. This feat has been accomplished primarily by the timely, professional and collaborative feedback reviews offered by the editorial board.

We are pleased and proud of the fact that the journal has been accepted and is now being incorporated into the EBSCOHost holdings. Of course, while NARACES oversees the content, subject matter and publishing of the journal, our affiliation with EBSCOHost allows authors to more fully document and articulate the presence of this *on-line* journal as a primary journal for counselor educators and supervisors.

So what's in this edition of the journal?

In the first article, Stephanie Hall and Diana Hulse investigate the perceptions of how doctoral students experience their *teaching preparation* during their doctoral studies. The authors also provide an assessment of students' level of preparation for teaching.

In the second article, Krista Malott, Tina Paone, Cleborne Maddux and Terri Rothman analyze the overlap and gaps between multicultural course content and objectives (as reflected by syllabi) with current trends and directions generally recommended in multicultural literature. The authors provide valuable and insightful suggestions for improving multicultural coursework.

The author of article three, Jerry Novack provides a deep inspection of the use of existential-gestalt approaches to counselor supervision offering both pragmatic and reflective considerations for utilizing such approaches in the supervisory relationship.

The second edition of our journal then continues the tone set in the first edition by considering significant issues faced by counselor educators and supervisors.

Once again, thanks to all involved in the development of the journal.

Bill McHenry, Editor

# Perceptions of Doctoral Level Teaching Preparation in Counselor Education

Stephanie F. Hall and Diana Hulse

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This study explores counselor educators' perceptions of their doctoral level teaching preparation. Results indicate that observation and feedback from faculty, teaching under supervision, being mentored to teach, and attending seminars on college teaching are positively correlated with participants' perceptions of overall teaching preparedness. Implications for counselor education doctoral training and recommendations for further research are presented.

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There has been extensive speculation in the higher education literature regarding the importance of teaching (Silverman, 2003) and reasons for the lack of emphasis on teaching preparation at the doctoral level (DeNeef, 1993); but there have been no known empirical studies that have examined the current state of doctoral teaching preparation in any discipline including counselor education. Discussions in higher education about teaching preparation have revolved around the topics of the importance of research versus teaching and how to best utilize resources. The debate about where to direct resources (teacher training versus researcher training) is not a new concept; for over one hundred years the academy has struggled with whether doctoral programs should impart research skills, teaching skills, or both (DeNeef, 1993). An intensified demand for competent teaching skills is evident in the fact that search committees are more frequently requesting statements of teaching interests, teaching philosophy, and teaching

demonstrations as part of the recruitment process (Warnke, Bethany, & Hedstrom, 1999).

The challenge of where to allocate resources is perhaps greater for counselor education than other disciplines in higher education, due to the fact that counselor education doctoral programs are expected to prepare graduates not only in the areas of teaching and research, but are also in clinical counseling and supervision. The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs (CACREP, 2009) has suggested that doctoral programs in counselor education should "develop collaborative relationships with program faculty in teaching, supervision, research, professional writing, and service to the profession and the public" (Doctoral Standards Counselor Education and Supervision, Section II, A.2.).

Orr, Hall, and Hulse-Killacky (2008) discussed the importance of teaching preparation in counselor education, stating that teaching experience prepares doctoral students to participate more effectively in the counselor education profession, since



the professional standards specifically include teaching. If a doctoral program does not provide instruction in teaching, or provides less than adequate instruction in teaching, then the doctoral degree is not sufficiently preparing graduates to enter the position of faculty member, which assumes a teaching role (Meacham, 2002). Rogers, Gill-Wigal, Harrigan, and Abbey-Hines (1998) examined faculty criteria and found that for counselor education programs, teaching experience was ranked higher than publication activity, further supporting the need for teaching preparation at the doctoral level.

The purpose of this national study was to examine faculty member's perceptions of experiences during their doctoral training and the effectiveness of those experiences in preparing them for teaching. There were four research hypotheses. The first hypothesis stated that the number of courses taught from start to finish as a doctoral student is positively related to the level of perceived overall preparedness for teaching. The second hypothesis stated that the number of courses taught under the supervision of a full time faculty member is positively related to level of perceived overall preparedness for teaching. Research hypothesis three stated that receiving feedback about teaching more frequently during doctoral training is positively related to level of perceived overall preparedness for teaching. Finally, research hypothesis four stated that the frequency of being given opportunities to reflect on feedback about teaching is positively related to the level of overall preparedness for teaching. Based on factors identified in this study as important in teaching preparation, suggestions are presented for improving the quality of doctoral level teacher training.

## **Doctoral Level Teaching Preparation in Counselor Education**

Graduates of counselor education doctoral programs are not only expected to be adequate researchers and teachers, but also competent counselors. To address this expectation, Hosie (1990) and Lanning (1990) proposed the educator-practitioner model for counselor education doctoral programs. Hosie and Lanning agreed that doctoral programs are preparing students who have earned master's degrees in counseling with additional counseling courses, making them more competent practitioners, but giving them little training in how to teach.

Lanning (1990) extended the conversation by focusing on the need for reform in counselor education doctoral programs and the subsequent emphasis on teaching as a skill. He linked the creation of an educator-practitioner model to the continual search for a unique professional identity in the field of counseling, arguing that the counseling profession could make that contribution by producing doctoral graduates who know how to teach the skills and knowledge of counseling to those who wish to be effective practitioners, and also to those who aspire to be university professors.

Others in higher education have offered suggestions about activities that might prepare doctoral graduates to teach. Meacham (2002) identified several factors that he believed would prepare doctoral students to teach effectively. Those factors include being mentored by senior faculty, spending time following faculty through a typical day on campus, participating in high level graduate seminars on teaching and faculty life, preparing a course syllabus and having it critiqued, being supervised in teaching by excellent teachers, engaging in self-assessment related to teaching skills, and assembling a teaching portfolio that includes a statement of teaching philosophy.

In addition, Boyer's (1990) work identified the scholarship of teaching as the interaction of research with classroom instruction. Boyer's approach is slightly different than Meacham's (2002). Boyer

placed importance on teacher training by emphasizing the link between research productivity and performance in the classroom. Boyer's redefinition of scholarship to include teaching and service activities, which was seen as a turning point in higher education, was successful in drawing attention to the essential task of teaching.

This study drew on the works of Meacham (2002), Hosie (1990), Austin (2002a; 2002b) and Lanning (1990). Many of the items on the survey used in this research project, the Preparation for Teaching Survey (PFTS), were derived from the work of these authors. Items in the PFTS were developed to explore whether graduates of counselor education doctoral programs would report having had the experiences recommended by these authors.

## Method

### *Participants*

Participants in this study were counselor educators who were teaching in doctoral and master's level counselor preparation programs accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). Participants were identified by using a list of CACREP accredited counseling programs obtained from the CACREP website ([www.cacrep.org](http://www.cacrep.org)). Once the programs were identified as CACREP accredited, faculty members' e-mail addresses were gathered from the individual program websites and entered into an e-mail list. This list contained only the e-mail addresses of the faculty members, and no other identifying information. Participants for the study were then contacted by e-mail with a mass e-mail message. A total of 1,062 e-mail messages were sent, and 262 participants completed the survey (a response rate of 24.6%). A total of 60 responses were discarded because those participants reported having

a doctoral degree in psychology instead of counselor education.

Personal information (sex, ethnicity, tenure status, type of program, and type of institution in which participants were currently employed) was collected in order to provide descriptive information about the participants of this study. Of those participating, 74 were male (36.6%) and 128 were female (63.4%). Participants indicated that their ethnicities were as follows: 14 were African American (6.9%), 6 were Asian American (6%), 164 were Caucasian/European American (81.2%), 4 were Hispanic (2.0%), 3 were Native American (1.5%), and 10 indicated an ethnicity of other (5%). When answering the tenure status item, 101 participants indicated that they were tenured (50%), 88 participants were in tenure track positions (43.6%), and 12 participants were in non-tenure track positions (5.9%). Of those participating, 78 were employed in masters only programs (38.6%), and 121 were employed in combined master's and doctoral programs (59.9%). When surveyed about the type of institution in which they were employed, 14 responded that they were employed in private institutions (6.9%), while 188 responded that they were employed in public institutions (93.1%). In terms of academic rank, 49 participants held the rank of professor (24.3%), 61 held the rank of associate professor (30.2%), 90 held the rank of assistant professor (44.6%), and 2 held the rank of lecturer (1.0%).

### *Preparation for Teaching Survey*

The *Preparation for Teaching Survey* (PFTS) was developed specifically for use in this study. The instrument is a 58-item survey that employs a 7-point Likert scale with anchored responses on both ends of a continuum (see Appendix A). Participants were asked to respond to questions either on a scale of one to seven (one being never and seven being very frequently) or on a scale of one to seven (one being not at all effective and seven being very effective). The first nine items of the PFTS requested

personal information and asked participants to identify themselves by characteristics such as sex, ethnicity, tenure status, academic rank, and number of years as a faculty member.

## Results

Ratings of the effectiveness of preparation experiences counselor educators had ranged from 1.34 (effectiveness of taking courses in college teaching) to 6.02 (effectiveness of teaching an entire course from start to finish). (See Appendix B for results from all computed correlations). Counselor educators did not find their courses on college teaching to be effective in preparing them to teach, however, they found that teaching an entire course (different from delivering lectures as a teaching assistant) was very effective in preparing them to teach. Silverman (2003) discussed that taking courses in teaching might prepare doctoral students to teach, but responses to this survey did not support that sort of activity as effective in teaching preparation. A total of 68 (36.4%) participants who reported taking one course in college teaching, and 100 (53.5%) participants reported not having any college teaching courses. According to the participants in this study who did complete courses in college teaching, the courses that were taken during their doctoral training were not effective in preparing them to teach.

