

Pre-Intensive Teaching Competencies Synthesis

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Applying the CACREP competencies to teaching standards are essential to be effective educators for emerging counselors. Without the knowledge of how to apply these standards to the classroom, students cannot be prepared to move forward in their professional career.

Roles and Responsibilities to Educate Counselors

One of the core responsibilities of counseling educators is teaching, to provide knowledge to developing students while adhering to ethical and professional standards (H, 36-37, 39). There are times when professors may take on a role of supervisor or mentor, particularly within graduate and post-graduate education (H, 3, 35), so a well-defined identity (H, 3) is essential for success as a counselor educator. Educators must regularly self-reflect (H, 10) to maintain awareness of limitations and be open to feedback from other professionals as well as students (H, 10; C, 144).

Regular research regarding best professional practices (H, 5; C, 36) within the changing field of professional counseling is necessary to remain up-to-date and relevant as a professor (C, 173). Educators also should regularly engage in advocacy work as they monitor student engagement and development (C, 174), remaining on the forefront of promoting change in higher education. Professors must remain mindful of diversity within their classroom (H, 94), adjusting teaching techniques to better engage students (H, 94). Educators remain active in social justice and advocacy projects and should encourage students to connect with their larger community (C, 103) and engage in their own advocacy work (C, 101). Exposure to diversity during graduate education promotes improved acceptance and understanding of the diverse nature of the counseling field (H, 43).

The personality of a professor matters to students; a professor who is positive, accessible, and respectful are more likely to be viewed in a positive way and have a deeper connection with the class (C, 32). When professors are met with student resistance, this type of personality can be beneficial and improve student anxiety and their ability to receive constructive feedback or engage in the remediation process (C, 160).

Pedagogy and Teaching Methods

A solid pedagogical approach creates the foundation for a successful course, defined by constructivism, critical pedagogy, and transformative learning processes (H, 19-21). These foster a learner-centered approach to the classroom (H, 21), encouraging deep conversation and critical thinking. Pedagogy is defined by the professor, blending both professor-centered and student-centered learning while remaining aware of the classroom dynamics and goals of the course (H, 103). Professor transparency and self-reflect benefits students through providing perspective and guidance on course material (C, 90).

Learning objectives should be written in a way that reflects competency standards for the program and profession (H, 114) while providing clarity to students on what they should understand by the end of the course (H, 105). Bloom's revised taxonomy can assist educators in developing clear learning objectives that reflect the goals of the course (H,108) while evaluating the developmental level of the student (H, 110). Flexibility and creativity are necessary when monitoring student understanding and engagement with course material (H, 10), as well as when assisting students to connect new information with prior knowledge (C, 26).

Just as the personality of the educator can improve student engagement, establishing a personal connection with students (H, 9), preparation of course material, and clear expectations of students improve teaching effectiveness (C, 139). Students who are more connected to the

course are more likely to engage in self-reflection and integrate learning from previous experiences (H, 18). Students often report deeper understanding of the material when the professor encourages connections between classmates through course assignments and discussion (C, 70, 73; H, 92). These connections can also foster conversations regarding multiculturalism as the professor monitors the diversity of the classroom (H, 66) and encourages students to engage in courageous discussions regarding diversity and respect (H 67, 70).

Adult Development and Learning in Counselor Education

Professors should remain mindful of the diverse learning styles of the classroom (H, 79) particularly recognizing the unique needs of adult learners, better engaging a variety of students with the material. Educators should be viewed as a facilitator of knowledge instead of a gatekeeper, moving adult learners towards self-directing thinking and encouraging autonomy (H, 83-84). Teaching approaches should be mindful of the influence of neuroscience on the learning process (H, 24) and how these relate to adult learning techniques; for instance, it is common for adult students to be motivated to learn through experiential techniques (H, 104). Adult learners typically move towards action through intrinsic motivation (H, 110), with a desire to understand why and the course aligns with their professional goals. Recognizing how adult students manage the varied responsibilities help educators better understand the mental load of each student (H, 87)

Students often feel a sense of safety when connected to a professor, which allows for deeper connection and understanding of the material (H, 86). These students are more willing to engage in an active learning process with empowering discussion, questioning, and reflection on critical topics (H, 20) to challenge previous assumptions and beliefs of the world (H, 21). Movement towards a balance of power in the classroom further promotes discussion and often

encourages students to self-reflect and approach vulnerable conversations with professor guidance. This type of awareness encourages reflection of class around active learning strategies to aid retention of course material (C, 35) and improve engagement (C, 55).

