CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN THE TRAINING OF COUNSELORS: A QUALITATIVE

ANALYSIS

by

ELEANOR HELM MCMAHAN

(Under the Direction of Georgia Calhoun)

ABSTRACT

This is an exploratory qualitative study that investigates the experiences of training professionals with more than 20 years of experience in graduate-level training of counselors. The study explores contemporary issues in the selection, instruction, supervision, and preparation of trainees for the field of counseling. This study also identifies the needs, strengths, and challenges of the current population of graduate students entering training programs. The findings of this study provide important foundational data for future research about counselor training.

INDEX WORDS: Counselor Education, Counselor Training, Therapy Training, Graduate
                 Admissions, CACREP, Counseling Psychology, Millennial Generation,
                 Grounded Theory

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2014

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August 2014

DEDICATION

This project is respectfully dedicated to all teachers. Facilitating the development of others by broadening their minds and hearts is perhaps the greatest of callings. I am ever mindful of the lessons of my teachers who first noticed and cultivated a vital spark in me: Mrs. Kauffman (K), Mrs. Seadyke (2nd), Mr. Nealon (4th), Mrs. Traviesa (7th), Mr. Pollick (9th), Mr. Foley (10th), Ms. Brewer (10th), Sean Mussleman (ballet), Dr. Breidal (undergrad), Dr. Ray (undergrad). My successes will forever be indebted to their investments in me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The idea for this project was initiated through long, stimulating discussions about therapy and how to train great clinicians over coffee with my excellent mentor and major professor, Dr. Georgia Calhoun. Her passion and enthusiasm for preparing students for the field of counseling was the inspiration and launching point for this culminating doctoral research project. As a beginning Master's student, her gifts and passion for training were foundational for connecting me with my own potential for the work of therapy and giving me a sense of home in the field. In essence, then, she has guided my own development for this work from beginning to "end." She has made an indelible and extraordinary impact on me as a graduate student, and also on my life and family. I am so very grateful for the gift of her in my life.

I have had the good fortune to have similarly benefited from the support and guidance from each member of my dissertation committee during the entirety of my graduate training. The importance of these extraordinary people on my growth and development cannot be overstated. I have tremendous gratitude for the unwavering kindness and generosity of Dr. Gayle Spears. Her superb professionalism and clinical wisdom continue to be models and guideposts on my journey. I am so grateful for Dr. Brian Glaser's perceptive brilliance and his gentle yet unrelenting insistence on broadening the scope and vision of his students. Dr. Alan Stewart's enthusiasm for knowledge and ideas, and his earnest, unassuming kindness and generosity have been unvarying sources of inspiration and support. I am so very, very grateful to each of these splendid people for their generous investment in me and contribution to my growth.

I will be forever indebted to my brilliant colleagues on the research team for this project, Amy Perkins and Dr. Jessica Parrillo. Their enthusiasm and indefatigable commitment to this research have been extraordinary. Our dynamic and vigorous collaboration scrutinizing this project's substantial data, and our intense and inspiring discussions about training have truly been a highlight of my week for the past year. I am tremendously grateful to Jessica and Amy for the many, many gifts they bring to my life, and I look forward to our future collaborations.

This project would not have been possible without the incredible support of my family and friends. I have especially appreciated the generous support and encouragement of Christine and Alex McMahan, my mother and father-in-law. My intellectually *gifted* and talented younger siblings: Joanna, Ged, and Daniel have ever challenged me to work hard, think on my feet, and really know my stuff. If I am successful in this field it is in no small part because of the formative gifts of my first teachers, Adrien and Edward Helm. I am so grateful for their model of intellectual curiosity and thoughtful engagement with the world. My mother's boundless compassion and resolute faith in humanity, and my father's vision, zeal, and unrelenting advocacy for change in the world are values that light my path and ultimately serve as the yardsticks by which I measure success.

I have the most profound gratitude to my life partner and true love, Gordon McMahan. His enthusiasm, sacrifice, and endless support have been the cornerstone of my endeavors. His honesty, humor, generosity, curiosity, and kindness always make me better, more compassionate, more authentic and congruent. He is a true partner, a safe harbor, and a loyal compass. Gordon is also a wonderful father and his excellence as a parent has been essential to my success as a graduate student. I am also so very grateful to have the good fortune to be Lyla's mommy. She is an extraordinary little person who teaches me something about love and life every day.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In 2009, an estimated 11 million adults suffered from a serious mental illness, and an estimated 39.8% (or 4.3 million) of those adults did not receive mental health treatment services (SAMHSA, 2010). The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2012) predicts that there will be a 19% increase in employment demand for mental health counselors between 2010 and 2020. In many U.S. states, the proportion of people facing a shortage of mental health professionals ranges from 19% to 31% (SAMHSA, 2010). The imperative for increasing the number of mental health providers is an issue that the counseling profession can help alleviate (ACA, 2011), and it is incumbent on counselor training programs to prepare trainees to meet this pressing demand for mental health clinicians.

Counselor training generally involves coursework in ethics, theory, and research, helping skills instruction, and "hands-on" counseling practicum and internship experiences under supervision (Ladany & Inman, 2008). The effectiveness of this combination of academic instruction and "live" experience in training counselors has yet to be the subject of empirical examination. Higher education is increasingly facing challenging economic constraints and pressures (Brooks & Heiland, 2007). Graduate training programs are under pressure to enroll more students, generate more income for their institution, and maintain high, competitive standards for their academic training programs (Urofsky, 2013). In this era of accountability, it is critical that graduate training has empirical support and validation for their training paradigms, and yet in the field of counselor training, little empirical attention has been brought to the current ways counselors are trained in graduate training programs (McLeod, 2003).

There is a wealth of information to be found in the professional experiences of training faculty who have been working for many years in the education and training of counselors. This knowledge can provide foundational data and theory about counselor training upon which to build future research.

Purpose of this Study

The purpose of this exploratory qualitative study is to contribute empirically to the underdeveloped body of literature by investigating the experiences of training professionals with more than 20 years of experience in counselor training to identify "best practices" in the selection, instruction, supervision and preparation of trainees for the field of counseling. This study also aims to identify the needs, strengths, and challenges of the current population of graduate students entering training programs. Grounded theory methodology (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) was selected to guide the data collection, coding, and recursive analysis processes, and produce emergent models for counselor training.

Research Questions

The following research questions were developed after a thorough review of the literature and an analysis of the current needs and trends of the field. This exploratory study investigates the following four questions:

Q1: What can we learn from training professionals with more than 20 years of experience training counselors about the current challenges and needs of counselor training programs?

Q2: How are counselor training programs currently selecting, instructing, supervising and preparing counselor trainees to become professional counselors? What works best? What is less successful?

Q3: What particular educational trends, challenges, and needs do training professionals see in the current populations of graduate students entering counselor training programs?

Q4: What are the benefits, challenges, and barriers to CACREP accreditation?

Researcher Assumptions and Delimitations

There are essential epistemological and theoretical assumptions that provide a "scaffold" for research (Crotty, 1998, p.16). The current research is predicated on a constructivist epistemological stance, which holds that the "truth" is an ephemeral creation of the human mind, and highly influenced by the culture and context of any given moment. The qualitative methods used in this study thus make no special claim to objectivity or generalizability. This stance further rejects that the subjective understanding people construct about their lives is inferior to "objective" positivist scientific claims. Indeed, the qualitative paradigm of this study, Grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), was selected because it allows researchers a phenomenological framework from which to analyze the subjective, lived experiences of participants. A qualitative research approach additionally requires a reflexive exploration of researchers in relation to their subject and how it shapes the lens through which interpretations of data are made (Preissle, 2008).

Particular researcher assumptions and bias related to specific issues of counselor training investigated by this study were analyzed at the initiation of the study and throughout the data analysis process. Grounded theory method is a rigorous, lengthy, inductive process where researchers become heavily immersed in the data (Corbin & Strauss). Through a constant, recursive process of analyzing that data, researchers develop an empirically grounded theory of patterns and phenomena within the complex and rich experiences, perspectives, and observations of the training professionals in this study.

Definition of Terms

> *Baby Boomer Generation:* A cohort of individuals born between 1945 and 1960 in the
>
> United States; a generation who represent the vast majority of higher education
>
> faculty members and counselor educators.
>
> *CACREP:* Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs,
>
> an organization that accredits counselor training programs and promotes unified
>
> standards for training.
>
> *Counselor Educator/ Training Professionals*: A faculty member or adjunct faculty
>
> member of an institution providing counseling coursework, supervision, or
>
> training to counseling students in masters' degree programs in counseling.
>
> *Counselor Training/ Counselor Education*: Training occurring at the graduate level in a
>
> masters' degree program in counseling, with focus in training on the provision of
>
> therapeutic services in community mental health settings.
>
> *Generation X:* A cohort of individuals born between 1960 and 1980 in the United States.
>
> *Millennial Generation*: A cohort of individuals born between 1981 and 2000 in the
>
> United States; a generation who represent the vast majority of students currently
>
> entering graduate programs.
>
> *NBCC*: National Board of Certified Counselors is an organization that provides national
>
> certifications for counselors according to unified standards.

Silent Generation: A cohort of individuals born between 1922 and 1945 in the United

States.

Trainee: Graduate students enrolled in a masters' degree program in counseling.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study will explore the experiences of training professionals with more than 20 years of experience in the training of counselors. The study will investigate the selection, instruction, supervision, and preparation of trainees for the field of counseling. This chapter will first present the history of training counselors in the United States. Following this historical perspective, more contemporary trends and issues of counselor training will be reviewed, along with a review of the relevant prior research. This chapter will also review the relevant literature regarding the prominent characteristics, learning needs, strengths, and challenges of the Millennial generation—the generation representing the population of graduate students entering training programs in the largest numbers.