Mean effectiveness ratings for some of Silverman's (2003) other suggested activities did indicate that they were effective in teaching preparation. For example, being a participant in a teaching practicum was given a mean rating of 5.56, which indicates that this was rated as highly effective. That rating also provides support for more experiential training of teachers, and is consistent with Orr et al. (2008) who observed that after participating in a supervised teaching practicum, students reported having greater depth of knowledge about the counseling curriculum,

understanding how to develop a course and implement it from start to finish, and developing a greater awareness of the role of a teacher in the counseling classroom. Sharing of resources with faculty had a mean effectiveness rating of 4.06, teaching under supervision had a mean rating of 5.60 (also suggested by Austin, 2002a; 2002b and Orr et al.), having discussions with faculty about teaching philosophy had a mean rating of 4.76, and having discussions with faculty about why instructional decisions are made in courses had a mean rating of 4.81. Participants in this study endorsed training activities that provided room for observation of skills, feedback, and reflection, along with open discussion of the process.

Activities suggested by Austin (2002a; 2002b) were also supported, with receiving feedback about teaching being assigned a mean effectiveness rating of 5.00; reflecting on feedback about teaching receiving a mean effectiveness rating of 5.00; observing others teaching receiving a mean effectiveness rating of 4.91; participating in designing a course receiving a mean effectiveness rating of 5.40; and gaining knowledge about individual learning differences receiving a mean effectiveness rating of 4.59. There seems to be a definite parallel between counselor preparation and Austin's suggestions about the training of doctoral students to teach. She emphasized training under supervision, receiving feedback, reflecting on the feedback, and sharing of resources with the supervisor. It follows that a more collaborative model of teacher training, closely resembling the training of counselors might be quite effective in training counselor education doctoral students to teach.

Meacham (2002) suggested preparing a course syllabus, engaging in self assessment, and completing a teaching portfolio as ideas for better teacher training, and those activities received mean effectiveness ratings of 5.89, 5.41, and 4.96 respectively. Of particular emphasis is the rating of 5.41 with regard to self assessment of teaching. Being asked to assess one's

own performance as a teacher is a different activity than simply receiving a performance rating given by an observer or supervisor, and may be instrumental in the development of one's own teaching philosophy. Engaging in self assessment requires students to critique their own performance, ultimately forcing them to ponder their own beliefs and ideas about teaching and learning. Self assessment also fits closely with the way in which counselors are trained. In counselor training programs, students are often encouraged to look inward and examine personal thoughts, beliefs, and biases, in addition to assessing their own growth throughout the learning process. Young (2001) discussed the interaction between self-assessment and other essential factors in the preparation of counselors, stating that supervision and mentoring are essential for self-assessment and reflection. Based on responses to items on the PFTS, doctoral students learning to teach counseling could benefit from supervision and mentoring (as suggested by Young, 2001) to engage in self-assessment of teaching and reflection on their classroom performance.

Participants also gave participation in a teaching practicum a high mean rating of effectiveness (5.56), providing further support for more experiential teacher training. Of the 202 respondents to this survey, a large number, 91 (46.7%), indicated that they did participate in some sort of teaching practicum. It is important to note that the nature of these teaching practica may vary, given that the term teaching practicum may have been defined differently by participants. All of the activities mentioned above that were given high effectiveness ratings are activities that could be included as part of a teaching practicum and could be tied into a more collaborative learning experience for doctoral students (Orr et al., 2008).

In summary, it was evident from the quantitative data that participants would like more experiential training to teach, which would include mentoring, supervision, a structured way of teaching, being given

feedback about that teaching and having a way to reflect on their teaching.

### *Responses to Open Ended Survey Item about Teaching Preparation*

This portion of the study asked participants to respond to the following: "please provide any additional information about activities or experiences during your doctoral training that would have better prepared you for teaching as a faculty member". Upon analysis of responses, four themes emerged: mentoring, a teaching practicum, more courses on teaching, and observation/feedback from faculty. Although these are four distinct themes that emerged from the data, there is substantial overlap between the applications of these concepts, and they are presented as such below.

*Mentoring.* The identified theme of mentoring provides support for Silverman (2003) and others (Cesa & Fraser, 1989; Wilde & Schau, 1991) who have cited mentoring as an essential factor in teacher training. Many responses indicated the desire to be mentored into the role of teacher by experienced faculty. This information supports the ideas of Anderson and Shannon (1988) who wrote that the purpose of a mentor is to integrate a new person into a professional role that is already held by the mentor and Orr et al. (2008) who suggest that faculty supervisors of students in teaching take a mentoring role in helping doctoral students transition from learner to leader in the classroom. Examples of responses were "more mentoring into the role of faculty member", "better mentoring" and "Mentorship by faculty in the areas of teaching, research and service...to learn about the different types involved and the expectations for tenure".

*Participation in a Teaching Practicum.* The second theme, participation in a teaching practicum, arising from responses to the open ended question, was a call for a

teaching practicum/internship and supervision of teaching. Comments supporting a desire for more structured teaching preparation abound; providing evidence that not only is there a need for more attention to teaching preparation, but also a desire for further instruction by the doctoral students enrolled in counselor education programs. For example, one participant stated that "A required teaching practicum under supervision that dealt with all of the elements of teaching from course design through assessment" would be useful. These comments provide support for Lanning's (1990) endorsement of an educator practitioner model in counselor education doctoral programs, as he pointed out that doctoral programs in counselor education should be concerned with preparing graduates who were not only skilled counselors, but also skilled teachers. In addition, these results support the work of Orr et al. (2008), whose participants suggested that a collaborative, supervised model for teacher training was beneficial in increasing their learning.

*More Courses on College Teaching.* Along with the desire for a teaching practicum, participants identified a need for more comprehensive courses on teaching. For example, one participant remarked "teaching courses could have been more practical...more in-depth and concentrated, and more time could have been spent talking about the role of instructor, grading, assessing goals and objectives, creating assignments, and engaging adult learners". Another participant stated that "a class or several seminars on teaching including teaching methods, syllabus development, grading, classroom/student management" was needed.

*Observation and Feedback from Faculty.* The fourth identified theme from responses to the open ended question was a need for observation and feedback from faculty. One example can be seen in this quote "I would have liked to have more observation and feedback from my faculty members. They seemed to be overly confident in my

abilities, sight unseen". Support for the importance of observation and feedback can also be found in the response of one participant who reported having an exceptional teaching experience. "Their [faculty members'] commitment to providing me with opportunities, feedback, and role modeling were the key elements to my success as a "teacher" of counselor education."

In summary, qualitative responses showed that participants wanted more mentoring, participation in a structured teaching practicum (that could include observation and feedback from faculty) and more comprehensive courses on college teaching.

## Discussion of Hypotheses

All hypotheses in the study were tested through the use of Pearson product moment correlations between items. The correlations yielded positive results, and those hypotheses are presented and discussed below.

The first hypothesis stated that the number of courses taught from start to finish as a doctoral student is positively related to the level of perceived overall preparedness for teaching. The positive correlation found ( $r(114) = .300, p < .001$ ) indicated that as the frequency of courses that participants taught as doctoral students increased, their ratings of overall preparedness for teaching increased. Often, when doctoral students are given the opportunity to teach, they serve as teaching assistants, delivering the occasional lecture. It is clear that more teaching experience allowed participants to feel more prepared overall for teaching, but it seems that the experience of teaching an entire course, rather than single presentations, is key. Here, the importance of continuity is evident. In the field of counselor education, counseling students are expected to have some degree of continuity in counseling relationships, as opposed to having single sessions with multiple clients. The rationale here is that

the students will build confidence and competence while moving through the developmental process of becoming a counselor.

The second hypothesis stated that the number of courses taught under the supervision of a full time faculty member is positively related to level of perceived overall preparedness for teaching. The positive correlation found here ( $r(140) = .297, p < .001$ ) indicated that there is a significant relationship; as frequency of teaching under supervision increased, so did participants' ratings of their overall preparedness. In a parallel way, supervision is provided to counseling students during practicum and internship not only to ensure client safety, but also to support new practitioners (Ladany et al., 1999).

Research hypothesis three stated that receiving feedback about teaching more frequently during doctoral training is positively related to level of perceived overall preparedness for teaching. This hypothesis was supported through findings which indicated a highly significant correlation ( $r(182) = .547, p < .001$ ). As frequency of receiving feedback increased, participants rated themselves as more prepared to teach. Again, there is a parallel here to the training of counselors. An integral part of the supervision process is the observation of students (through use of audio or video tapes) and the provision of feedback about their performance. Feedback has been given great attention in the counselor education literature (Young, 2001), particularly attention to the use of corrective feedback and its utility in counselor training (Hulse-Killacky, 1996). A similar process for the training of teachers would be useful, and fairly easy to employ. Doctoral students could tape the classes being taught and then turn the tapes in to faculty supervisors, later receiving feedback about the teaching skills employed in classrooms. Alternatively, doctoral students could serve as lead instructors of courses under the supervision of faculty supervisors, who would be responsible for attending

classes taught by the doctoral student lead instructor and providing feedback about the student's teaching (see Orr et al., 2008).