Instructional and Curriculum Design, Delivery, and Evaluation

Instructional design and delivery should be founded on clarity and consistency – in learning goals, content, syllabi, assignment guidelines, and expectations of student behaviors – to maintain accountability and clear expectations for professional behavior (H, 131). This type of transparency, when communicated with encouragement and respect, improves student motivation and connection to course material (C, 14; C, 128). The syllabus and assignment rubrics increase transparency, allowing students to self-assess and adapt through personal reflection and evaluation of their work (C, 131).

A backwards course design encourages professors to reflect on the overall goals of the course when developing the syllabi, class structure, learning activities, and assignments (C, 11; H, 40, 122). When the goals are identified, objectives and outcomes can be used to define course content and assignments, to further reinforce what the student should expect from the course (C, 3). When appropriate, student engagement with and feedback on course material encourages connection with the assignment and can improve course outcomes (H, 41, 129).

Lecture formats should be tailored to the course learning outcomes (C, 50) and standards of the profession (H, 41-42) while remaining considerate of the unique learning styles of students (H, 152). Professor's engagement with students (H, 88) and excitement with course material improve student outcomes (H, 126). Adult learners in particular benefit from connecting course material to real-life events to improve understanding of the relevance of what is being learned (H, 90). Using case studies during practicum and internship can be particularly helpful as

students work together and learn from each other's approaches or insights (H, 88). It is important for educators to remain aware of changes in the profession and informed of evidenced-based practices to improve the reliability of course material (H, 124).

Effective Approaches for Online Instruction

Online learning environments allow a variety of students to pursue higher education that may not have the time and financial resources to attend school on campus. This type of learning also can create unique challenges related to isolation, so students should be provided opportunity for connection to increase a sense of community (H, 87). Students who have difficulty with time management (H, 86), may find online learning to be difficult due to less structured instruction (H, 193), and increased autonomy (H, 196).

Professors should be aware of the unique differences between in-person and online learning and be as prepared as possible for these differences (H, 192-192). The success of an online course is highly dependent on the professor's presence, and video lecture, synchronous meetings, and online discussion are important for connection and material retention (C, 43, 51, 84; H, 192). These meetings have the same responsibility to monitor student alignment with professional ethics standards and provide gatekeeping and remediation as appropriate (H, 194).

Online communities should be structured in a way that promotes engagement with other students, encouraging learning from one another and promoting deeper interaction with the material (C, 86-88). Just as with in-person courses, professors should provide constructive feedback on assignments and work to promote a positive class culture (C, 83; H, 197). Integrating face-to-face learning strategies through synchronous meetings, online discussions outside of class, and using class time for discussion instead of lecture all provide unique benefits

to online learning communities by encouraging students to learn from each other and interact more deeply with the material (C, 86-88).

Screening, Remediation, and Gatekeeping

Screening emerging professionals begins when students are admitted into programs and should continue throughout the program through a variety of assessment tools (H, 162).

Screening measures should be developed in a way that protects students from discrimination, while assessing their ability to recognize professional standards and ethics (H, 37). Program standards should be provided in a clear manner during a program orientation process (C, 38), allowing students access to expected ethical behaviors and the overall gatekeeping and remediation process (C, 159).

Counselor educators must be prepared to monitor student progress throughout a program to ensure adequate adherence to professional expectations (H, 7-8), gatekeeping to protect future clients from harm (C, 157). Benchmark assignments allow counselor educators to monitor this progress by assessing student's adherence to competency standards, university policies and overall awareness of ethics (C, 158, 161; H, 52-53, 162). Advances in technology in education will continue to aid the evaluation of students, and are necessary due to the potential ethical threat of unmonitored technology use and artificial intelligence (H, 201-202).

