

Limitations in the ACA Code of Ethics: Implications for Counselor Educators

Arij Abdul-Halim, LMHC
Luís Alicea Gracia, LPC
Nicole Taylor, EdS, LPC

Learning Objectives



Participants will examine the limitations of the ACA Code of Ethics.



Participants will recognize best practices to address limitations in the ACA Code of Ethics.



Participants will recognize advocacy needs for addressing limitations in the ACA Code of Ethics.



Time to Reflect...

When we mention limitations in the Code of Ethics, what words and/or concerns come to mind regarding how you would address this issue?

<https://www.menti.com/alyg1v55gfbf>



Code of Ethics



Section D

Relationships with Other Professionals

Section F.2

Counselor Supervision Competence

Section F.6

Counseling Supervision Evaluation,
Remediation, and Endorsement

Section F.7

Responsibilities of Counselor
Educators

Section F.11

Multicultural/Diversity Competence

Section H

Distance Counseling, Technology, and
Social Media

CACREP Standards



Section 4

Professional Practice

Section 5-C

Clinical Mental Health
Counseling

Section 6

Doctoral Standards:
Counselor Education and Supervision

Are professional counselors
different from other mental
health professions?

If we are different, what is
the importance of our
identity?

How would not developing
it affect us?



Time to Reflect...

Have you had a professor or a supervisor who was not a professional counselor?

Or had coworkers who were not professional counselors but were mental health professionals?



What differences did you notice?

Case Study

Natalia is a student in the Master's degree in Mental Health Counseling. She is enrolled in an internship, and has a Psychologist as a supervisor.

In her internship, her supervisor assigns her a patient who does not know what to study and is looking for help with life and career development.

Her supervisor tells her that he has no competencies in the area of life and career development.



Time to Reflect...

What implications could this situation have on Natalia's competency development?



Could there be an ethical issue related to the supervisor's competencies?

ACA

F.7.H
Counselor
Educator
Competence
(ACA, 2014)



ACPC

Puerto Rico Association of Professional
Counseling

I.11: it tells us about the ethical obligation that the supervisor has to master the skills of professional counseling (APCP, 2020)

Interview with Dr. Alicia Rios, APCP Executive Board Member: The identity of counselors has been affected because sometimes teachers, who are not counselors, forget that they are teaching counselors and not psychology students.

CACREP: Counselor Identity

CACREP talks about the importance of developing counseling education programs that develop the counselor's identity.

Can the professor or supervisor of another mental health profession empower the student to:

- Learn about the different organizations of the profession
- Activities of the profession
- The competencies of the counselor
- History of the profession
- Barriers of the profession
- Counseling models

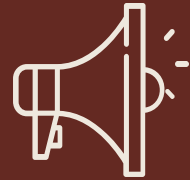
20/20: A Vision for the Future of Counseling



Strengthening
Identity



Presenting
ourselves as one
profession



Improving public
perception and
recognition and
advocating for
professional issues

This is a part of you! _____

1. The counselor's identity can be affected by other mental health professionals who do not have counseling competencies.
2. As counselors we must advocate for continuing to strengthen the counselor's identity.
3. Counselors must be gatekeepers for our spaces and students.



Time to Reflect...

What are some concerns you naturally have with AI in higher education?



History

1966

6

First AI Program

1985

5

Pop Culture – Star Wars

1996

6

AI Editing Assistant

2001

6

Georgia Tech TA

2002

2

Georgia Tech Tutor

2002

4

Tutoring,
Administrative Support

Future

It is important to stay up-to-date with research on the implications of AI in higher education and the counseling profession.



Ethical Considerations

How should AI be
integrated into counseling
and higher education?



Harvard University AI Pedagogy Project & Derek Bok Center

ACA Guidelines

The ACA has an active task force to provide resources for navigating AI in the counseling profession.

Counselor educators must stay informed of the research to ethically use AI in education and encourage students to do the same.



(Fulmer & Williams, 2024)

Research

Fiske, Henningson, & Buyx (2019)

Your Robot Therapist Will See You Now

Journal of Medical Interest Research

Fulmer et al. (2021)

*The Ethics of Psychological Artificial Intelligence: Clinical
Considerations*

Counseling and Values

What's Next?

Higher educators must provide
faculty trainings.

Educators must remain
informed of the use of AI in
higher education.