History of Counselor Training & Program Accreditation

Frank Parsons founded the Vocational Bureau in 1908, laying the foundation for a long movement that would become the field of counseling and guidance (Gazda, Childers, & Brooks, 1987). A series of legislative efforts, starting with the Smith-Hughes Act in 1917, and following major armed conflicts, along with the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) in 1958, provided major funding support for vocational guidance and counseling services, and created great demand for trained counseling professionals (Gazda et al., 1987; Nystul, 2011). Initially, most counselors were employed in schools and because training requirements were established by state-level educational departments, the education and preparation of counselors varied greatly between states (Baruth & Robinson, 1987). However in the 1960s, states began more commonly to require a Masters' degree in counseling from regionally accredited universities in

order to be employed as school counselors. The field of counseling also began to shift away from a vocational and educational counseling emphasis to encompass broader mental health service delivery following the 1963 Community Mental Health Centers Act and the reduction of individuals treated in large state mental hospitals in favor of community settings (Baruth & Robinson, 1987; Belkin, 1988; Gazda, Childers, & Brooks, 1987; Gladding, 2000).

Early training, which was particularly dominated by psycholanalytic theory, involved almost exclusively the process of trainees themselves undergoing analysis (McLeod, 2003). As person-centered therapy began to become popular in the 1940s and 1950s, experiential skill practice and personal growth groups emerged as training activities for counselor trainees, along with the analysis of recordings and transcripts of client sessions, and opportunities to conduct co-therapy and supervised therapy with instructors (McLeod).

Uniform training and credentialing standards were developed gradually over time, resulting in training standards adopted by the then-named American Association for Counseling and Development (AACD) in 1971 (Gazda et al., 1987). The effort to standardize training and credentialing advanced greatly when the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) was established in 1981, followed by the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC) in 1982 (Belkin, 1988). CACREP was created by the AACD to accredit counselor training programs according to unified standards for training, while the NBCC was created to provided national certification of counselors according to unified standards (Baruth & Robinson, 1987). This standardization resulted in the creation of structured coursework and training activities designed for teaching specific counseling skills and competencies (McLeod, 2003).

Current CACREP standards require supervised practicum and internship with specific requirements governing faculty to student ratios, along with coursework in the areas of human growth and development; social and cultural foundations of counseling; theory and methods of counseling and consultation; group procedures; assessment and appraisal; career and lifestyle development; professional orientation and ethics; and research and evaluation (CACREP, 2009). These standards represent the broad consensus regarding the kinds of training activities and coursework central to counselor training (Dryden & Thorne, 2004).

Since the inception of these bodies, there has been a general trend towards accreditation of graduate training programs (Hershenson, Power, & Waldo, 1996). Legislative lobbying at the state and national levels on the part of CACREP has greatly shaped the ways that counselors are trained, licensed, and reimbursed. For example, only counselors graduating from CACREP-accredited programs are eligible to be hired for Department of Defense Tri-Care reimbursement for treatment services (Department of Defense, 2011). As of the end of 2009, every state in the U.S. had passed a law regulating the licensing of professional counselors (Reiner, Dobmeie, & Hernández, 2013).

Mainstream psychology and the American Psychological Association (APA) have largely distanced themselves from counseling (Gladding, 2000), and there has been reluctance on the part of APA to recognize terminal masters' counseling degree programs (Nugent, 2000). Some introductory counseling textbooks go as far as to characterize this distancing as psychology's "contempt for the counseling profession" (Nystul, 2011, p. 26). It is clear that the separate organization and credentialing of professional counselors has been in part fueled by an exclusion by psychology and psychological boards (Sutton, 2000).

The consequence of this division has been a tension related to the credentialing of counselors and psychologists, as characterized by Snow:

> Counselor licensing has been a "hot" issue for some time. There has been considerable dialogue in recent years alluding to the difficulties between psychologists and counselors regarding who should or should not be licensed (as psychologists) and who can do what to whom. (1981, p. 80)

Unfortunately, the subsequent thirty years since Snow's observation has seen an escalation in professional tensions and "battle for professional territory" (Snow, p.80) rather than a bridging of these issues. For example, CACREP has recently moved aggressively to lobby state legislatures to only license practitioners from CACREP-accredited programs (Mascari & Webber, 2013; Palmer, 2013).

Another current contentious issue related to the training of counselors involves CACREP accreditation which will require that counselor training be conducted by instructors with advanced degrees in CACREP-accredited Counselor Education programs rather than other areas, such as Counseling Psychology (Barrio Minton, Myers, & Morganfield, 2012; CACREP, 2009). This action is seen by some as an important effort to address the need to create a unified professional counseling identity, which has been widely perceived in the field as problematically fragmented (Reiner et al., 2013). A byproduct of this stipulation, however, is that graduates of other closely-related psychological fields, such as Counseling Psychology doctoral programs, will be excluded from being able to teach in CACREP-accredited masters' degree counselor training programs, thus greatly restricting Counseling Psychology's role in the training of counseling students, and has resulted in further tension and division among training professionals (Barrio Minton et al., 2012; Palmer, 2013). There has been published discussion about these

issues in *The Counseling Psychologist* (July, 2013) calling for action to seriously address these more recent efforts to solidify CACREP's unilateral influence over training and licensure, and what is considered a significant threat to the future viability of Counseling Psychology programs and profession as a whole, including the engagement of alternative accreditation standards to CACREP (Horne, 2013; Jackson & Scheel, 2013a; Jackson & Scheel, 2013b; Palmer, 2013). Beyond this more recent publication there has been little published discussion or research regarding these contemporary political issues in counselor training. Nonetheless, the complicated and often strained relationship between the fields of Counseling, Counseling Psychology and CACREP represents an important contextual reality for the present study. These issues also represent an important opportunity to contribute to an underdeveloped area for scholarly investigation.

Selection & Admission to Counselor Training Programs

Candidates for admission to counselor training programs are generally considered according to criteria including Graduate Record Examination (GRE), Miller Analogies Test (MAT), or other standardized testing, past academic performance, personal statements, and letters of recommendation (Belkin, 1988). A personal interview with a faculty member is also typically required because interpersonal skills are considered to be critical in the development of counseling competencies (Belkin). Though empirical evaluation of the selection of candidates for counselor training programs is generally sparse (McLeod, 2003), there have been a number of research studies that address the predictive validity of several preadmission variables commonly used in making admissions decisions for graduate study in psychology and related fields of study and which will now be reviewed in this chapter.

The GRE is the most-widely used measure in making graduate admissions decisions and yet there has been mixed empirical support for GRE scores actually predicting a prospective candidate's future success in graduate programs (Ingram, 1983; Sternberg & Williams, 1997). The GRE has been found to only very modestly correlate to grade point averages of graduate-level psychology students (Newman, 1968; Sternberg & Williams, 1997; Smaby et al., 2005), and to comprehensive examination performance (Callendar, 2005; Daehnert & Carter, 1987; Kirnan & Geisinger, 1981; Littlepage, Bragg, & Rust, 1978; Schmidt, Homeyer, & Walker, 2009; Smaby et al., 2005), but not to competencies such as analytical thinking skills, creativity, instructional capacity, and research skills (Sternberg & Williams, 1997), nor to faculty ratings of counseling student performance (Callendar, 2005; Morrow, 1993) or personal characteristics important to counseling (Smaby et al., 2005).

Similarly, research assessing the predictive value of past academic performance, or grade point average (GPA) in psychology graduate training, has produced mixed results. Undergraduate GPA has been correlated to performance on comprehensive examinations (Daehnert & Carter, 1987; Dunlap, Henley, & Fraser, 1998; Omizo & Michael, 1979; Schmidt et al., 2009), but not to overall graduate GPA, or faculty-rated performance (Hackman, Wiggins & Bass, 1970; Littlepage et al., 1978). Other research has produced contrary findings, with researchers determining statistically significant correlations between undergraduate GPA and overall graduate GPA (Federici & Schuerger, 1974; Omizio & Michael, 1979), and a lack of predictive validity for undergraduate GPA on comprehensive examination scores (Kirnan & Geisinger, 1981). Additionally, Smaby and colleagues (2005) found that undergraduate GPA was correlated with the acquisition of particular counseling skills.

The predictive validity of personal statements and letters of recommendation in admission processes has been the subject of little empirical treatment, and the research that has been conducted has produced conflicting results. The quality and style of writing of personal statements has been found to predict faculty ratings of masters-level counseling students (Callendar, 2005), but other research suggests that there is no correlation between personal statements and academic and field experience scores in a masters-level social work graduate program (GlenMaye & Oakes, 2002), nor to outcome indicators in a doctoral-level family therapy program (Piercy et. al., 1995). Federici and Schuerger (1974) found that letters of recommendation did not correlate with graduate GPA nor to ratings of interpersonal skill competencies, whereas other researchers have found that letters of recommendation were in fact predictive of graduate GPA, comprehensive exams, and faculty and peer ratings (Daehnert & Carter, 1987).

Personal Interviews are widely perceived by training directors as the most effective screening measure used in admissions for counselor training programs (Leveritt-Main, 2004; Walfish & Moreira, 2005). Interviewing candidates is time-consuming and challenging because the interpersonal qualities and characteristics important for counselors which are generally assessed as part of personal interviews are less apparent and can be difficult to evaluate (Leveritt-Main). There is little research on personal interviews for selection to graduate training programs in psychological and counseling fields, and the limited research that has been conducted does not support the predictive validity of the personal interview in anticipating student outcomes (Hosford, Johnson, & Atkinson, 1984; Rickard & Clements, 1986). Additionally there are several studies that demonstrate interviews have little predictive validity for anticipating academic success among medical school students (Morris, 1999; Salvatori,

2001). Other research has found that interpersonal and communication skills important for medical students' clinical work were correlated only modestly with personal interview performance (Campion, Palmer, & Campion, 1997; Evans, Stanley, Coman, & Burrows, 1989; Goho and Backman, 2006; Salvatori, 2001), and the overall reliability and validity of interviews in the screening for desirable personal characteristics of medical students has been widely critiqued (Albanese, Snow, Skochelak, Huggett, & Farrell, 2004; Eva, Reiter, Rosenfeld, & Norman, 2004).