Students who are recognized through this screening and gatekeeping process as in need of remediation must be provided a fair due process (H, 44) with transparency regarding unmet standards. Remediation is often viewed as punitive but can be communicated as a chance to learn and encourage personal and professional growth (H, 45, 163), especially when combined with a recommendation for personal counseling (H, 42). This reframing may lead to more successful

remediation as students may be more open to feedback and willing to reflect on counseling skills and professionalism (C, 159).

Assessment of Learning

Student evaluation occurs through many interactions, although assessment provides concrete data regarding student's progress and development (H, 148) as well as accountability to professional standards (H, 150). As with other parts of curriculum design, assessments should be aligned with course goals and have a level of transparency that promotes student success while monitoring alignment to professional ethics (H, 145). For an adequate assessment of student's learning in a course, there must be a variety of assignments spread across the semester, allowing a professor to provide feedback on learning (C, 113) as well as receive feedback on teaching and program effectiveness (H, 146).

Objective assessments should be designed in a way that aligns with the timeline of course topics (H, 151) and designed to evaluate student understanding of the material (H, 41).

Assessments should be provided through a variety of methods for diverse student strengths and needs; in addition to quizzes and tests, role-plays, reflective journals, and in-class graded discussions provide valuable insight regarding student knowledge, skills, and professional disposition (C, 114-120; H, 152). Assignment rubrics increase student awareness of assignment expectations and allow professors to follow a specific grading guide that can be applied to all students (H, 154). Students should also be encouraged to review rubric feedback to reflect on their knowledge and awareness of the material (C, 52) to facilitate a scaffolding process for future assignments and learning (C, 37). In advanced courses, students should be encouraged to self-evaluate by completing the rubric with the submitted assignment (H, 155).

Ethical and Culturally Relevant Strategies

Ethical standards for the counseling profession are clearly outlined in the American Counseling Association (ACA) *Code of Ethics*, and serve as a guideline for counseling educators. Students should be expected to align with these professional standards including plagiarism (H, 47), privacy and confidentiality (H, 48), willingness for personal reflection (H, 52), and appropriate relationship boundaries (H, 49). The professor has a responsibility to monitor program expectations and their alignment with ethical guidelines (H, 41). The ACA *Code of Ethics* requires engagement with social advocacy projects, which can be built into course material. With proper planning and preparation, professors can establish community connections and creatively apply projects to courses outside of practicum and internship (C, 107, 109). Students often benefit from service-learning activities to engage with their immediate community, learning to recognize needs and apply course material in assistance to others (C, 105).

Multicultural standards are outlined in the *Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies*, developed by the ACA, calling professionals to be aware of multiculturalism as well as their biases and privilege (H, 61, 64). Regular reflection is essential for maintaining ethical standards for teaching and counseling (H, 74), and professors must be willing to engage in this process just as students are required. As educators work to understand student experiences, there should also be a sense of support diverse needs and abilities of the students (H, 52). Educators can engage with critical pedagogy, promoting equality through reflection of “power, oppression, justice, and society” (H, 20). Professors must value the diversity of students (H, 21, 64) and promote a classroom culture that encourages student’s self-reflection and awareness of any bias influencing their perception of others (H, 61).

Mentoring in Counselor Education

Professional mentoring can be essential for the development of individuals who are newly entering a career and are expected within the CACREP standards for counseling programs (H, 213-214). Mentoring can focus on a variety of areas including knowledge of research, multicultural awareness, improved self-awareness and wellbeing, and better learning skills (C, 163). This process can also be used to develop future leaders (H, 215) and requires a delicate balance of boundaries and professional distance while collaborating on projects (H, 48).