Research hypothesis four stated that the frequency of being given opportunities to reflect on feedback about teaching is positively related to the level of overall preparedness for teaching. When this hypothesis was tested through the use of a Pearson product moment correlation, a highly significant result was found ( $r(180) = .550, p < .001$ ). Those participants reporting more opportunities to reflect on feedback about teaching rated themselves as more overall prepared for the task of teaching. Again, in the training of counselors, there is often a focus on being aware of what is happening in the counseling session and reflecting on the experience of counseling after the session's conclusion. There are ways in which counselor educators can provide more structured opportunities for doctoral students to reflect on feedback about their teaching. For example, there could be a requirement for students to answer questions about teaching experiences based on feedback received, in the form of a short reflection paper.

## Limitations of the Study

The participant sample represents the first potential limitation of this study. Because participants are not required to complete the survey, those that chose to complete it may not be representative of the entire population of counselor education faculty. Another limitation of the study lies in the percentage of completed surveys; 1,062 e-mail messages were sent, and 262 participants completed the survey (a response rate of 24.6%).

## Implications for Counselor Education Doctoral Programs

Overall, the importance of activities such as teaching entire courses, receiving supervision while teaching, receiving

feedback about teaching, reflecting on that feedback, and having discussions with faculty and other students about teaching issues were highlighted in the responses to this survey. Findings suggested a need to create structured approaches for teacher training, and are consistent with the description of a teaching collaborative model presented by Orr et al. (2008). Orr et al.'s model of a teaching collaborative, which involves the concepts mentioned above could be beneficial in training doctoral students to teach; and this teaching collaborative is very similar to the regimented way in which counselor education programs train students to be counselors. Components such as supervision, observation of teaching, feedback from faculty about teaching and opportunities for students to reflect on that feedback and engage in self assessment with regard to development of teaching skills are included. The supervision of doctoral students is of particular importance during teacher training, and this need could be addressed in a variety of ways. Orr et al. (2008) suggested that a faculty supervisor observe the class on a regular basis. Another method might be to conduct doctoral seminars on supervision and expand them to include a component of teacher training, based on Bernard and Goodyear's (1998) notions about the teaching component of supervision. In either case, doctoral students could then be provided with feedback from faculty supervisors, based on observations of teaching (through live supervision, viewing of audio or video tapes for example). A next step would be to have structured approaches to reflection on this feedback, and having doctoral students engage in self assessment of progress by way of reflection papers, for example. As stated previously in this manuscript, a model for teacher training with these components would closely follow the way that counselors are being trained. For this reason, counselor education is in a prime position to be responsive to the needs of doctoral students highlighted in the responses to the PFTS.

## Implications for Further Research

The results of this study are intended to extend counselor educators' understanding of the state of teaching preparation in doctoral programs. Based on the preliminary findings of this study, future research can focus on several areas.

Two themes emerged from responses to the open-ended question that warranted further clarity: mentoring and teaching practica. A qualitative study could be helpful to explore what a mentoring relationship for teaching in counselor education would look like.

Many participants in this study cited a mentoring relationship as crucial for development of teaching skills, and others who had not experienced a mentoring relationship stated that it would have been helpful. However, mentoring may be defined in a variety of ways, so further investigation into the meaning of mentoring and its relationship to teaching preparation is warranted. Further exploration of the need for a teaching practicum would also provide insight into better training of doctoral students.

Examination of teaching preparation at the doctoral level could also be useful across disciplines. Research could be conducted to compare several disciplines that have a masters' degree as the terminal degree for practice (i.e. social work, counselor education, business administration, public administration) evaluating their respective approaches to teacher training at the doctoral level. The assumption here is that many people obtaining a doctorate in disciplines that only require a master's degree for practice are doing so to prepare themselves to take faculty positions, which will require a significant amount of teaching.

Finally, further investigation into whether having teaching experience in secondary education prior to pursuing a doctoral degree has an effect on doctoral teacher training could be useful; thus

probing the issue of whether learning to teach adults is somehow different than learning to teach children and adolescents.

## Conclusion

There is increasing attention to teaching in higher education, with additional demands being placed on faculty to prove competency in the area of teaching (Austin, 2002b). In addition, it is apparent that teaching as a skill is valued by the field of counselor education. At this point, the issue for counselor educators is to be clear about where teaching preparation will fall in counselor education programs and to make decisions about where to place program resources. These data provide initial ideas about how to train doctoral students to teach which are in line with Hosie's (1990) and Lanning's (1990) arguments for an educator practitioner model of doctoral training. In fact, the discussion of results not only provides support for Lanning's idea of an educator practitioner model, but begins to suggest ways in which it could be implemented. An educator practitioner

model that prepares doctoral students to be competent practitioners as well as competent educators could be achieved through the use of structured approaches to teaching preparation. These structured approaches could include implementation of the teaching collaborative model suggested by Orr et al. (2008) and attention to other topics of importance, including the ethics of teaching (emphasized by the American Counseling Association in section F.6.d. of the code of ethics, CACREP in section IV.C.3. and the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Ethical Guidelines in section three).

The results of this study and respective discussion of findings provide a starting point for addressing an area in counselor education that is in great need of attention. It is obvious that teaching is still in competition with research; this is true across disciplines in higher education. One question remains: does teaching have to be in competition with research, or can counselor education doctoral training programs address both?

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# Appendix A

## PREPARATION FOR TEACHING SCALE

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

Please provide the following personal information:

1. Sex:

- Male  
 Female

2. Ethnicity:

- African American  
 Asian American  
 Caucasian/European American  
 Hispanic  
 Native American  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

3. Tenure Status:

Please check all that apply

- Tenured  
 Tenure Track  
 Non-Tenure Track

4. Type of Program in Which You are Currently Employed:

- Master's Only  
 Master's and Doctoral

5. Type of Institution in Which You are Currently Employed:

- Private  
 Public

6. Academic Rank:

- Professor  
 Associate Professor  
 Assistant Professor  
 Instructor  
 Lecturer

7. Number of Years as a Faculty Member: \_\_\_\_\_

8. Was Your Doctoral Training Program CACREP accredited?

- Yes  
 No

9. Please List All Degrees That You Currently Hold:

\_\_\_\_\_

Please read the items below and respond based on the training that you received as a doctoral student:

#### FREQUENCY

Never

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Very Frequently

#### EFFECTIVENESS

Not at All Effective

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Very Effective

10. How many times did you participate in designing a course? \_\_\_\_\_

11. If you participated in designing a course, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

12. How many times did you teach an entire course from beginning to end? \_\_\_\_\_

13. If you taught a course from beginning to end, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

14. How many times did you design a course syllabus? \_\_\_\_\_

15. If you designed a course syllabus, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

16. How many times did you teach a course under the supervision of a full time faculty member? \_\_\_\_\_

17. If you taught a course under the supervision of a full time faculty member, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

18. How often did you have discussions with faculty about your teaching philosophy?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

19. If you discussed your teaching philosophy with faculty, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

20. How often did faculty share teaching resources (e.g. lecture materials) with you?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

21. If faculty shared teaching resources with you, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

22. How often did you have discussions with faculty about why instructional classroom decisions are made?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

23. If you had discussions with faculty about why instructional classroom decisions are made, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

24. Did you participate in a teaching practicum? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

25. If you participated in a teaching practicum, please rate it's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

26. How many courses in college teaching did you take? \_\_\_\_\_

27. If you took courses in college teaching, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

28. How often did you receive feedback from a faculty member about your teaching skills?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

29. If you received feedback from a faculty member about your teaching skills, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

30. How often were you provided with opportunities to reflect on feedback about your teaching?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

31. If you were given the opportunity to reflect on feedback about your teaching, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

32. How often did you observe someone teaching (not including classes that you were enrolled in?)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

33. If you observed someone teaching, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

34. How often did you have discussions with faculty about individual learning differences?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

35. If you had discussions with faculty about individual learning differences, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

36. How often did you have conversations with faculty about their approaches to grading?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

37. If you had conversations with faculty about their approaches to grading; please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

38. How often did you engage in self assessment with regard to your teaching?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

39. If you engaged in self assessment with regard to your teaching, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

40. Were you encouraged to develop a teaching portfolio? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

41. Were you provided assistance in developing the portfolio by a faculty member? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
N/A \_\_\_\_\_

42. If you were given the opportunity to develop a teaching portfolio, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

43. How often did you deliver a lecture in the classroom?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

44. If you delivered a lecture in the classroom, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

45. How often did you grade exams?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

46. If you graded exams, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

47. How often did you grade or provide feedback on written assignments?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

48. If you graded or provided feedback on written assignments, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

49. How often did you prepare course assignments?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

50. If you prepared course assignments, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

51. How often did you attend seminars on college teaching?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

52. If you attended seminars on college teaching, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

53. How often did you engage in conversations with other students about teaching?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

54. If you engaged in conversations with other students about teaching, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

55. How often were you able to ask faculty members questions about teaching?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

56. If you asked faculty members questions about teaching, please rate the event's effectiveness in preparing you for teaching:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 NA

57. Upon completion of your doctoral degree, please rate your overall preparedness for the task of teaching:

Not at All Prepared

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Very Prepared

58. Please provide any additional information about activities or experiences during your doctoral training that would have better prepared you for teaching as a faculty member.