Taken together, the literature reviewed here suggests that selecting candidates for admission to counselor training programs is disadvantaged by an absence of empirically-supported consensus regarding the predictive validity of the components widely used for making admissions decisions. A likely significant complicating factor in empirical efforts regarding the complicated issue of admissions criteria, is the difficulty in determining outcome measures as indicators of successful training (McLeod, 2003). How does one assess that a counselor trainee is any "good" at counseling the end of the program? This is a complex question that has received a great deal of attention in terms of theory and research in the field of counseling (Belkin, 1980), and the ongoing predicament of judging counselor effectiveness has been adroitly summarized by Wheeler:

> An effective counsellor is one who works with clients to produce a positive
> outcome, a positive change in the client's perception or experience of themselves,
> or a reduction in adverse symptoms. Ultimately it is only the effect on clients in
> the working relationship that can determine the competence of the practitioner,
> but it is the responsibility of training organizations and counselor trainers to be
> the gatekeepers of the profession. Rarely is feedback from clients, who are seen

by counsellors on placement as part of their training used in the overall

assessment of counsellor competence. (2000, pp. 65-66)

Nonetheless, numerous other sources of data are used for making determinations about counselor

competency including peer, supervisor, and self-reflective rating forms and questionnaires,

comprehensive examinations, in-vivo, audio and videotaped client sessions, computer

simulations, and learning journals (McLeod, 2003). The validity and reliability of these

techniques, however, is unknown (Scofield & Yoxheimer, 1983) or questionable (Chevron &

Rounsaville, 1983). Research has indicated that the most common form of evaluation of trainees

is qualitative (Norcross, Stevenson, & Nash, 1986). Additionally, there is evidence personality

characteristics are used most frequently by trainers to differentiate between "good" and "bad"

counseling trainees (Wheeler, 2000).

Personality characteristics and interpersonal qualities of effective counseling have

received extensive empirical treatment over the years (Belkin, 1988), and yet there has been little

resolution of what these characteristics are definitively and how they impact therapeutic change.

Pioneering empirical investigation of important qualities of the counseling relationship

demonstrated that accurate, empathetic understanding and genuineness were critical components

for successful therapy (Rogers, 1957). Empathetic capacity, non-possessive warmth,

unconditional positive regard, and the ability to be integrated, mature, genuine, authentic, and

congruent in relationship with a client were found to be universally important to work with

clients across theoretical stances (Traux & Carkhuff, 1967). Emotional awareness, sensitivity,

introspection, and tolerance of others have also been demonstrated to be qualities of effective

counselors (Tinsley & Tinsley, 1977). Other research has found a correlation between the

perceived expertness, attractiveness, and trustworthiness of counselors and effective therapy

(LaCrosse, 1980). Counselor qualities of warmth, positive regard, cultivating hope, non-judgment, and acceptance have also been found to be common qualities facilitating therapeutic change (Grencavage & Norcross, 1990).

Despite strong consensus that personal qualities of counselors dramatically impact counseling outcomes (Baldwin, Wampold, & Imel, 2007; Wampold, 2001; Wampold & Brown, 2005; Zuroff, Kelly, Leybman, Blatt, & Wampold, 2010), there has been very limited research regarding counseling trainee personal qualities and characteristics as predictors of successful counseling graduate training outcomes. Performance on scales measuring empathy and affective sensitivity have found some modest value in using these as tools for selecting trainees (Jackson, 1986; Jones, 1974), and yet there has been inadequate empirical investigation of the use and value of personality and interpersonal skill assessments in admission processes.

Counselor Training Instruction & Supervision

Along with the difficulty of measuring counselor efficacy, another complex question that has proven to be a challenge for the field is whether and to what degree counselor training impacts counselor effectiveness. There has been some empirical evidence that the effectiveness of counseling or therapeutic outcome is independent or only very modestly correlated with a counselor's level of training (Stein & Lambert, 1995; Truax & Lister, 1970), whereas other researchers have found that training produces better outcomes with clients (Burns & Nolen-Hoeksema, 1992; Fals-Stewart & Birchler, 2002). Researchers have concluded that counselor attractiveness and perceived expertness increase with training (Corrigan, Dell, Lewis, & Schmidt, 1980; Heppner & Claiborn, 1989; Heppner & Dixon, 1981), and also that training does impact a counselors' values, skills, and behavior (Thompson, 1986), and multicultural

knowledge (Cates, Schoefle, Samby, Maddux, & LeBeuf, 2007). In their comprehensive review of the empirical literature in this area, Roth & Fonagy conclude:

> Overall, evidence for the impact of training is suggestive rather than substantive, yet we need such evidence in order to bypass what has hitherto been a rather unproductive debate regarding the benefits of professional training or experience. Reframing this debate, a more rigorous and relevant question would be to determine whether a therapist has acquired relevant and specific competencies in the course of his/ her training or experience, and whether this process of acquisition is linked to better therapeutic outcomes. An even more challenging question is whether training enhances therapists' capacity to generalize their learning—for example to apply their knowledge to novel clinical situation or to acquire novel therapeutic skills at a faster rate. Questions about the impact of training often assume it is procedural knowledge rather than capacity for learning that is relevant, and at present, researchers inappropriately equate skills acquisition with the mantle of professional accreditation. (2005, p. 456)

Clearly this is an important open subject for counselor training, and underscores a related issue regarding the qualities of trainees that are prerequisite for becoming a counselor versus ones that are impacted by training (Belkin, 1988). Researchers have demonstrated that there are ten stable personality characteristics of counselor trainees that are considered by experts to be the most important and least teachable. In ranked order of importance these are: acceptance, emotional stability, open-mindedness, empathy, genuineness, flexibility, interest in people, confidence, sensitivity, and fairness (Pope & Klein, 1999). Other researchers have described this collection of qualities which underlies counseling and the counseling relationship as therapeutic *presence*

(Geller & Greenberg, 2002). There is some evidence that training can impact aspects of therapeutic presence (McCollum & Gehart, 2010) and yet there has been very limited empirical investigation of *presence*, and clarification of important questions such as: Is one born with presence? Can it be cultivated through training? Is presence itself healing? What role does presence play in the therapeutic relationship? (Tannon & Daniels, 2010).

Despite the open questions about the impact of training on counselor effectiveness, there is a broad consensus about what should be included in training programs. These components consist of theoretical knowledge, counseling skills, professional issues and ethics, research awareness, knowledge of self, and supervised practice (McLeod, 2003).

Theoretical frameworks ground the work of counselors in terms of their philosophies about the human condition, change, and the counseling process (Levitt & Bray, 2010). Instruction in theory is widely considered an important aspect of training, however there is more ambiguity concerning substantial training in one theoretical approach (Gladding, 1988) versus broader exposure to many theoretical orientations, including integrative models and transtheoretical stances (Prochaska & Norcross, 2010). The nature and values of the training institution usually determine the approach used regarding theoretical instruction (McLeod, 2003). Despite the vast number of approaches to therapy, training programs generally focus on the most widely-accepted theories, particularly because research has consistently demonstrated that there is no significant difference in effectiveness among theoretical approaches to therapy (Frank & Frank, 1992; Wampold et al., 1997). There is also evidence that counselor trainees do not actually develop a personal theoretical framework for their counseling work until after their training concludes (Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1992).

Training in counseling skills is considered to be an important foundational component of counselor training, although there are deficits in adequate research regarding helping skills and counseling skills training (Ladany & Inman, 2008). There are several structured models of helping skills instruction including four of the more widely used approaches: Human Relations Training or Integrated Didactic Experiential Training (Carkhuff, 1971); Microcounseling Skills Training (Ivey, 1971); Interpersonal Process Recall (Kagan, 1984); and Hill's Helping Skills Model (Hill, 2004; Hill & O'Brien, 1999). Meta-analytic research conducted on these models has yielded support for their effectiveness in increasing skill development among graduate students (Baker & Daniels, 1989; Baker, Daniels & Greeley, 1990). There is also evidence that modeling, instruction, and feedback are important components of training (Hill & Lent, 2006). Ladany and Inman (2008) in their review of the research on helping skills instructional models critically assess both the small number of investigations conducted in this area and deficiencies in the methodologies of these existing studies which they suggest undermine conclusions that can be made about these models as instructional processes and their impacts for training. They additionally call for investigation of moderating variables such as trainer and trainee characteristics and the assessment of the transferability of helping skills to other clinical situations beyond the controlled training environment. Further, Ladany and Inman (2008) propose that future research should utilize qualitative methodologies to better understand the complexity of helping skills training.

Counseling training emphasizes the development of a professional identity, and a component of working in the field should involve continual self-assessment of growth edges and ongoing professional development (Collison, 2000). There has been increasing attention given to ethics and legal issues in the field of counseling (Nystul, 2011), which has been in part a

response to rises in litigation and malpractices claims (Corey, Corey, & Callanan, 2007). However, there has been little empirical effort to examining ethics instruction methodology in counselor training (Welfel, 1992). In one survey conducted by Urofsky and Sowa (2004) of CACREP-accredited programs across the country, most programs (93%) required a course in professional ethics, and most of the instruction involved analysis of case studies (85%), along with ethical decision making-models (85%). How ethics training impacts trainee clinical work and ethical decision-making has also been subject to little empirical investigation (Urofsky & Sowa, 2004), although there is some evidence that graduates from CACREP-accredited programs are sanctioned for ethical misconduct significantly less frequently than graduates from non-CACREP-accredited schools (Even & Robinson, 2013). Other research has suggested that ethics coursework results in increased acquisition of knowledge of ethics and legal issues, but did not result in increases in social-cognitive maturity or ethical decision-making skills (Lambie, Hagedorn, & Ieva, 2010).