AI Policy in Syllabi

Classroom use of AI

University Support

Adaptive Learning

Best Practices

- Intentionality
 - Multidisciplinary Integration (Molewijk et al., 2015)
 - It matters, pay attention (Molewijk et al., 2015)
 - “Problem” vs Ethical (Molewijk et al., 2015)
 - Meetings explicitly on ethics (Molewijk et al., 2015)
 - Self-reflection (Burkholder et al., 2020; Perkins et al., 1998)
- Having ethical decision-making models (EDMs) (Burkholder et al., 2020)



Best Practices

- Stay up to date (tech/verbiage) (Molewijk et al., 2015)
- Future

- 20/20

Strengthening identity • Presenting ourselves as one profession • Improving public perception/recognition and advocating for professional issues • Creating licensure portability • Expanding and promoting the research base of professional counseling • Focusing on students and prospective students • Promoting client welfare and advocacy” (Kaplan & Gladding, 2011, p. 369).

- Ethical hotline and/or other resources accessible for counselors



Additional Limitations

- Cultural sensitivity complexities
- Spiritual integration (Elzamzamy & Kshavarzi, 2019, p. 62)
- International vs National
 - Discrepancy in the role of a counselor
 - Portability
 - Advocacy (Kaplan & Gladding, 2011)
 - Ambiguous and open for interpretation
 - AI - Teletherapy

Learning Objectives



Participants will examine the limitations of the ACA Code of Ethics.



Participants will recognize best practices to address limitations in the ACA Code of Ethics.



Participants will be aware of advocacy needs for addressing limitations in the ACA Code of Ethics.



Time to Reflect...

Reflecting on what was presented to you,
how will you now approach ethical
limitations?

<https://www.menti.com/alyg1v55gfbf>



Time to Reflect...

What follow-up questions do you have about the material?

References

- American Counseling Association. (2014). 2014 ACA code of ethics.
<https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/ethics/2014-aca-code-of-ethics.pdf>
- APCP (2020). *Código de Ética de la Asociación Puertorriqueña de Consejería Profesionales*. [Code of Ethics of Puerto Rican Association of Professional Counseling]. APCP.
<https://www.asociaciondeconsejerosprofesionalespr.com/>
- Burkholder, J., Burkholder, D., & Gavin, M. (2020). The role of decision-making models and reflection in navigating ethical dilemmas. *Counseling and Values*, 65(1), 108-121.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/cvj.12125>
- CACREP (2024). 2024 CACREP Standards. CACREP. <https://www.cacrep.org/for-programs/2024-cacrep-standards/>

References

- Deacon, M, Van, K., Simmons, R. & Chamberlin, B. (2020). Professional Identity; Associations, Credentials, and Licenses. In R. Simmons , S. Lilley & A. Kuhnley (Eds.), *Introduction to Counseling* (pp. 47-89). Kendall Hunt
- EdTech (2024). *EdTech: Focus on Higher Education*. <https://edtechmagazine.com/higher/>
- Elzamzamy, K., & Keshavarzi, H. (2019). Navigating ethical dilemmas in mental health practice between professional ethics and Islamic values. *Journal of Islamic Faith and Practice*, 2(1), 40-71.
- Fulmer, R. & Williams, O. (2024). *Artificial intelligence in the counseling profession*. American Counseling Association. <https://www.counseling.org/resources/research-reports/artificial-intelligence-counseling>
- Goebel, C., Strauss, D., & Tessler, N. (2024). AI and academia: Student perspectives and ethical implications. *studentPOLL*, 17(1). <https://www.artsci.com/studentpoll-volume-17-issue-1>

References

- Harvard University (2024). *Artificial Intelligence*. The Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning. <https://bokcenter.harvard.edu/artificial-intelligence>
- Hoop, J. G., DiPasquale, T., Hernandez, J. M., & Roberts, L. W. (2008). Ethics and culture in mental health care. *Ethics & Behavior*, 18(4), 353-372.
- Kaplan, D. M., & Gladding, S. T. (2011). A Vision for the Future of Counseling: The 20/20 Principles for Unifying and Strengthening the Profession. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 89(3), 367-372. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6678.2011.tb00101.x>
- Molewijk, B., Hem, M. H., & Pedersen, R. (2015). Dealing with ethical challenges: a focus group study with professionals in mental health care. *BMC Medical Ethics*, 16, 1-12.

References

- Perkins, D. V., Hudson, B. L., Gray, D. M., & Stewart, M. (1998). Decisions and justifications by community mental health providers about hypothetical ethical dilemmas. *Psychiatric Services*, 49(10), 1317-1322.
- Sharf, R. (1985). Artificial intelligence: Implications for the future of counseling. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 64. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1556-6676.1985.tb00000.x>
- Shum, B. (2023). *Professional Counselor Identity Development Relative to Professional Recognition* [Doctoral dissertation, Walden University].
<https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=13115&context=dissertations>