## Appendix B

### Results of Pearson Product Moment Correlations for Selected Items Correlated to Perceived Overall Preparation

Variables	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
10. Times You Participated in Designing a Course	.264	.003
11. Rating of Effectiveness for Course Design	.473	<.001
12. Times You Taught an Entire Course	.300	.001
13. Ratings of Effectiveness For Teaching an Entire Course	.487	<.001
14. Times You Designed a Course Syllabus	.188	.042
15. Ratings of Effectiveness for Syllabus Design	.405	<.001
16. Times You Taught a Course Under the Supervision of a Full Time Faculty Member	.297	<.001
17. Ratings of Effectiveness for Teaching Under Supervision	.470	<.001
18. How Often Did You Have Discussions with Faculty About Your Teaching Philosophy	.478	<.001
19. Ratings of Effectiveness for Discussions About Teaching Philosophy	.462	<.001
20. How Often Faculty Shared Teaching Resources with You	.492	<.001
21. Ratings of Effectiveness for Sharing of Resources	.457	<.001
22. How Often You Discussed With Faculty Why Instructional Decisions Are Made	.512	<.001
23. Ratings of Effectiveness for Discussion of Why Instructional Decisions are Made	.504	<.001
25. Ratings of Effectiveness for Participating in a Teaching Practicum	.572	<.001
27. Ratings of Effectiveness for Taking Courses in College Teaching	.478	<.001
28. How Often Did You Receive Feedback from Faculty About Your Teaching Skills?	.547	<.001
29. Ratings of Effectiveness for Receiving Feedback from Faculty About Your Teaching	.410	<.001
30. How Often Were You Provided With Opportunities to Reflect On Feedback?	.550	<.001
31. Ratings of Effectiveness for Reflecting on Feedback About Your Teaching	.520	<.001
32. How Often Did You Observe Teaching?	.401	<.001
33. Ratings of Effectiveness for Observing Teaching	.381	<.001
34. How Often Did You Have Discussions with Faculty About Learning Differences?	.418	<.001
35. Ratings of Effectiveness for Discussions with Faculty About Learning Differences	.384	<.001
36. How Often Did You Have Conversations with Faculty About Grading?	.464	<.001
37. Ratings of Effectiveness for Conversations with Faculty About Grading	.486	<.001
38. How Often Did You Engage In Self Assessment with Regard to Teaching?	.569	<.001
39. Ratings of Effectiveness for Engaging in Self Assessment With Regard to Teaching?	.494	<.001
42. Ratings of Effectiveness for Developing a Teaching Portfolio	.293	.116
43. How Often Did You Deliver a Lecture in the Classroom?	.486	<.001
44. Ratings of Effectiveness for Delivering a Lecture	.560	<.001
45. How Often Did You Grade Exams?	.409	<.001
46. Ratings of Effectiveness for Grading Exams	.337	<.001
47. How Often Did You Grade or Provide Feedback on Written Assignments?	.481	<.001
48. Ratings of Effectiveness for Grading or Providing Feedback On Written Assignments	.470	<.001
49. How Often Did You Prepare Course Assignments?	.520	<.001
50. Ratings of Effectiveness for Preparing Course Assignments	.436	<.001
51. How Often Did You Attend Seminars on College Teaching?	.259	<.001
52. Ratings of Effectiveness for Attending Seminars on College Teaching	.311	.008
53. How Often Did You Engage in Conversations with Other Students About Teaching?	.561	<.001
54. Ratings of Effectiveness for Conversations with Other Students About Teaching	.461	<.001
55. How Often Were You Able To Ask Faculty Members Questions About Teaching?	.622	<.001
56. Ratings of Effectiveness for Asking Faculty Members About Teaching	.504	<.001

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# Multicultural Counselor Training: Assessment of Single-Course Objectives and Pedagogical Strategies

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Krista M. Malott, Tina R. Paone, Cleborne Maddux and Terri Rothman

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The purpose of this study was to examine the extent to which multicultural counseling courses throughout the United States include course objectives and pedagogical strategies recommended in the literature (Arredondo et al., 1996) and in professional counseling standards and guidelines. Findings from 277 participants indicate that most, not all, courses include the recommended objectives and strategies. The most common (85.9%) objective was self-awareness of own values and biases, whereas only approximately 50 percent included an objective related to critiquing counseling theories. The most common pedagogical strategies were classroom discussions/debates (95.3%), whereas fewer than half integrated cross-discipline readings and student research. The authors suggest dialogue and empirical investigations necessary to further the practice of multicultural counselor training.

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In an effort to provide effective mental health services for a rapidly diversifying client population, counselor educators have come to recognize the need for multiculturally competent counseling professionals (Pope-Davis, Coleman, Liu, & Toporek, 2003; Sue & Sue, 2008). Multicultural counseling competency has been broadly defined as counselor awareness of personal culture and biases, awareness and knowledge of clients' unique traits and world views, and skills or strategies in working with diverse clientele (Arredondo et al., 1996). Over time, those

directives have informed standards for effective multicultural counselor training (MCT), including the decision to require a multicultural course across counselor training programs (Alvarez & Miville, 2003; Reynolds, 1995; Ridley, Espelage, & Rubenstein, 1997).

Authors have provided varied and expansive suggestions for the design and implementation of a multicultural counseling course. Those suggestions have evolved over time as the definition of multicultural competence has evolved. For instance, core objectives of increasing student knowledge, awareness and skills have expanded

(Fuentes, Bartolomeo, & Nicols, 2001) to include recognition of the need to increase student empathy, cultural responsiveness, and ethical behaviors with diverse clientele (Ridley, Mendoza, & Kanitz, 1994).

In response to contemporary issues, authors have posited a need to increase counselor knowledge of various religions (Yarhouse & Fisher, 2002) and of the counselor's role globally (Chung, 2005; Leong & Ponterotto, 2003). In addition, a recent study in the literature identified social justice as a growing emphasis in multicultural counseling courses (Pieterse, Evans, Risner-Butner, Collins, & Mason, 2009), although skill-based instruction according to social justice initiatives appeared deficient in the 54 course syllabi assessed by the authors.

Hence, multiple learning objectives could be addressed in a multicultural course. However, it is uncertain whether instructor practices reflect recommendations found in the literature. Time constraints or limited knowledge regarding certain objectives may limit what instructors are able to address (Hayes, Dean, & Chang, 2007; Ridley et al., 1997). In turn, instructors may be forced to omit multiple learning objectives that are considered essential for MCT. Conversely, counselor educators who address all suggested learning objectives within a course risk presenting the material in a superficial or stereotypical manner (Reynolds, 1995).

A similar dilemma exists in regards to pedagogical strategies for a multicultural counselor course. Authors assert the importance of using a mixture of strategies in an effort to respond to a variety of student learning styles (Alvarez & Miville, 2003). For instance, experiential activities could be combined with didactic activities, such as lecture and readings that include cross-disciplinary readings in history, political science, ethnic studies and so forth (Alvarez & Miville, 2003; Kim & Lyons, 2003; Tromski & Dotson, 2003). Counselor self-awareness could be facilitated through use of introspection, in conjunction with writing and reading assignments. Actual counseling

skills could be observed and practiced through participatory learning (e.g., role playing, simulated counseling experiences), technology-assisted training, and modeling/observational learning (Ridley et al., 1994). Modeling and observational learning have particularly been encouraged for use as a precursor to the practicing of skills (McRae & Johnson, 1991).

Hence, multiple suggestions from the literature lend direction in the design and implementation of a multicultural counseling course. However, such a wide variety of options could also make the process of course design and implementation overwhelming. It could ultimately result in wide differences in educational practices across counseling programs, despite calls for standardized MCT across counselor training programs (McCarthy & Santus, 2003).

In an attempt to gather insight into current MCT in a course format, this study assessed instructor practices in a single multicultural counseling course in order to increase understanding of instructional practices and provide a platform from which additional, related studies of MCT practices may be launched. Specifically, this study examined learning objectives and pedagogical strategies applied in a multicultural counseling course. This study was designed to address the following research questions:

1. What percentage of instructors report including each of 15 commonly recommended objectives (Arredondo et al., 1996; Kiselica, 2004; Reynolds, 1995; Ridley et al., 1997; Ridley et al., 1994) in their required multicultural counseling course?
2. Which of the objectives are most commonly addressed?
3. What percentage of instructors report using each of 14 commonly recommended pedagogical strategies (Alvarez & Miville, 2003; Arredondo et al., 1996; Kim & Lyons,

- 2003; Ridley et al., 1997; Ridley et al., 1994; Tromski & Dotson, 2003)?
4. Which of the recommended pedagogical strategies are most commonly integrated?

## Method

### *Participants*

Participants were identified through a membership list of two branches of the American Counseling Association (ACA), Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) and Counselors for Social Justice (CSJ). We believed that targeting those two associations would allow access to as many instructors of multicultural counseling courses as possible. Members of ACES teach various courses at the college/university level and therefore part of this membership would likely be teaching a multicultural counseling course. Members of CSJ are often self recognized instructors of multicultural counseling courses, so inviting this group to participate would also likely reach a large number of multicultural counseling instructors.

Of the 1675 ACES and CSJ members, 277 participants (38.4% male, 61.6% female) responded to an author-designed survey instrument (response rate = 16.5%). Participants' ages ranged from 24 to 73 years, with a mean age of 45.5 (SD = 10.77) and a median age of 46 years. Participants predominantly identified themselves as Euro-American (63.2 %), with others reporting as African American (14.9%), Latino/Hispanic (9.2%), Asian (5.4%), Native American (4.6%), and multiethnic (10%). Of those professionals, 57% held a doctorate degree in counselor education; 10% held a doctorate in Counseling Psychology; while 33% held master's degrees or were finishing their doctorate degrees in a counseling field. All participants were instructors of multicultural counseling courses.