There is an effort in training programs to promote an understanding, valuing and application of research, however, this emphasis has not generally resulted in increasing the interest, respect, and appreciation for the utility of research (McLeod, 2003) nor has it increased the research self-efficacy of trainees, even trainees entering doctoral programs in Counselor Education (Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011). Some scholars have noted that the professional activities of counselors have recently become more singularly-focused, and opportunities for the integration of roles between research, training, and practice is more limited, resulting in practice environments less conducive to the integration of research and practice (McLeod). The so-called research-practitioner gap is an ongoing issue for the field, and despite the current emphasis on

evidenced-based practice, there has been very limited empirical attention given to the issue of competencies involving research in counselor training programs.

Knowledge of self is widely considered a cornerstone of effective counseling practice (Hansen, 2009; CACREP, 2009), and yet there is little consensus regarding the how development of self-awareness among trainees should occur (Pieterse, Lee, Ritmeester, & Collins, 2013). Scholars have noted a lack of investigation of the construct of self-awareness in the literature given its relevance to the field (Hansen, 2009; Richards, Campenni, & Muse-Burke, 2010), and the need to clarify the definitions of what self-awareness means (Williams, 2008). There is evidence that self-awareness of counselor trainees has more weight in the counseling process than counseling skills and techniques, and is critical to knowing when to use skills appropriately (Torres-Rivera et al., 2002), and that increased self-awareness is correlated with an increase in clients' perception of therapist helpfulness (Williams & Fauth, 2005). Self-awareness has also been emphasized in competency to treat culturally diverse clients (Pederson, 1997; Sue & Sue, 2003). Personal therapy, participation in personal growth groups, and self-reflective writing exercises such as journaling and learning diaries are commonly used to facilitate personal exploration in counselor training programs (McLeod, 2003).

Supervised practice with actual clients is widely considered an essential component of training (McLeod, 2003). Historically, however, there has been limited theoretical and empirical attention given to supervision (Ladany & Inman, 2008), and although there has been more recent interest in supervision, there has not been a corresponding increase in published research in this area (Bernard & Goodyear, 2013). Bordin (1983) proposed eight objectives for supervision including supporting the development of: particular counseling skills, conceptualization skills, understanding of the therapeutic process, knowledge of self and impact on therapeutic process,

theory, research, and professional ethics. There are a number of theoretical models of supervision, which can be classified categorically as Psychotherapy-Based Models of supervision; Person-Centered supervision; Developmental Approaches to supervision; and Social Role Models (Bernard & Goodyear). There is little in the literature to inform what models of supervision are being most widely employed in supervising the practice of trainees in counselor training programs. In part, this is likely due the limited formal preparation of supervisors prior to their ascension to the role (Bernard & Goodyear, 2013). Supervision in counselor training programs occurs either individually or in groups, with audiotaped, videotaped, live observation, or counselor self-report as the primary mode of reviewing therapeutic content (McLeod, 2003). There is startlingly little research on how supervision actually impacts trainees' therapeutic outcomes with their clients (Ellis & Ladany, 1997).

Research has widely supported the primacy of the supervisory interpersonal relationship in governing the supervision process (Ladany, Friedlander, & Nelson, 2005; Ramos-Sanchez et al., 2002; Ronnestad & Skovholt, 1993; Worthen & McNeill, 1996). There are several complex dynamics that may arise in the context of the supervisory relationship and impact the process of supervision. Key among these are transference and countertransference, parallel process, supervisee resistance, supervisee anxiety and impression management, and trainee shame (Bernard & Goodyear, 2013).

It is likely that supervision and training is particularly impacted in some way by the particular needs of the generation of students it serves (Calhoun, Dagley, & McMahan, 2012). Yet to date, there has been no empirical attention given to how these supervision dynamics may be effected or exacerbated by the current generation of students, the Millennial generation who are entering graduate training programs in large numbers. One aim of the study proposed in this

prospectus will attempt to contribute to this underdeveloped research. This chapter will therefore conclude with a review of the relevant empirical treatment of issues related to the Millennial generation.

Millennial Generation of Learners

Every significant cultural generation possesses unique worldviews, perspectives of self, and values shaped by the cultural zeitgeist of its coming of age (Mannheim, 1952). The "Millennial" generation (Howe & Strauss, 2000), also known as "Generation Y" and "Generation Me," a cohort born between 1981-2000, is the largest cohort population since the Baby-Boomers (born between 1945-1960), and is entering the workforce and graduate training programs in large numbers (U.S. Department of Labor, 2012). The Millennial generation has presented unique challenges to workplace managers (Alsop, 2008; Espinoza, Ukleja, & Rusch, 2010; Schultz & Schwepker, 2012; Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008; Twenge & Campbell, 2008) and educators (Chambers, 2010; Olsen, 2009; Glockler, 2008; Venne & Colemen, 2010). How characteristics of Millennial learners impact their training as counselors, and how training should adjust to meet Millennial learning styles and needs, is an open and important issue, and one that has been unexamined by counselor training.

Scholars across several disciplines have documented several fundamental values and characteristics that distinguish the Millennial generation from other generational cohorts:

Self-Esteem, Narcissism and Confidence: There is considerable empirical research that demonstrates significantly higher levels of self-esteem (Twenge & Campbell, 2001; Twenge & Nolen-Hoeksema, 2002; Twenge, 2000), narcissism (Twenge & Campbell, 2001; Twenge, Konrath, Foster, Campbell, & Bushman, 2008; Twenge & Campbell, 2008) and self-confidence (Greenfield, 1998; Twenge, 2009) among the Millennial generations as compared to prior

generational cohorts. Millennials are also popularly referred to as "trophy kids" whose

accomplishments tend to be the source of great pride for doting parents, and on whom parents

lavished praise and constant affirmation, which may have inflated their sense of confidence, self-

esteem and narcissism (Alsop, 2008). Other scholars have suggested that grade inflation has

contributed to heightened confidence about ability (Greenfield, 1998). The members of this

generation are also referred to as "trophy kids" because in an effort to support self-esteem, adults

tended to give children in this cohort trophies simply for showing up—everyone is a winner—

and not necessarily for actual achievement (Alsop, 2008).

Risk Aversion and Defensiveness: Millennials have tended to grow up in a child-centered

environment, and received engaged, protective parenting (Howe & Strauss, 2007). According to

a Pew study (2007), the vast majority of Millennials report speaking with their parents with great

frequency on a regular basis. Because of the sheltering they received from parents (Howe &

Strauss, 2000), Millennials are often risk-adverse, and have difficulty accepting criticism

(Twenge, 2006). One of the reasons that Millennials tend to like working collaboratively in

groups, for example, is because it displaces personal risk (Alsop, 2008). Millennials expect a

great deal of structure and support in their learning environments and dislike ambiguity (Howe,

2005; Wilson, 2004). Millennials also tend to be more conventional than previous generations in

that they would rather seek approval from authority figures and follow clearly articulated rules

than to be independent (Howe & Strauss, 2007).

Entitlement and Special-ness: Researchers and educators have observed that the

Millennial cohort of students tends to exhibit entitlement, or an "expectation of special privileges

over others and special exemptions from normal social demands" (Raskin & Terry, 1988, p.890).

Millennials tend to have high expectations for their accomplishment, compensation, recognition,

and comfort, and they demonstrate impatience with standard processes for achieving these ends (Alsop, 2008). They also tend to equate effort with achievement (Howe & Strauss, 2000). Millennials believe that they are special and have always been told they can do anything (Howe & Strauss, 2000; Keisa et al., 2007; Olson, 2009). There is a great deal of empirical research that indicates that Millennials don't just want, but <u>expect</u> frequent praise and affirmation from supervisors much more than has been observed in previous generations (Gursoy et al., 2008; Hill, 2002; Martin, 2005).

Entitlement has been observed among Millennials particularly in academic settings (Greenberger, Lessard, Chen, & Farruggia, 2008; Singleton-Jackson, Jackson, & Reinhardt, 2010). As Singleton-Jackson and colleagues note, the trends towards "corporatization of higher education" may complicate and reinforce entitled attitudes among students:

> As institutions increase sales and marketing, students' perceptions of themselves
> as customers increase. While economic realities may force colleges and
> universities to compete for students, this complicates students' roles: are they
> scholars or customers? When prospective students are treated as customers this
> brings about a level of entitlement that then follows the students into the
> classroom. Students may feel confused. Consumers are justified in feeling a
> certain level of entitlement with regard to purchased goods and services.
> However, once a student has purchased higher education in the form of tuition
> and books, a significant portion of the responsibility for learning and success lies
> with the buyer instead of the seller (2011, p. 231).

As learners (or consumers,) Millennials have consistently demonstrated that they want to know the specific relevance and utility of the instructional content, and are resistant to any learning that

does not have obvious use outside the classroom (Elam, Stratton, & Gibson, 2007; McGlynn, 2005; Sayers, 2007).