Research has supported multiple strategies for effective mentoring, including networking recommendations for counselors-in-training, encourage connection and collaboration among students, provide advisement on challenging situations, promote development of new skills through self-reflection, and promote networking and visibility throughout professional circles (H, 216-224). Mentors must be prepared to support students with a variety of needs while maintaining their own sense of stability and professionalism and should be held to high standards due to their influence on emerging or struggling students (H, 225). Research has found the mentoring process to be most beneficial for women and students who are not European American, providing a sense of community and support (H, 215).

When students are identified as needing mentoring support, there must be consideration made for cultural diversity and the unique needs of the student (H, 224). Mentoring can be paired with remediation programs, to encourage connection with a successful person who can provide support as they develop professionally (C, 162). Mentors can encourage self-reflection and prepare students for upcoming challenges while validating the stressful experiences of being in a graduate program (C, 224-225).

Conclusion

As mentioned previously, these standards are essential for understanding the unique and stringent expectations of being a counselor educator. Professionals entering the education role must be prepared for regular self-reflection, engagement in research and scholarship, and remain up to date on professional and ethical standards to ensure students are also following these guidelines. Educators must provide clear expectations for students to find success in their work while also engaging in gatekeeping and remediation for students who are struggling to engage in professional behaviors. Educators are held to a high standard as they are responsible for the development of future counselors, and ultimately the quality of care received by the counselors graduating from their program.

References

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Association.

Criteria	Ratings				Points
Synthesis of material	90 to >82 pts Advanced Shows advanced levels of evidence of comprehending course content and applicability to practice as a counselor educator. Each CACREP standard is thoroughly described including roles and responsibilities of counselor educators.	82 to >75 pts Proficient Shows proficient evidence of comprehension of course content and applicability to practice as a counselor educator. Each CACREP standard is mostly described including roles and responsibilities of counselor educators.	75 to >0 pts Developing Shows developing and little evidence of comprehension of course content and applicability to practice as a counselor educator. Each CACREP standard is missing important information and/or is under-developed overall	0 pts Not Present	90 pts 85
Quantity & Timeliness	50 to >45 pts Advanced Succinct summaries remain within the 250-300 word count requirement, and points are cited in the truncated format provided. Grading Rubric-Self-Evaluation included.	45 to >41 pts Proficient Succinct summaries remain within the 250-300 word count requirement, and most points are cited in the truncated format provided. Grading Rubric-Self-Evaluation included.	41 to >0 pts Developing Summaries are either not within the 250-300 word count requirement, and/or points are cited in the truncated format provided. Additionally, summaries lack pertinent material. Grading Rubric-Self-Evaluation included	0 pts Not Present	50 pts 50
Mechanics & Composition	30 to >27 pts Advanced Paper is free of errors in spelling, grammar, or punctuation. Writing style displays exceptional composition with all of the following elements: coherent, cohesive, effective sentence/paragraph structures, logical progression, and transitions.	27 to >24 pts Proficient Few errors in spelling, grammar, or punctuation. Clear writing style displaying basic composition with most of the following elements: coherent, cohesive, effective sentence/paragraph structures, logical progression, and transitions.	24 to >0 pts Developing Pervasive errors in spelling, grammar, or punctuation. Writing includes pervasive errors in multiple categories: coherent, cohesive, effective sentence/paragraph structures, logical progression, and transitions.	0 pts Not Present	30 pts 28

Criteria	Ratings				Points
APA	30 to >27 pts Advanced Citations are appropriately implemented and are formatted per APA (truncated format allowed). All of the references are strong, legitimate academic sources and are correctly formatted per APA. Overall paper is formatted per APA: running head, page numbers, title page, spacing, indentions, margins, and headings.	27 to >24 pts Proficient Minor errors regarding appropriate implementation and/or APA formatting of citations. Most references are from legitimate academic sources; few formatting errors according to APA. Few errors in paper format per APA: running head, page numbers, title page, spacing, indentions, margins, and headings.	24 to >0 pts Developing Pervasive errors regarding appropriate implementation and/or APA formatting of citations. Multiple references are from questionable sources; multiple formatting errors according to APA. Multiple errors in paper format per APA: running head, page numbers, title page, spacing, indentions, margins, and headings.	0 pts Not Present	30 pts 30