Participants represented 49 out of 50 States in the U.S. (with the exception of Hawaii). They reported having the following programs at their institutions: doctoral level counselor education programs (37.6%); doctoral level counseling psychology programs (11.7%); school emphasis (77.4%); community counseling (71.1%); college/university counseling (22.9%); and marriage and family counseling (21.8%). The majority of participants (63.3%) were from CACREP accredited programs.

### *Instrumentation*

This study was conducted in accordance with the procedures approved by Institutional Review Boards from both institutions involved. For this study, respondents were asked to respond to two web-based survey items administered through survey monkey ([http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=t9KkJofYfKmp4hKF05u1dQ\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=t9KkJofYfKmp4hKF05u1dQ_3d_3d)). These two items addressed course objectives and pedagogical strategies in multicultural courses taught by respondents. For the first item, they were asked to identify, through a checklist, which of 14 pedagogical strategies they utilized in their MCT course. The second item asked MCT instructors to identify their MCT objectives from a checklist of 15 objectives. Respondents were asked to check all items that applied to their course.

The scale was developed after an extensive examination of the literature, with a review of 148 written artifacts that included articles or book chapters which were empirical and nonempirical in nature. We reviewed articles that addressed multicultural competencies or education, and articles that provided guidelines for multicultural counseling instruction were particularly useful for survey design (e.g., Kim & Lyons, 2003; Reynolds, 1995; Ponterotto, 1997; Ridley et al., 1994, 1997; Roysircar, Gard, Hubbell, & Ortega, 2005; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992).



Approximately 10 articles that addressed multicultural education in the related field of teacher education were also selected due to their status as either seminal literature or status as a major theorist or researcher in that field (e.g., Banks et al., 2005; Sleeter & Grant, 1987; Tatum, 1992).

In addition, standards from the major professional counseling and counseling psychology organizations were used in survey development, including the guidelines set by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP; 2009) and the American Psychological Association's guidelines for multicultural education (APA; 2002). Finally, newer directives for multicultural competencies, as addressed in the literature, were included. Those included social justice issues (Kiselica, 2004), religion (Yarhouse & Fisher, 2002) and global awareness (Chung, 2005; Leong & Ponterotto, 2003).

To further address the content validity of the survey, five counselor educators, with specific training and expertise in multicultural counselor training, reviewed the survey language and content of the survey items for both accuracy and comprehensiveness. For reliability purposes, through the cross-tab function, the researchers calculated the frequencies for several sub-samples within the data and found comparable item percentages across various iterations, thus suggesting high reliability.

#### *Procedure and Analysis*

Participants were contacted via email with a request to participate in the study. They were provided a link to a web

site that gave a description of the research and an online version of the survey. Two weeks later, a follow-up email was sent to those who had yet to complete the survey.

Of the 1675 persons contacted, a total of 309 participants responded to the survey. However, 32 surveys were incomplete, yielding a usable sample of 277 (response rate = 16.5%).

Participants were instructed of their rights through informed consent, and all survey responses were completed electronically through survey monkey. Once the deadline for participation ended, responses were downloaded to Excel and uploaded to SPSS for further analysis.

## **Results**

To determine the percentage of instructors who addressed each of the identified MCT objectives in their courses, we provided a list of the 15 MCT objectives and asked participants to identify any and all objectives addressed in their MCT courses. Frequencies and percentages of respondents who covered each of the 15 MCT objectives were calculated, and each objective appeared to be covered by the majority of MCT course instructors (See Table 1).

The most frequently selected objective (85.9%;  $n = 262$ ) was, "Increase student awareness of their own assumptions, values and biases regarding others," and the least often mentioned objective was, "Critiquing counseling theories for cultural relevance," identified by ( $n = 140$ ) 50.5 percent of respondents.

**Table 1: Frequencies and Percentages of Respondents Who Reported that Syllabi Included Specified Course Objectives (N = 277)**

Objective	f	%	Rank
Increase students' awareness of their own assumptions, values and biases regarding others	262	94.6	1
Develop cultural empathy	244	88.1	2
Increase knowledge about characteristics of different groups	238	85.9	3
Improve Increase awareness of systemic inequalities	237	85.6	4
Increase ethical knowledge and practice	231	83.4	5
Improve multicultural skills (strategies, etc. )	230	83.0	6
Increase student ethnic/racial identity development	229	82.7	7
Increase student perception of future roles as advocates for diverse client populations	228	82.3	8
Increase student perception of future role as advocates for community/societal change	211	76.2	9
Increase knowledge of within-group differences	203	73.3	10
Increase student global perspective	181	65.3	11
Increase student awareness/understanding of diverse religions	171	61.7	12
Increase student understanding about diagnosis and misdiagnosis of diverse populations	165	59.6	13
Increase knowledge of appropriate assessment practices with diverse populations	154	55.6	14
Critiquing counseling theories for cultural relevance	140	50.5	15

We also calculated frequencies and percentages of instructors who addressed each of 14 commonly recommended MCT pedagogical strategies (See Table 2). The three most frequently applied strategies, in order of frequency, were: (a) classroom discussions/debates (n = 264; 95.3%); (b) textbook reading, counseling related (n =

252; 91.0%); and (c) self-reflective assignments (n = 249; 89.8%). The three least frequently identified strategies were: (a) modeling/observational learning (n = 144; 52.0%); (b) cross-discipline reading (history, politics, literature, etc.) (n = 116; 41.9%); and (c) student research (n = 114; 41.2%).

**Table 2: Frequencies and Percentages of Respondents Who Reported Using Selected Pedagogical Strategies (N = 277)**

Strategies	f	%	Rank
Classroom Discussions/Debates	264	95.3	1
Textbook Reading, Counseling Related	252	91.0	2
Self-Reflective Assignments (Journaling, Reaction Papers)	249	89.9	3
Exploration of Students' Culture or Immigrant History	246	88.8	4
Didactic Lectures	243	87.7	5
Experiential Classroom Activity	234	84.5	6
Technology Assisted Training (videos, etc.)	216	78.0	7

External Experiential Requirements (exposure/immersion)	202	72.9	8*
Multicultural Case Conceptualizations	202	72.9	8*
Exams and/or Quizzes	165	59.6	10
Required External Events Related to Diversity Issues	149	53.8	11
Modeling/Observational Learning	144	52.0	12
Cross-Discipline Reading (history, politics, literature, etc.)	116	41.9	13
Student Research	114	41.2	14

\* Denotes tie in rank

## Discussion

### *Objectives*

Findings in this study revealed that the majority of MCT instructors attempted to address each of the 15 core objectives derived from the literature and professional standards and guidelines, indicating that the majority of educators in this study had designed their courses according to professional directives. For instance, the majority of instructors cited addressing multicultural counseling competencies that meet CACREP Standard 2, Social and Cultural Diversity (CACREP, 2009). This corroborates findings from a recent national study of counselor education and counseling psychology programs, indicating comprehensive coverage of material within multicultural courses (Pieterse, et al., 2009). These studies raise the question of whether instructors are sacrificing depth for breadth and, in the process, covering material in a superficial or ineffective manner, a phenomenon suggested by researchers (Hays et al., 2007; Reynolds, 1995; Ridley et al., 1994).

*Most and least selected objectives.* As indicated in Table 1, over 85 percent of the participants stated that they included objectives in their course syllabi that addressed counselor traits. The most frequently selected were objectives that focused on increasing students' awareness of personal biases (94.6%), student cultural empathy (88.1%), knowledge about characteristics of different groups (85.9%), and student awareness of systemic inequalities (85.5%). Addressing student

traits to promote individual change has been cited as a key goal for increasing multicultural counselor competence (Arredondo et al., 1996; Hays et al., 2007; Tomlinson-Clarke, 2000) and is fairly consistent with Pieterse et al.'s (2009) research that examined multicultural counseling syllabi. Pieterse et al found that MCT instruction placed more emphasis on the promotion of awareness than skills. Moreover, increasing student awareness of systemic inequalities could be identified as a social justice component (Love, 2000), consistent with prior directives (Constantine, Hage, Kindaichi, & Bryant, 2007; Kiselica, 2004) asserting the importance of social justice training in counselor training.

Instructors in the current study were least likely to include assessment and diagnosis objectives in their courses. Authors have asserted the importance of addressing those topics in training (Harper & McFadden, 2003; Hays, 2008; Ridley et al., 1994; Roysircar), as counselors risk overestimating the degree of client pathology when applying theoretical assumptions, assessment, and diagnosis practices with a Western or European frame of reference (Roysircar, 2005; Sue & Sue, 2008). Potentially, in some training programs, such objectives were met in a separate assessment/diagnosis or theories course. However, such practice should be verified by multicultural counseling instructors who chose not to address those topics in their own course.

### *Pedagogical Strategies*

Over half of the participants reported applying 12 of the 14 strategies listed, indicating a broad range of teaching strategies in multicultural courses. Use of mixed strategies has been promoted in the literature as an effective means for teaching students with diverse learning styles (Alvarez & Miville, 2003). The most commonly selected pedagogical strategies appeared to be those that promoted student self-exploration (discussions and self-reflective assignments) or were didactic in nature (lecture and textbook reading). The popularity of those forms of instruction was consistent with recommendations in the literature (Alvarez & Miville, 2003). Additionally, some research supports the efficacy of self-reflective assignments in multicultural training (Murphy, Park & Lonsdale, 2006; Roysircar et al., 2005).