Extrinsic Orientation: Research indicates that Millennials tend to have extrinsic life goals (Twenge & Campbell, 2008; Twenge, Campbell & Freeman, 2012), and tend to be governed by values that place materialism and fame over intrinsic values (Gordinier, 2009; Smith, Christoffersen, Davidson, & Herzog, 2011). Wealth has been found to be a chief aspiration, with 64% of Millennials reporting that becoming rich is the most important goal in life for their generation, and another 17% reporting it is the second most important goal for their generation (Pew, 2007). In the same study, 51% of Millennials reported that becoming famous was a primary or secondary life goal. In contrast, just 12% reported that helping others in need, and only 7% reported that becoming a leader in their community were the top goals for their generation (Pew, 2007). Researchers have also found that the Millennial generation tends to be less empathetic and caring towards others (Konrath, O'Brien, & Hsing, 2011; Malahy, Rubinlicht, & Kaiser, 2009), and also to exhibit less community commitment and to demonstrate less civic engagement than past generations (Twenge, Campbell & Freeman, 2012).

Summary

It would appear that there are several fundamental ways that typical characteristics of Millennial generation students might present challenges for counselor training (Calhoun et al., 2012). This specific question has not yet been investigated by researchers, however. This study investigates training professionals' perspectives on the ways in which Millennial generation counseling students' characteristics and values shape their training needs and impact counselor training.

Additionally, the present review of literature indicates there is much that is unknown, puzzling, or only modestly researched about critical aspects of counselor training, including admission processes and criteria, core components of training, and impacts of accreditation issues on training. Investigation of these subjects will assist training professionals by revealing important information about the present needs and challenges of counselor training and implications for best-practices for addressing these significant issues.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Participants

The selected participant population for this study was training professionals who self-identify as having at least 20 years of experience in training counselors. Training professionals (N=8) were recruited to participate in the study utilizing purposive sampling (Patton, 1990), and as a cohort represent a combined total of 262 years of experience in the education and training of counselors (M=32.75 years per participant). Four of the participants were male and four were female, and the average self-reported age of participants was 63.4 years, with participants representing both the Silent (N=2) and Baby Boomer (N=6) generations. All participants described their race or ethnicity as White or Caucasian. Known or identified training professionals were contacted directly and invited to participate in the study via email with a message describing the research and an invitation to participate (Appendix A).

Most participants in this study are well-respected leaders in fields of Counseling Psychology, Counselor Education, and Counseling. All participants' professional careers have involved contributions of leadership in prominent positions in professional associations, governance and scholarship. With regard to their own graduate training, participants held doctoral degrees in Counseling Psychology (N=4) and in Counselor Education (N=4). Upon agreement to participate, the informed consent document (Appendix B) along with the demographic questionnaire (Appendix C) was sent to participants electronically. Interviews were scheduled to occur via telephone or face-to-face where feasible. At the start of the interview, the researcher completed informed consent and solicited questions about the consent process and

research study. All participants selected pseudonyms, which were subsequently used during the analysis procedures, and in descriptions of the data in this dissertation.

Measures

Demographic Questionnaire. A demographic questionnaire was administered or reviewed at the beginning of the experimental procedure to obtain information on participant gender, age (and corresponding generational cohort,) self-identified race and ethnicity, number of years of experience as a training professional, and education degrees obtained.

Semi-Structured Qualitative Interview. All participants completed one semi-structured interview (Appendix D). Interviews lasted 60-120 minutes. Interview questions and protocols were developed based on a review of literature, and analysis of current trends and issues in counselor training. Research questions and interview protocols were piloted in an initial interview, with feedback from the pilot shaping subsequent research questions and interviews. Questions were created to be open and flexible, allowing participants to express their individual experiences of counselor training. Spontaneous probes and follow-up questions were used during the interviews to gather additional information. At the end of the interview, participants were given the opportunity to contribute anything else they deemed relevant to the interview and experimental research process that had not been captured by the interview questions.

Qualitative Paradigm

Grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) was selected as the qualitative methodology for this study because it allows researchers a phenomenological framework from which to analyze the complex subjective experiences of participants. This method is a rigorous, lengthy, inductive process where researchers become heavily immersed in the data (Corbin & Strauss). Through a constant, recursive process of analyzing that data, researchers develop an empirically

grounded theory of patterns and phenomena within complex experiences, perspectives, and observations (Corbin & Strauss).

Research Team

The research team was comprised of three females who each had completed training in CACREP-accredited Master-degree counseling programs. One of the researchers had additionally completed a PhD in Counseling Psychology and is a licensed psychologist. Two of the researchers were completing their PhD degrees in Counseling Psychology. Two of the researchers represented Generation X, while one researcher was a member of the Millennial generation.

Researchers are connected to their inquiry subjects. A qualitative research approach requires a reflexive exploration of researchers in relation to their subject and how it shapes the lens through which interpretations of data are made (Preissle, 2008). The team of researchers met to discuss their assumptions and potential biases at the initiation of the analysis of the data (Creswell, 2006), and continued this reflexive dialogue during their weekly or bi-weekly meetings throughout the analysis process, which lasted for more than eight months. A number of research biases were discussed at the outset of data analysis and continued to be negotiated throughout the analysis process.

Fundamentally, members of the research team expressed a profound reverence for the process of therapy, along with a sense of "being called" to the field. Members of the team expressed their sense of urgency and the importance of the gate-keeping role of training, and protectiveness towards the unique sanctity of a healing therapeutic alliance. The team wrestled intensely in trying to determine their own feelings about the nature of therapy and whether therapists are "born" or can be "created." One researcher expressed a particularly strong opinion

that effective therapists must possess innate gifts, while the other two researchers expressed more ambivalence about requisite natural gifts and how they can be shaped by training.

There was less ambivalence about team member's expressed experiences and implicit attitudes towards Millennial generation counseling students and supervisees. Each member of the team had taught and supervised the clinical work of members of the Millennial generation, and expressed concerns about this cohort's apparent entitlement, perfectionism and fear of taking risks; their seeming superficiality and lack of emotional intimacy or openness in their relationships; and their need for proscriptive approaches to therapy leading to a tendency to "play the role" of therapist, rather than work to connect meaningfully with clients' experience. As the chief aim of counselor training is to train therapists, these observations by the researchers about Millennial students reveals several important assumptions including the team's belief in the intimate, relational nature of therapy requiring emotional vulnerability, authenticity and use of self on the part of a therapist. It also reveals the team's inherent bias about the "messiness" of therapy as a relational dynamic rather than a proscriptive process. These stances about therapy certainly shaped the way data was analyzed, particularly as it relates to a number of training issues explored in the study.

At the initiation of the project, team members reflected on their a lack of knowledge and some confusion about all the "fuss" regarding CACREP and how reactive individuals appear to be about the topic. Possibly as a parallel process to the subject of the data, the team was perhaps most personally reactive to data having to do with statements made about the future employment prospects, particularly in higher education positions, by Counseling Psychology graduates. Team members admitted that they wanted to feel that own their Counseling Psychology doctoral degrees had particular value.

Throughout the process of analysis, the team actively negotiated and openly discussed their personal reactions as they arose in reaction to statements made by participants. The researchers actively discussed their sense of the elitism that exists among individuals more aligned in the Counseling Psychology "camp" rather than the Counseling or Counseling Education "camps." Members of the team tended to have stronger negative reactions to statements made by members in Counseling Education camp about the future prospects for Counseling Psychology graduates. These responses were openly discussed and evaluated in terms of bias among team members. All members of this research team expressed their sense of being aligned more strongly with Counseling Psychology than Counseling or Counseling Education.

Data Analysis Procedures

All interviews were audio-taped with the participants' permission and then transcribed verbatim by researchers.

Open Coding. Researchers began to analyze data through an unrestricted, independent open coding process (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In this stage of the data analysis, researchers individually analyze each line of transcript meticulously, capturing as many codes and themes as possible that are relevant to the research question. Codes represent discrete ideas, concepts, or themes. Researchers used constant comparison throughout the data analysis process in order to come to a consensus about main themes and categories that emerge, and to resolve any discrepancies about coding (Corbin & Strauss). Researchers coded one transcript at a time and then met to compare their coding and come to an agreement about what they found in the data. Codebooks for each participant transcript were developed to provide structure and organization to emergent themes.

Axial Coding. As core themes emerged, researchers began a process of "axial coding" to create subcategories and determine the interrelationship of themes (Corbin & Strauss). In this phase of analysis, the process began to shift from looking at concrete, meaningful units of data towards focusing on the abstract relationships between concepts (Corbin & Strauss). Higher-level categories were created to begin to provide structure to the emerging theoretical model of the phenomena being analyzed. Again, analysis of data engaged in a deliberate recursive process (Corbin & Strauss). Linkages and relationships between concepts that were developed by researchers were constantly compared to both incoming codes and previous analysis so that constant, circular layers of consensual analysis informed the emerging theoretical frameworks.

Selective Coding. Finally, researchers used selective coding to refine the emergent theoretical models and to develop an overarching category that encompasses the phenomena being analyzed, including all other sub-categories. Researchers developed several abstract theoretical frameworks that explain the phenomena being investigated and formalize the relationships between categories and concepts (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Researchers looked for common and divergent ideas across all transcripts. Each transcript was analyzed until saturation was achieved and no new concepts were identified (Corbin & Strauss).

Trustworthiness of Research Process

Researchers collected and analyzed data in this study using an intentional method to preserve the credibility and verifiability of the data. The research team engaged in a process of constant comparison of data coding and analysis, and always achieved a consensus about emergent themes. The research team met weekly or biweekly and was immersed in the data and data analysis process for a prolonged period—more than eight months of time. Researchers looked for both common and divergent concepts across transcripts at every stage of data

analysis. Reflexive journaling by researchers, member-checking, and peer debriefing were used as methods of ensuring trustworthiness of data. A faculty member served as an external auditor throughout the research process. The external auditor reviewed data, findings, and process to help preserve the trustworthiness of this study's method and findings.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of this exploratory qualitative study is to contribute empirically to the underdeveloped body of literature by investigating the experiences of training professionals with more than 20 years of experience in training counselors to identify "best practices" in the selection, instruction, supervision, and preparation of trainees for the field of counseling, and identify the needs, strengths, and challenges of the current population of graduate students entering training programs. This chapter will present the findings of the data collected and analyzed by the research team for each of the four research questions.

Q1: What can we learn from training professionals with more than 20 years of experience training counselors about the current challenges and needs of counselor training programs?

Participants shared their experiences of training counselors in graduate programs for the past twenty years or more, and reflected on dynamics that exert great influence on the current challenges and needs of counselor training. The core themes of these experiences is captured in Figure 1 (p. 35), which represents how counselor training is significantly impacted and shaped by three core influences: Higher Education; External Forces; and Ideology. The respective strengths of the influences, as described by participants, is represented by the relative size of the arrows, with Higher Education exerting the most influence and Ideology the least influence.

Despite apparent distinctions in the field, all the participants in this study spoke interchangeably about training master's-level clinicians and doctoral-level Counseling Psychology or Counselor Education clinicians. Participants did not clearly differentiate about aspects of selection, supervision, or instruction along these lines as they discussed relevant

issues. It often was not clear whether participants were discussing aspects of training for doctoral-level students or masters-level students, despite the researcher's stated focus of the study on masters-level training. Participants also openly expressed their lack of differentiation regarding the actual training itself among Counseling, Counseling Psychology, and Counselor Education students. The circle of color at the center of the arrows in Figure 1, illustrates the fluidity and enmeshment of these ostensibly distinct training "camps" and how these were discussed interchangeably by participants in this study.
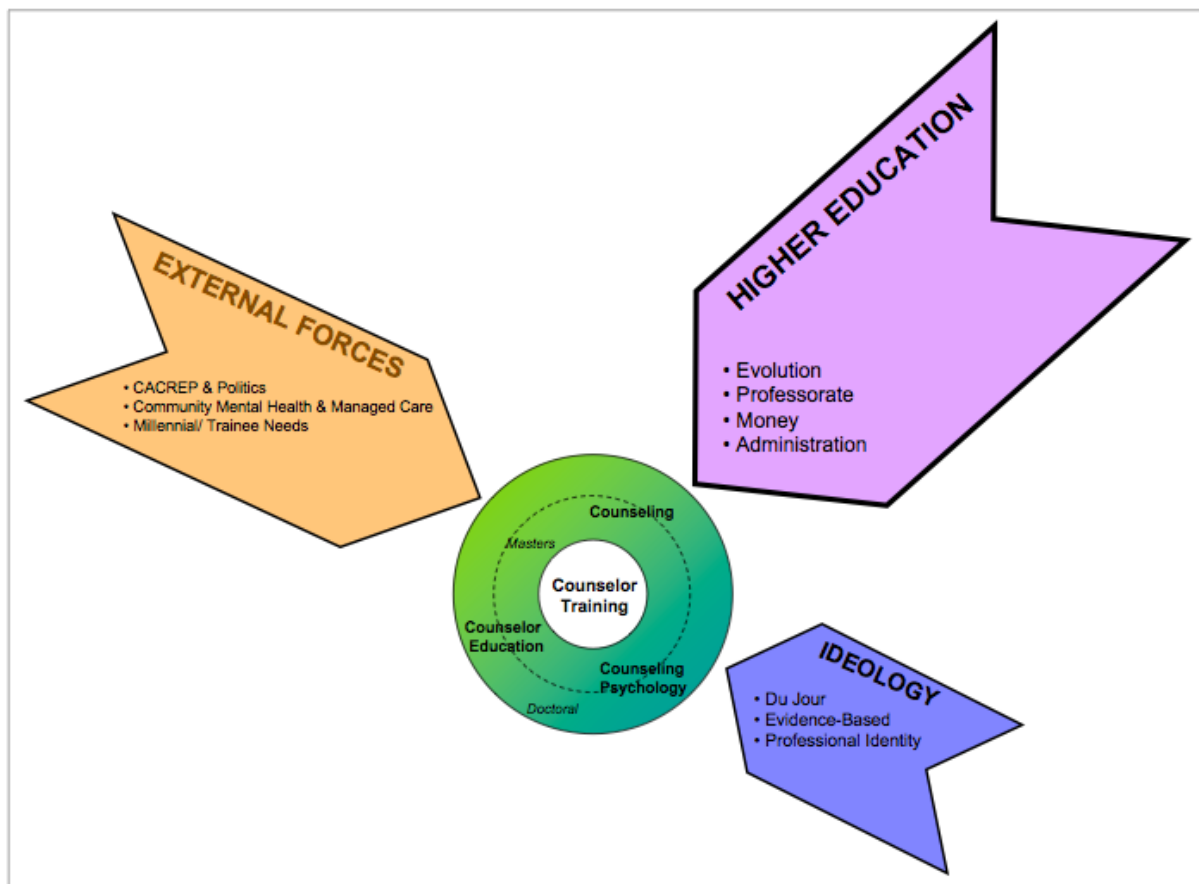

Figure 1: Dynamics Exerting Influence on the Challenges and Needs of Counselor Training

Higher Education

All the participants of this study spoke emphatically about the significant impacts Higher Education exerts in shaping the training of counselors. Participants' perspectives clustered around four core themes: Evolution, Professorate, Money, and Administration.

Evolution: Several participants discussed their perspectives on how the evolution of higher education has created significant shifts for faculty and training. Participants explained that the ways institutions of higher education have changed over time in terms of their structure, organization, emphasis, and expectations for faculty has shaped how training is occurring. Jack, for example, reflected on how "absolutely essential" being connected to clinical work was for his teaching:

> In 1970 it was common, 1970 and before, it was common to have joint-appointments. And that's what I wanted, was an appointment in the Counseling Center and an appointment in an academic department. And in 1971, they changed that. It just started right toward publishing. I mean (chuckles) there were some of our professors and [our program] had always been considered a top program, but a lot of us didn't even publish ever at that point. Of course now they do. So at any rate, yeah, it's too bad you can't get that joint appointment—it just doesn't happen very often anymore.

Karen explained how years ago she was able to maintain a private clinical practice, but explained that being a professor and having a practice isn't possible anymore:

> The jobs have gotten much more complicated and that includes grant assistance. But I also think if you just watch higher ed, and we've talked about administrative loads, and they just hire more and more people it seems with these very rarified

roles and as a result, in order to justify the initiatives they have to pull in faculty

to work with them, and you can just be, I mean you have to be really careful if

you're young, if you are a faculty member, about how much service you are asked

to do. But there's just a lot that goes on in higher ed that didn't go on back then. It

was a much simpler life then.

Another participant, Olivia, explained her perspective about how the evolution of the structure of

higher education in providing services to students has impacted the lack of emphasis on training

in career counseling skills:

Career has been relegated to a secondary position for a long time. And some of

that history is because counseling centers and career centers have been split. And

career centers are often staffed by masters level people and counseling centers are

often staffed by psychologists, so there's been a big split there, but it's been years,

unfortunately.

Several participants expressed concerns about the way higher education is evolving to

incorporate online courses into programs and curriculums, including counseling programs that

have been accredited and which are online-only programs. For example, Alfred explained his

reservations about this development:

I have a lot of grave concerns about what kind of product we're going to be

putting out as we go more and more online… But there are lots of places that have

a lot of their courses online and going more and more that way. When you look at

advertisements for faculty positions, when they talk about the skills they want for

new faculty, they talk about technology, sometimes they'll even say online

expertise. When they use the word technology, what that means is can you teach online.

Professorate: Participants described how the demands and expectations of the faculty positions at universities greatly impact training. Participants described the professorate as "complicated," "demanding," and "pressured" with tremendous expectations around a number of professional functions. Many participants described how it is not possible to "do everything." Jack, for example, explained how the current requirements of the professoriate limit engagement in clinical activities, and even shape the expertise of faculty being hired into departments:

> Younger faculty just have so much pressure to write, there isn't any way in the world that they're going to see clients. And so fewer and fewer new people over the last 10 to 15 years have any interest at all…It seems to me that the pressure is so great to bring in money...so that's the pressure and no one really cares whether you have the practical experience or not. We tend to get scholars and those are the kind of people who get hired, and they only want to get the chance to be promoted, and so you don't want to hire somebody who's going to fight writing, because they are only going to be here a few years, then have to take their families and leave. So it's not their fault. It's not just the writing either, they are truly interested in money… What I worry about that, as a challenge to us, is how do you maintain the quality of supervision when clinical service is really not recognized or appreciated and scholarship is? It's not that you can't do both, but it gets harder and harder to do.

Participants described ways that the pressures of their work impact the training that counseling students receive. Karen, for example, described how having to give up her clinical practice has shaped her teaching stance:

> We're not claiming to be everything. We're egg-heads, that's the job we took, we're full-time academics. And our job is to translate that literature, translate that research, translate even that clinical work that's published for students. And I just don't claim to also offer them the best clinical insight. I think I've got a decent amount of clinical insight, but I don't try to, I think it's important that we see ourselves as a team, just as I like to think about community agencies that hire people from different mental health professions are stronger than only hire from one, I think that good faculty should try to integrate the perspective of clinicians as well as academics.

Kate expressed her perspective about how the strong emphasis on research and publication restricts attention given to instruction and teaching among faculty:

> I don't think we place enough emphasis in academic environments on being good teachers… Sometimes in the Academy I think we do a better job of mentoring incoming junior faculty about research than we do—or even seasoned faculty, we need to help us all become better teachers…Most of the faculty in this department are budgeted entirely for research and teaching and yet the teaching end sometimes gets short-shrifted.