Diverging from recommendations in the literature, instructors in this study reported using experiential activities less frequently than other teaching techniques. External activities provide exposure to a diverse population outside of the classroom setting, and research shows that exposure to different populations promotes student multicultural competencies (Dickson & Jepsen, 2007; Manese, Wu, & Nepomuceno, 2001; Roysircar et al., 2005). Hence, we recommend that counselor educators increase the use of such assignments within a multicultural course.

Implementing research within the class was least frequently applied as a pedagogical strategy (mentioned by 41.2%). We recognize the limited time available for such practice. However, we also believe research can be used as a powerful teaching tool, as instructors can help students recognize abusive or culturally-biased research practices with oppressed groups. For instance, instructors can identify the potential harm of a study focused upon „the negative outcomes of African-American single-parent families“ (e.g., a negative or pathological focus) while requiring students to redesign a strengths-based, less biased,

study, such as identification of the strengths of single-parent African American families.

Student-led multicultural research could also be applied to shift focus from those oppressed to those who have perpetuated oppression, such as looking at White racial identity development or aspects of oppression or racism related to Whiteness or White individuals (Sue & Sue, 2008). Given that classroom research may require more time than instructors have available within one course, students could instead design and create hypothetical studies not fully implemented. Such a project provides an opportune venue for educating students of past abusive research practices, while encouraging them to critically assess for any biased assumptions that may have informed their own study designs.

Survey findings showed that instructors were also less likely to utilize cross-discipline reading (41.9%) and modeling/observational learning (52.0%) as instructional strategies, both activities promoted in the literature (Alvarez & Miville, 2003; LaFromboise & Foster 1992). We posit that literature from professionals in sociology, teacher education, psychology, political science, and the health sciences (e.g., medical fields, including nursing) can provide a more sophisticated, if not systemic, understanding of the complex environmental factors leading to social injustices faced by clientele. For example, *Scientific American* recently published an article summarizing studies from various fields, describing the influence of poverty upon health and the root of poor health for the impoverished (Sapolsky, 2005). Another resource is the book, *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down* (Fadiman, 1997), which presents a powerful description of the clash of two cultures, as a Hmong family is forced to receive Western health care services that dramatically differ from their own beliefs regarding illness, helping, and healing. Counseling students could address the implications of those readings on their future work with certain populations. In addition, such readings present a forum to

discuss the benefits of cross-discipline collaboration.

### *Implications and Suggestions for Future Research*

This study delineated current training practices, through an investigation of course objectives and pedagogical strategies, addressed within a single multicultural course at colleges and universities across the United States. We suggest that multicultural counselor educators critically examine their current training practices and the underlying beliefs that inform them. There is no consensus on the definition of multicultural competency and MCT objectives. Hence, there is a need to create a more universal understanding of the characteristics, dimensions, and features of multicultural counselor competence before practitioners can address multicultural training in a more consistent manner (Ridley & Kleiner, 2003).

We believe that a certain level of standardization of course content and pedagogical strategies may be beneficial. However, recommendations should be made according to empirically-supported practices, which are currently limited in number. In addition, some research suggests a need to adjust the delivery of MCT to the individual needs of the student group. For instance, research has shown that students of color respond differently from White students to MCT. Whites' responses to MCT are also uniquely influenced by their racial identity development statuses (Smith, Constantine, Dunn, Dinehart, & Montoya, 2006).

Consequently, educators in the fields of counseling and counseling psychology should carefully review and consider the empirical literature before proposing standardization of course content. Before a decision can be made, a first step is to determine, empirically, which current MCT topics and pedagogical strategies produce the most multiculturally competent counselors. Secondly, counselor educators must also extend empirical

studies to fully understand the types of MCT strategies that benefit specific groups of students. Recommendations for implementation of empirical studies are as follows:

1. Additional studies must determine the efficacy of current practices. There is a need to examine outcomes based on actual student-counselor success with clientele following MCT, as opposed to using traditional self-report measures, which may be more susceptible to response bias (Smith et al., 2006). Studies should be implemented to determine if a best course format exists. Do students gain different levels of multicultural counselor competencies based on these current, differing courses? Future studies should apply experimental research designs to minimize threats to the internal validity of the results. In addition, studies should specifically delineate course content, with comparisons of different courses to determine the most effective course format.
2. Are courses that address fewer objectives, but with more depth, more effective in producing multiculturally competent counselors than those that address more objectives with less depth? Studies should determine if one practice is superior to the other, again, with application of experimental designs and full description of course formats.
3. Which combination of objectives provides the most effective course format? Assessment of students' multicultural competency levels based on actual counseling outcomes, in lieu of self-reported studies, would ideally be applied (Smith et al., 2006).

4. Similarly, which pedagogical strategies are best applied and in which order? Should standardization exist? For example, Tomlinson-Clarke and Wangs (1999) suggest use of a mixture of pedagogical strategies in a specific order, beginning with didactic and shifting to experiential. Others have suggested different formats. For instance, Ridley et al. (1994) provided a grid of 10 strategies and 10 learning objectives, with directives to mix and match those creatively and expansively.

## Limitations

A limitation of this study is reliance on self-reported information. It is possible that participants may have tailored their responses to reflect course instruction and implementation in what they perceived as a positive light, rather than providing actual course practices. Another limitation is the low response rate. However, although the response rate was very low (16.5%), the respondents represent a comprehensive range of institutions by size, scope, and location. Still, given the low response rate, questions arise concerning differences between responders and non-responders on motivational and personality factors.

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# An Existentialist-Gestalt Approach to Clinical Supervision

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Although the science and practice of clinical supervision receives relatively little attention in the professional literature (Mintz, 1983; Worthen & McNeill, 1996), some theorists and researchers have proposed different supervisory models based on bona fide therapeutic approaches. While the various approaches all seem similarly effective (Goodyear, Abadie & Efros, 1984), evidence supports the need for training programs that take an integrated, holistic approach to supervision (Dlugos & Friedlander, 2001; Worthen & McNeill, 1996). This article will present an Existentialist-Gestalt approach to supervision designed to facilitate an integrated, holistic and effective training paradigm. In addition to theoretical constructs, recommendations for dealing with supervisees' emotional experience in training, cultural variables, and personal and professional developmental considerations will be presented.

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**S**upervision, as it pertains to psychotherapy can be defined as "An intensive, interpersonally focused ... relationship in which one person is designated to facilitate the development of therapeutic competence on the other..." (Loganbill, Hardy, & Dellworth, 1982, as quoted by Ponton, 2005). Other authors have suggested alternative definitions (Massey & Combs, 2002; Ponton, 2006; Starak, 2001; Yogev, 1982). Albott (1984) describes supervision as a teaching practice involving at least two people, occurring in an environment conducive to the process of learning (or teaching) psychotherapy. Resnick and Estrup (2000) suggest that clinical supervision should be multidimensional, helping the supervisee to:

- (a) help the therapist understand his/her client better at both the content and process levels, (b) to help the therapist become more aware of his/her own reactions and responses to the client

(actual and countertransference), (c) to understand the dynamics of how the therapist and client are interacting – from both a clinical and theoretical perspective, (d) to look at the therapist's interventions and the consequences of these interventions, (e) to learn to compare theories of psychotherapy, (f) to explore other ways of working (other models of psychotherapy) ... , and (g) to both validate (support) and challenge the therapist (p. 122).

Resnick and Estrup (2000) also contend that supervision should help the clinician learn professionalism, administration and business practices. However, despite theoretical and philosophical differences, the proposed definitions share some common factors. Each identifies a more senior therapist (the supervisor) and one or more clinicians with less experience or formal training than the supervisor [supervisee(s)] engaged in an interpersonal exercise intended to optimize

the supervisee's clients' psychotherapeutic experience.

Like therapeutic orientations, several effective and valuable approaches to clinical supervision have been created. Also like therapeutic approaches, there seems to be a "Dodo Bird verdict" indicating that despite differences in approach, the various „bona fide" supervisory methods all yield similar outcomes (Smith & Glass, 1977; Wampold, 1997). Goodyear, Abadie, and Efros (1984) studied several clinicians engaged in supervision with either Albert Ellis (Rational Emotive Supervision), Carl Rogers (Person-Centered Supervision), Rudolph Ekstein, (Adlerian/Psychodynamic Supervision) or Erving Polster (Gestalt Supervision). The four supervisory approaches were qualitatively different from one another, and, in response to the supervision, the therapists' approaches to their clients was qualitatively different. Still, intersession scales, outcome measures and measures of counselor effect reported equal effectiveness for each therapeutic approach and equal outcomes for their respective clients. Still, Goodyear, et al. (1984) assert that a theoretical foundation is, at least, as important to supervision as it is to psychotherapy, a sentiment echoed by several others in the field (Mintz, 1983; Resnick and Estrup, 2000). In short, to effectively help his/her supervisees hone their abilities and develop as helping professionals, the supervisor must work from a consistent and meaningful framework which guides his/her approach to clinical supervision.

A given supervisor's approach to supervision need not necessarily echo his/her own clinical theoretical orientation. It certainly can, and in this author's case, it does. A strong proponent of the paradoxical theory of change, the cycle of experience, the constructive use of anxiety, people's ultimate freedom and responsibility and the importance of meaning in our activities, I propose the Existentialist-Gestalt approach to clinical supervision.