> *Money:* Participants explained how financial considerations are a formative priority of institutions and administrative leadership, which greatly impacts training. It was the expressed perspective of several participants that the business of higher education has shaped the

professorate and how institutions are evolving. For example, several participants explained that

the greater emphasis on online delivery of courses is being driven by the profitability of this

mode of instruction. Other participants noted that they are operating "in a world driven by credit

hour production" which gives rise to issues that have to be negotiated and which greatly impacts

training program implementation.

Administration: Most participants indicated that dealing with bureaucratic issues, or

administrators themselves was the most challenging part of their job as faculty members.

Participants described specific instances of being very frustrated by administrators who, as Andy

expressed, "hinder rather than facilitate faculty success with students," along with difficult

institutional policies. Other participants described the difficulties of negotiating slow,

unresponsive bureaucratic systems in trying to advocate for students or to promote policy

change.

External Forces

Participants in this study described how influences external to institutions of higher

education or programs themselves impact the training of counselors. The discussion of external

forces shaping training generally centered on three significant influences: CACREP & Politics;

Community Mental Health and Managed Care; and Millennial/ Trainee Needs.

CACREP & Politics: All the participants of this study discussed the significant influences

accreditation and CACREP has on training. Participants also explained how political climates

and issues regarding licensure in their respective states are important issues that must be

negotiated by faculty and that influence training significantly. Political tensions and enmity

within and between the fields of Counseling, Counseling Education, and Counseling Psychology

were particularly emphasized by participants as having impacts on training. Findings related to

how CACREP and accreditation exerts significant influences on training and impacts political

tensions in the field will be explained in depth later in this chapter (p. 74).

Community Mental Health & Managed Care: Several participants discussed how

community mental health often informs aspects of the training that students receive, typically in

very "practical parts of the job." Participants explained how faculty relationships with practicum

and internship sites enable community mental health to inform and shape emphasis in training

and instruction.

Several participants also explained their perspective that the managed care industry is

impacting training, with emphasis particularly on certain types of evidence-based practice.

Alfred, for example, explained his perspective that managed care is shaping counselor training

instruction:

> Most [students] have been taught, okay, you've got to do these two or three theories
>
> because that's the only thing that's going to pay you. More and more of the curriculum is
>
> being defined by, even for what is being taught, is more and more being defined by what
>
> insurance companies will pay for.

Millennial/ Trainee Needs: All of the participants of this study discussed their

perspectives on the generational characteristics of the current population of trainees and how

these impact training. Participants discussed specific challenges related to Millennial counseling

program trainees and these findings will be discussed later in this chapter (p. 62).

Ideology

Participants described how prevailing ideology exerts influence on training. The ways

that dominant philosophies or beliefs effect training centered around three dominant themes:

Ideology Du Jour; Evidence-Based; and Professional Values.

Ideology Du Jour: Participants shared their perspectives and concerns about how there are popular trends and movements within the field that lead to an ideology "du jour" which leads to the neglect of other important areas. Jack, for example, explained his observations of the concerning pattern he sees in the field:

> Our social justice is so strong. I think we're stronger in that area than we are in theory, and tend to act like theory doesn't really have a role, and for me it always gives you a way to think. I think we could better at—we have a tendency at every ten years or so pick out a new approach and focus on it to the exclusion of everything else, and that's not, I think we need to do a better job of being inclusive.

Some participants expressed concerns about how getting "overly committed to certain topics" and the "assuredness" of "a few folks who are high on their opinion" about "pet" areas or "hot" methods impacts training in restrictive or limiting ways.

Evidence-Based: Aligned with the preeminence of an ideology du jour, the impact of the current dominant ideology emphasizing evidence-based practice was an issue that was stressed by several participants. Participants expressed being challenged by the exclusivity and restrictiveness of this ideology as it relates to counseling instruction. Alfred, for example, explained his perspective:

> I think we get so busy teaching techniques that we need to make sure that students graduating from master programs have outstanding basic facilitative skills. And sometimes, the evidence-based stuff—and I'm not anti-evidence based, I don't want that to come across, but I don't think it's the only thing, I don't think it's a panacea. I think there's more approaches that are useful than just cognitive

behavioral therapy. I love cognitive therapy, and I use it with my clients, that

being said, CBT is not a panacea, there are lots of approaches.

Jack explained his concern about the restrictive nature of the current ideology, expressing

his sense of ambivalence about what constitutes evidence:

Virtually everything you read will have the phrase evidenced-based in it. And I

think it's a really good attempt to become scholarly and certain… but we don't

have any agreement at all about what *is evidence*… If you're much of a clinician,

you know that evidence is pretty ipsative and it's not always normative. But that

isn't going to fly, and you're not going to get published that way, it's just how

you're going to help people, that's all.

Professional Identity: Several participants discussed the trends and shifts in ideology in

the field as challenging significant issues with regard to professional identity. Some participants

discussed this in terms of "loss" or compromise in an effort to be "accepted" or "match clinical"

or medical standards, and which greatly impacts training. For example, one participant explained

how the strong emphasis in terms of time and money on training students in diagnosis, results in

less training in how to actually treat disorders, and represents a shift in professional values. Other

participants communicated a more hopeful stance about the how the field "will continue to

evolve" and grow with regard to professional identity and ideology.

Q2: How are counselor training programs currently selecting, instructing, supervising, and

preparing counselor trainees to become professional counselors? What works best? What is less

successful?

Participants discussed key elements of counselor training and explaining the ways that

faculty are preparing trainees for the field of counseling. Data from the interviews clustered

around five core issues regarding the implementation of training: Training Philosophy;

Admissions; Hidden Curriculum; Remediation; and Curricular Needs & Trends.

Training Philosophy

Each participant was asked to discuss some of their core beliefs about training. They

were each asked to reflect on how much as educators they were creating counselors versus

shaping what was already there in terms of skills in the trainee. Much of this conversation with

participants centered around the issue of whether or not it is possible to teach empathy.

Participants vocalized their struggle in responding to this question, and indicated that this subject

is complicated and difficult. Almost none of the participants gave unequivocal answers, and most

were qualified responses. There was no consensus about this issue in the responses among

participants.

As an example, an excerpt from Brandon's interview reveals his ambivalence about this

question and also how this issue is something that as a teaching philosophy may evolve with

experience or over time:

E: Can you teach empathy?

(long pause)

B: No.

(laughter)

B: Several years ago I would have argued vehemently that you can. I'm sorry, I

have seen sociopaths. We kicked someone out of our program a few years ago

who was diagnosable. I mean this person had no empathy. Ah, well, of course you

can try to teach empathy. But are you aware of any solid, replicable research that

shows that training in multicultural actually makes people less racist and more

multicultural? I'm not particularly….Yeah that's a tough one Eleanor. I think we

are lucky we don't have to accept anyone who applies to our program.

Several participants indicated that it is "possible" to teach empathy, but also indicated that there

might be exceptions where this would be too difficult a task for the training. Olivia, for example,

commented:

> I think that they have to have some basics that are necessary. I think that we do
>
> shape them for sure, but I think that without empathy by this time, I don't know
>
> how we teach empathy. Don't want to, we don't care... I don't know if I can teach
>
> empathy, I don't want to spend the time doing that. I want to spend the time
>
> working with people who start out and really improve and by the time they
>
> graduate from our program can be pretty competent to be out there doing
>
> counseling.

Alfred described his somewhat different perspective that though there might be variation in

empathetic gifts among trainees, the training can help people find other strengths:

> Can you teach people to be empathic, yes. Will they be as good as somebody who
>
> is gifted naturally and works to develop these skills? Probably not. That doesn't
>
> mean that they can't be good, and be stronger in other ways.

Several participants indicated that students who "come in with more" are able to engage the

training more effectively and therefore "go out with more." For example, Kate explained her

developmental theory perspective, which is predicated on some existing set of potentials within

the trainee:

> I think we can help them develop. I think there does have to be something there.
>
> That's certain inclinations or characteristics, or previous life experiences. I think

that there are things that we can do with people who have some of those

characteristics that lend themselves to this work, that we can do to help them

develop more fully. One of my mentors who is a developmental psychologist

said, 'to help them learn what it means to be more fully human.' So I think

that's true… [Training is] really beneficial I think to everybody, but those that

came in with, you know who had studied abroad, or had done, in some cases

even like mission work in another country. Or some who'd worked in

Americorps or those kinds of things—they almost came in and were able to take

off more. But I'm not suggesting that we have developmental milestones that

people have to have reached before we accept them into a program. I think there

are ways to help them develop. But I think it's something worth paying

attention to. There are a couple of programs that use sentence stems from

developmental—sort of semi-projective assessments as part of their admissions

process. And you know I can see the justification for it.

Admissions

In their discussion of admissions, participants discussed both the process itself and

characteristics that are screened for or screened out with candidates as a part of the admission

process. Perhaps the chief the finding with this data is that generally there was little consensus

among participants about the aspects of admissions that were discussed as part of this research.

While the opinions of participants were strongly expressed and based on their many experiences

and sense of expertise with admission processes, there was little agreement among participants

about most aspects of counselor training program admissions.

Admission Process: There was the least amount of consensus about the process of admissions among participants as compared to other aspects of selecting trainees. Participants generally indicated that admissions is an important process, and that if it is done well, it saves a great deal of faculty time and difficulty in the long run. Several participants indicated that admissions is a difficult and imperfect process, and usually flawed, as Jack noted, "With all these years of experience (chuckles), I can put all my weight and energy behind somebody that I think, how in the world did I miss that?!" This sentiment was echoed by several other participants who indicated that despite intentionality about admissions processes, there is a prevailing sense of randomness about selection outcomes. A few participants explained that there is an instinctual element to selection of candidates that is much more influential than objective criteria. Kate, for example, described a kind of intuitive litmus test of whether she would, "Let this person near a child I cared about?"