## **Existentialist-Gestalt Model**

Combining principals of Gestalt supervision and existentialist psychotherapy results in a holistic model that requires the supervisor to view the supervisee as more than a therapist. The supervisor must experience the supervisee as a complete, integrated person, or, at least a person working toward wholeness and integration (Starak, 2001). This approach takes into consideration the here-and-now relationship between the supervisor and supervisee, a concept supported by Worthen and McNeil (1996) in their investigation of "good" supervision events; the supervisee's ability to maintain professional boundaries and engage in non-work related activities; and the supervisee's continuing educational pursuits. Though counselor reactions, feelings and thoughts remain central in the here-and-now, this approach certainly advocates that proper boundaries be drawn to ensure that experiential supervision drawing on the counselor's emotional reaction(s) to the client does not progress into psychotherapy between the supervisor and supervisee, Dlugos and Friedlander (2001) suggest that this integrated, holistic training approach helps clinicians avoid burnout and remain passionately committed to their work.

### *Gestalt Supervision*

Defined by Starak (2001) as a here-and-now interpersonal process that helps the counselor understand the contact-boundary between him/herself and the client system in order to help the supervisee become more creative and fully alive in the therapy session, the Gestalt supervisor strives to facilitate the therapist's ability to respond to and engage with the client in an authentic, meaningful, therapeutic way. It is vital to understand that this goal is achieved not through specific techniques or "tricks," but through due diligence to the constructs and concepts presented here (Mintz, 1983). While techniques and experiential activities might prove useful and appropriate in

supervision, in the absence of a guiding theory and purpose, they become a “hodge-podge” of serendipitous activities that might or might not result in professional development for the supervisee instead of purposeful, meaningful interactions that effectively contribute to the therapist’s personal and professional development (Harman & Tarleton, 1983).

Gestalt theory understands change as paradoxical (Polster & Polster, 1973; Starak, 2001). The paradoxical theory of change posits that change (read “professional development” in the case of supervision) occurs automatically as long as the supervisee is free to fully own and appreciate who and what (s)he is at the moment (Corey, 2005; Resnick & Estrup, 2000; Starak, 2001). In other words, a counselor in training will automatically grow and improve as long as (s)he is not only permitted to be a novice without judgment or criticism, but encouraged to appreciate, own, even love their current place in the developmental continuum. At the same time, authentic meaningful feedback is vital and central to Gestalt supervision (Harman & Tarleton, 1983; Resnick & Estrup, 2000). Feedback, however, must be provided without judgment, positive or negative, and is intended to facilitate awareness in the supervisee.

Awareness, first suggested as a therapeutic concept by Hypocrites, is central in Gestalt supervision and suggests that the skill, knowledge and ability to become a better clinician already exists within the supervisee (Harman & Tarleton, 1983; Mintz, 1983; Polster & Polster, 1973; Resnick & Estrup, 2000; Starak, 2001). It simply needs to surface and be realized. The supervisory role in this process, then, is not to actively instruct or direct the supervisee toward growth and development, but to facilitate awareness within the supervisee. Once this awareness is processed and integrated into the counselor’s holistic self, development into a more mature clinician will occur automatically (Corey, 2005; Resnick & Estrup, 2000), much the same way that

food, once digested by a toddler, will automatically result in a more physically mature child. To that end, feedback must articulate processes and interactions observed by the supervisor and his/her personal reactions to the supervisee, the client, or the interactions between them without his/her judgment of them.

Authentic, meaningful feedback runs the risk of approaching psychotherapy for the supervisee. The supervisor must ensure that clinical supervision does not violate the boundary between effective supervision and psychotherapy (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009; Mintz, 1983; Resnick & Estrup, 2000). Another important tool in the Gestalt approach, Field Theory, provides the supervisor with a perspective (s)he can use to maintain appropriate boundaries. Field theory concerns itself with the interaction between the object of primary attention (the client, the supervisee, a presenting problem, an interpersonal relationship, etc.) and the context within which that object exists (Polster & Polster, 1973; Starak, 2001; Yontef, 1993). When the supervisee’s emotional reactions to the client surface in supervision, vigilant attention to the field will ensure that such content is used to process the counselor’s countertransference reactions to the client and develop a treatment plan using those reactions for the client’s benefit. Once the client’s benefit falls out of the field, then the supervisor has an ethical responsibility to either reintroduce the client into the field, discontinue that line of interaction, refer the supervisee for individual counseling, or some combination of the three.

Collaboration with the supervisee should also be considered when deciding how to proceed with his/her emotional reactions in supervision (Resnick & Estrup, 2000; Starak, 2001). Dialogue, as defined by Gestalt theory, is the “open engagement of two phenomenologies” (Resnick & Estrup, 2000, p. 126), and it is an expression of both parties’ genuine experience in the moment (inclusion), both parties’ willingness to embrace or join with the other’s while still maintaining their own

centeredness (inclusion), and the willingness to surrender to the interpersonal process which develops in the here-and-now of interaction between the two people without either one trying to control or limit contact with the other, or the interaction's outcome (commitment to the dialogue). By engaging in such open and committed dialogue, the supervisor and supervisee can choose, together, which would be the best course of action. Gestalt theory suggests that dialogue will most frequently result in a more creative and appropriate result or solution than any solution that either party would have thought of without the other (Yontef, 1993).

It is important not to mistake Gestalt's use of field theory and dialoguing in supervision as passive or nondirective, especially when critical and immediate action is required. Whenever possible, the Gestalt supervisor prefers to help facilitate awareness in the counselor, making him/her the architect and engineer of his/her own growth and development. However, when immediate action is required, any supervisor must make paramount the safety and benefit of the supervisee's client (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009). This can be accomplished through the use of any creative and experiential method (Mintz, 1983). For example, if the supervisor is observing a session in which the supervisee does not seem aware that the client is at high risk for suicide, and is not assessing that risk further, the supervisor might join the session and facilitate a growth experience with the client present. In fact, several authors have suggested „In Situ” supervision in appropriate circumstances (Harman & Tarleton, 1983). In this instance, the supervisor might explore the counselor's here-and-now experience of the dialogue with the client. It is likely that counselor might perceive some emotional discomfort, indicating that (s)he might not have been fully present, or might not have picked up on something important. If the counselor does not recognize the important oversight, then the supervisor might turn to the client, assessing his/her experience of the session,

or (s)he might have the counselor and client switch places and role play one another (Glickauf-Hughes & Campbell, 1991; Harman & Tarleton, 1983). A present, effective, creative supervisor will, ultimately bring to the surface that there was “an elephant in the room,” get the client assessed, and process the important oversight with the supervisee during a private supervision session. Of course, this is only one simple example, but the point should be clear: Whenever possible, the Gestalt supervisor will empower his/her supervisee to grow and develop in his/her own way, but when necessary, that same supervisor will intervene with the counselor in a directive and meaningful way for the benefit of the client.

Several specific models of Gestalt supervision have been suggested and most seem to have merit (Mintz, 1983; Resnick & Estrup, 2000; Starak, 2001). What seems vital, is that the Gestalt supervisor always remain cognizant of the field-figure relationship (with regards to the client as well as the supervisee); facilitate awareness in the supervisee through committed, here-and-now dialogue and creative, experiential interventions; and honor the paradoxical nature of change by encouraging the supervisee to embrace and appreciate each stage of his/her professional development and the benefits and struggles inherent in them in a holistic, nonjudgmental way. These conditions can certainly be employed for the benefit of therapists working from theoretical orientations other than Gestalt, but in those cases, the Gestalt supervisor has an ethical responsibility to maintain a working knowledge of the supervisee's orientation of choice, including supervisory recommendations from that orientation (Mintz 1983). (S)he need not necessarily conduct therapy or supervision from that orientation, though. In fact, Resnick and Estrup (2000) suggest that exploring different approaches and theories of psychotherapy might be an important dimension of effective supervision.

### *Existentialist Theory*

Often, in studying Gestalt theory, one will find references to the importance of Existentialist philosophy (Philippson, P., 2009; Starak, 2001; Yontef, 1993), however a literature search using ERIC, PsychINFO and PsychARTICLES yielded no results for Existentialist approaches to clinical supervision. Massey and Combs (2002) include several important existential concepts within the context of their Interpersonal-Systemic and Development approach to supervision, but do not propose an Existentialist supervision theory. This supervisory model, too, will draw on existentialist concepts: the importance of death, life meaning, learning from (and using) anxiety, freedom and responsibility (Corey, 2005; Yalom, 1980).

Existential psychotherapy and Logotherapy suggest that the creation or identification of meaning in one's existence, experience(s) or actions plays a central role in emotional healing (Corey, 2005; Frankl, 1984; Yalom, 1980). This idea can benefit clinical supervision in two ways. First, the supervisor, mindful of the field from which the client (and related client systems) emerges, can help the supervisee explore the factors that might be meaningful to the client. Subsequent meaning-making processes can be employed with the client to help him/her resolve his/her inner-conflicts where appropriate. Second, the supervisor, also cognizant of the supervisee's field, can help ensure that (s)he finds meaning in his/her work by using supervision time to explore the supervisee's experience as a counselor and his/her subsequent reactions to his/her work. Such a practice, while not directly related to the client in question, will ultimately result in a better therapeutic experience for the client because it will likely facilitate the counselor feeling more committed to his/her work and passionate about the psychotherapy process (Dlugos & Friedlander, 2001).

Gestalt supervision makes great use of the supervisee's emotional reactions (both actual and countertransference) to the

client (Resnick & Estrup, 2000). Similarly, existentialism engages the client's anxiety in psychotherapy (Corey, 2005), though anxiety sometimes manifests as a heightened emotional experience, it often appears in the guise of traditional resistances; repression, displacement, rationalization, etc (Yalom, 1980). Like the client in therapy, the counselor in supervision might experience either heightened emotional arousal, or (s)he might intellectualize or rationalize the client's situation, project his/her own issues into the client's field and figure, or avoid central process issues and attend more to content. While easily understood as normal in a developmental context, these tendencies likely result from the counselor reacting on some level (often one that brings his/her mortality into awareness) to the client. Exploration of this emotional experience (or resistance as the case may be) can help the supervisee identify his/her own existential concerns, and by parallel process, better understand the client's experience in therapy. Such developments in supervision can help enhance the client's phenomenological view of the client (vital for both existential and Gestalt psychotherapy) and his/her capacity for authentic empathy.

Existential anxiety, on some level, results from human awareness of mortality and fear of death (Yalom, 1980). Death anxiety can manifest in unpleasant feelings, avoidance and resistance, as mentioned, or as achievement and energy. In the former, the supervisee is made aware of his/her own mortality through contact with the client (Resnick & Estrup, 2000; Starak, 2001). Yalom (1980) suggests that all fears, nightmares, and anxieties bear, at least, death's footprint latent in the other important content. With this awareness surfacing, the supervisee becomes uncomfortable with his/her own fragility and subsequently avoids this underlying content and remains focused on the client's more overt content. However, as humans, death is always in the field and anxiety is viewed, in Gestalt theory, as a close cousin to energy (Polster & Polster, 1973). By helping the supervisee

own his/her mortality, the terror of death anxiety can become the motivation of life meaning. Knowing that we do not have infinite time to complete our work (be it a work of art, science, or interpersonal relations), can motivate us to address these activities in the here-and-now because there might not be a tomorrow (Corey, 2005; Frankl, 1984; Mintz, 1983; Polster & Polster, 1973; Yalom, 1980).

Viktor Frankl (1984) recommended that the Statue of Liberty on the east coast of the United States be paired with a Statue of Responsibility on the west. Existentialist theory believes that people possess ultimate freedom at the most basic levels (Frankl, 1984; Yalom, 1980). Regardless of somebody's situation, (s)he has the freedom to choose how (s)he will think, feel and behave. Frankl (1984) drew this conclusion watching fellow Jews while imprisoned in a Nazi concentration camp. He observed that even though they were all in the same environment, some people turned to "saints" trying to help others who might have fallen ill, while others turned to "swine" stealing food rations from the sick. People often eschew this freedom, though, because with it comes responsibility for our choices. Learning to embrace responsibility, exercise personal freedoms and even make occasional errors is considered movement toward health in Existential psychotherapy (Yalom, 1980).

Gestalt theory, too, echoes this sentiment. According to Resnick and Estrup (2000), the ultimate goal of Gestalt therapy is not change. It is choice. Gestalt techniques such as the famous two-chair, the hot seat, role playing and the empty chair are not necessarily intended to facilitate change in the client (or supervisee), but to help the supervisee become aware of his/her options, each with inherent benefits and limitations, freeing him/her to choose in favor of change or not (Polster & Polster, 1973; Starak, 2001). Additionally, helping the supervisee accept responsibility for his/her choices and to own, even embrace occasional errors honors the paradoxical theory of change and should,

ultimately, result in growth for the supervisee.

Clearly, addressing existential concerns, meaning and anxiety with the counselor can provide rich, fertile material from which the supervisor can help facilitate growth in (or with) the counselor. However, existential content might never surface as a focus of discussion or intervention. In short, existential content might or might not be addressed in supervision, but it is always present in the supervisor's field, the counselor's field and the client's field.

### *Cultural and Developmental Implications*

Gestalt psychotherapy has received criticism for being culturally limited (Corey, 2005). While Gestalt has historically been used by white, middle-class men to treat white, middle-class people, this criticism more accurately reflects the practitioners, or perhaps the mental health field's inability to serve more diverse populations, but not the theory itself. Race, religion, age, physical ability, nationality, gender, sexual preference and other cultural variables all interact with one another to create the field from which figures emerge (Polster & Polster, 1973; Starak, 2001). Field theory represents a primary and central theme in the Gestalt approach (Corey, 2005; Harman & Tarleton, 1983; Mintz, 1983; Polster & Polster, 1973; Resnick & Estrup, 2000; Starak, 2001), and by extension, culture and identity should also be considered central and vital in both treatment and supervision.

Individual supervision with a counselor seeing only one client results in six, possibly seven, distinct fields that must be considered as the backdrop for treatment of the client and supervision of the counselor. The potential fields are as follows:

1. The supervisee's client
2. The supervisee
3. The supervisor
4. The field that emerges in the dialogue between the supervisee and the client

5. The field that emerges in the dialogue between the supervisor and supervisee
6. The field that emerges in the dialogue between the supervisor and supervisee with specific regard to the client
7. A final field that could possibly emerge between the supervisor and client if they have any sort of interaction.

Introduce group supervision with several supervisees, each with several clients, and this perspective can become somewhat daunting until the supervisor becomes comfortable managing the balance between foreground and background. An effective method for managing field perspectives might be to create lists similar to the one above, or to draw diagrams illustrating where the various fields intersect and interact. Creativity is vital in any Gestalt practice, even supervision (Harman & Tarleton, 1983).

Doka (2006) recommends conceptualizing cultural variables as places to start asking questions – not arriving at answers. If one or more factors in any (or several) of these fields is preventing the supervisee or the supervisor from fully understanding the participants, processes or content of the therapy, then (s)he has an ethical obligation to educate him/herself with regards to those factors. This can be done through consultation with colleagues, scholarly literature, or dialoguing with the other participants involved (including the supervisee's client). If cultural variables are understood as part of the field from which the individual, his/her strengths, his/her struggles, and his/her beliefs have emerged, then Gestalt supervision deserves none of the criticism suggested by Corey (2005).

Personal and professional development, too, comprise elements of the field from which figures emerge. A chronologically young clinician with a great deal of experience and training will work from a different framework than a chronologically senior counselor who has

less experience. Similarly, older clients will have different world-views from younger ones. Their perspectives might also be affected by previous counseling experiences, their stage of change and their knowledge of counseling and psychotherapy.

Professional identity development should follow a „spiral“ model (Bruner, 1960 as cited in Yogev, 1982). This model suggests that counselors learn best using a process that explores central themes in counseling processes, identity, relational factors and skill development. As the supervisee achieves a level of mastery, integrating these concepts into a coherent, unified approach to psychotherapy, the supervisee then returns to the beginning of the process again, but at more advanced level (Yogev, 1982).

If a hypothetical Gestalt supervisor has one hypothetical supervisee who is a 26-year-old, Asian American female with a great deal of clinical experience, and is working with a 65-year-old, African American male client; and one hypothetical supervisee who is a 37-year-old, Caucasian male with little training who is seeing a 14-year-old Latina girl, and both supervisees approach the supervisor with the same concern, the supervisor's response to each must be palpably different. Although the content of the supervisees' problems was identical, the different fields interacting with one another (including the supervisor's) makes them very different problems, indeed (Polster & Polster, 1973; Resnick & Estrup, 2000; Starak, 2002; Yontef, 1993).

## Conclusion

Worthen and McNeill (1996) found that both, a good relationship between the supervisor and supervisee, and specific attention to skill development were minimally necessary for positive supervision experiences. They also identified four distinct phases common in “good” supervision events. First, there must be an existential baseline set by the supervisee's previous supervision experiences. Then, the



“stage” must be set. That is, supervisor and supervisee must have a clear and purposeful informed consent agreement in which expectations and goals from both the supervisor and the supervisee are clearly articulated. Third, there has to be a good supervision experience which is perceived by the supervisee as “... empathic, nonjudgmental, and validating, with encouragement to explore and experiment...” (p. 28). Finally, the supervision event must culminate with good outcomes defined by improved confidence and professional identity for the supervisee, which results in a strengthening of the supervisory relationship and increased commitment to supervision, realizing a positive feedback loop which transitions into the next “good” supervisory event.

An Existentialist-Gestalt approach to clinical supervision provides supervisors the tools, perspective and process for facilitating such supervisory events. It is important, however, not to mistake a true Gestalt approach for a serendipitous sampling of silly, meaningless “techniques” (Mintz, 1983). While certain techniques and interventions such as: having the supervisee role-play his/her client, in situ supervision (counseling sessions with the supervisor in the room), group supervision, Socratic dialogue, and formal case presentation approaches have been effectively used in Gestalt supervision (Glickauf-Hughes & Campbell, 1991; Harman & Tarleton, 1983; Mintz, 1983; Resnick & Estrup, 2000), the use of techniques or interventions must develop in the here-and-now of the supervision dialogue, appropriately reflect the field and figure, facilitate awareness and adhere to the paradoxical theory of change for the supervision to be truly Gestalt. What’s more, existential ideas such as life meaning, the importance of death anxiety and freedom and responsibility can add depth to the supervisory relationship and process.

While some supervisory approaches avoid the supervisor’s emotional experience and reaction to his/her clients, believing it too close to acting as the supervisee’s

therapist, there is support for a holistic approach to supervision that integrates professional development with concern for the supervisee’s life, hobbies, and experiences outside the counseling room (Dlugos & Friedlander, 2001; Worthen & McNeill, 1996). This evidence suggests that more holistic training paradigms result in supervisees experiencing greater passion for their work, a deeper commitment to supervision, greater confidence in their abilities, greater satisfaction with the supervision they receive and the prevention of professional burnout. Use of the Existentialist-Gestalt supervision model should realize such benefits for the supervisee, supervisor and client.

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