With regard to specific aspects of the admission process, the only element that achieved a consensus in terms of importance among participants were admission interviews. Participants consistently stated that interviews are important for selecting candidates, although there was less consensus about how best to conduct interviews. Several participants acknowledged that impression management and anxiety during the interview process clouds the interviewer's ability to see the candidate realistically. Some participants felt that group interviews are particularly helpful, while others expressed that individual interviews are more revealing. Karen explained that she feels interviews are more helpful in eliminating candidates who are less suited for the training, and less effective in helping faculty select good candidates. Several participants also suggested that interview questions are helpful when they allow for assessment of candidate thinking patterns and reveal candidate self-analysis or level of self-awareness.

There was no consensus, and in fact, often contradictory data from participants about other aspects of admissions screening elements. For example several participants indicated that references are important while another participant stated they are "a waste." A few participants said that they rely on GPAs and GRE scores as screening elements, while other participants suggested that these are not reliable or important. Several participants suggested that personal statements are valuable, and one participant indicated that a writing sample can be useful for screening applicants.

Desired Characteristics: Participants achieved somewhat more consensus around characteristic that are important for trainees to have, although there was less conveyed about how these qualities were screened for during the admissions process. Olivia mentioned that she was particularly looking for "some things that you can't teach" from candidates. There were four main characteristics that most participants indicated were desirable for trainees to have and were screened for as part of the admission process: Empathy; Maturity & Life Experience; Honesty, Authenticity & Genuineness; and Compassion & Caring for People. How these qualities are judged or assessed by participants was not clear in the interview data.

There was considerably less consensus around other desired characteristics or qualities which clustered into three organizational categories: Relationship to Self; Relationship to Learning; and Relationship to Others.

Relationship to Self: Participants discussed characteristics that are important qualities related to a candidate's relationship with self. Several participants indicated that self-reflection and self-awareness are important, including an accurate sense and understanding of self. Olivia described how a candidate's ability to talk about their weaknesses along with their strengths is sometimes a good indicator of their understanding of themselves. Other participants emphasized

cognitive complexity and cognitive flexibility as important, meaning the capacity to put oneself

in different perspectives and contexts. Several participants referenced a desire for "healthy

people" as candidates for admission. One participant, Jack, indicated that he looks for "deep

human beings, great human beings" in the admission process.

Relationship to Learning: Participants identified important characteristics that pertained

to how candidates engage in learning environments and the training program. Curiosity and

being interested and thoughtful about learning was seen as important by several participants.

Several other participants emphasized openness to feedback as a critical characteristic. Kate

explained her experience that a student's ability to be "conscientious and serious about the work"

is essential in combination with other qualities:

> The ones that are successful holistically are the ones that are conscientious and
>
> read and are relatively well-organized, work well with teams of people to learn
>
> content and yet at the same time have some of the those interpersonal
>
> characteristics that help them move to clinical work and translate book
>
> knowledge into clinical practice.

Relationship to Others: Participants also described important qualities of

candidates in their relationship to others. Sensitivity to diversity was emphasized by

several participants as being critically important. Interpersonal skills and listening to

others in a group was also seen as essential by several participants. A few participants

indicated that collaboration and the ability to work well as a member of a team are

important qualities to have.

Detrimental Characteristics: Participants discussed characteristics of candidates that are

screened out as part of the admission process. There was not a great deal of consensus about

these qualities, nor was it clear how these characteristics are assessed during the admissions process. Several participants indicated that narcissism and ego-centrism are detrimental to the process of becoming a counselor. Other participants suggested that having personal issues, which might lead to a "dead spirit" or "lack of energy and lack of caring" needs to be screened out through the admissions process.

Several participants indicated that immaturity and not having enough life experience can negatively impact the training process, and Karen stated that it is important not to admit students who are attending graduate school to "put off growing up" or to avoid paying back student loans. Olivia mentioned that she particularly doesn't like "whining and drama." Being closed to difference and having prejudice and bias was seen as detrimental for several participants. A few participants explained how impression management, perfectionism and competitiveness are unproductive and negative qualities. Resistance to feedback and a tendency to "fight" the learning process were seen by a few participants as being detrimental characteristics. Several participants indicated that lack of comfort in ambiguity and rigidity are qualities that additionally have negative impacts on training.

Hidden Curriculum

When discussing their perspectives on important aspects of training, participants' discussion sometimes centered around parts of the training which are not explicitly connected to a particular course or training competency, and are not skills that would be tested on a competency or licensing examination. CD referred to several skills she was naming in this regard as the "hidden curriculum" of training programs. The hidden curriculum of training programs according to participants in this study clustered around the following skills: tolerating ambiguity;

tolerating distress; knowledge of self; being active versus passive; intentionality about growth and professional development.

Tolerating Ambiguity: Several participants indicated that tolerating ambiguity and learning to feel comfortable in uncertainty and with the unknown and unknowable as being a critically important skill. CD, for example, explained:

The other issue I end up talking about all the time is tolerating ambiguity. And that's a hard skill, I mean that has always been a hard skill. I mean if you talk about the hidden curriculum in counselor ed, that's one of them, is to learn to tolerate ambiguity. Because you're never going to know perfectly. Yeah, and it's very threatening.

Tolerating Distress: A few participants described how the both the introspective work and therapeutic work of counselors requires skills at tolerating emotional pain and distress. Jack explained his sense of this skill and how the training should impact it:

There are a couple of students that have punched their ticket the right way, all the way, and we haven't touched them. You know, they, we just have not impacted them as people. So they're not deeper when it comes to really sitting with misery. You can't do that from a book. You've got to, you've got to *be* that kind of person.

Knowledge of Self: Most participants described how fundamental self-reflection and introspection skills are to the training and work of counselors, and many described how training should facilitate the awareness and knowledge about self for trainees. Andy explained:

Now, you know there are some people that have said that training programs should be 50 to as much as 80% self-analysis. That's looking at who you are,

what you're like, how you come off to others, how you come off to clients, with

these particular clients. So learning about yourself. Because that's basically what

you are using when you go into an office and are working with someone else—

that comes out more than any of the theories or anything else.

Alfred explained her perspective on the importance of this issue starting from a place of personal

reflection on his own process of connecting with self in his work with clients:

When I gave myself permission to be imperfect, I had the courage to be imperfect,

and I allowed myself to *be myself* with clients. Because the most important tool

you take into a counseling session is yourself. Not your bag of tricks or anything.

The most important thing you bring is yourself…I think one thing that needs to be

added to programs if they are not already doing it, is ways for students to take a

hard look at themselves. I don't think we can ever require students to go to

therapy or counseling, but I think it could be useful for two reasons. One, for

people to take a hard look at themselves, and see what might get in their way. You

can do some of these things in class activities—self-awareness exercises and

things of that nature, but I think it would also be good to do some of it with a

counselor…But here's another variable, for a lot of people to go in and start doing

counseling, that have never been in counseling—they don't know what it's like to

be in that chair, how vulnerable you feel, how scary it is to talk to this stranger

about all the intimate details of your life. And counseling students need to know

what that feels like. I think they would be more, that it would help them with

empathy if they could know how vulnerable it feels to be in the chair.

Active Versus Passive: A few participants emphasized that a requisite level of activity and engagement with the process of counseling is critical. Essentially, that a counselor must be active rather than passive in the process of counseling. Active responding to clients, active acceptance of responsibility for clients, and active participation and leveraging energy towards the therapeutic process were skills referenced by participants.

Intentionality about Growth and Professional Development: Several participants described the importance of trainees' purposeful engagement with their own growth and professional development. Essentially, that part of the training implicitly is learning how to learn independently what you need know to work effectively with each individual client. Kate explained:

> There's no way that in a two year program that we can teach, in a Masters
>
> program, we could teach you everything we know. I mean, you'd be old and grey.
>
> But even if we could, I guarantee you something would, someone would walk
>
> into your office on the second day you're on the job that represents a constellation
>
> of characteristics and issues that I've never seen before, or that none of us have
>
> ever seen before. And you've got to figure out how to be helpful. And so I think
>
> that, if there's a most significant piece, it's that capacity to sit with another person
>
> or observe groups and figure out what you need to know in order to be helpful.
>
> You know you almost start to create your own syllabi. So I think if there's
>
> somewhere across the program, and it's not clearly identified like in the list [of
>
> courses,] is helping people understand how to—is to be intentional about their
>
> own professional development in order to, to always be ready for the next thing
>
> that's unanticipated. Hopefully you have best practices, best standards of practice,

using ethical guidelines as frameworks. Using theoretical premises to guide your work rather than flying by the seat of your pants, thinking in terms of integration rather than eclecticism. But what's going to be the most important on the other end is using that knowledge—both content knowledge, practical experience you've had as part of a Masters program, feedback you've gotten in supervision, and somehow using that to guide traveling a road that's uniquely yours as a counselor and as a helper.

Remediation

Participants discussed the processes of attending to individual training deficits and student challenges through remediation. The participant data on remediation is organized around three central themes: Participants discussed their Philosophy (1) about remediation as a professional function and role, their Methods (2) of remediating trainee deficits, and the Legal Concerns (3) that are associated with the issue of remediation. The lack of consensus around issues pertaining to remediation was particularly marked, and there was no aspect about remediation that achieved consensus among participants.

Philosophy: Participants expressed a range of professional beliefs about remediation. Jack, for example, stated bluntly that "nothing works" if a student is in need of remediation. Other participants indicated that specific issues are not capable for remediation such as entrenched racism or prejudice, or serious clinical issues. Karen, for example explained:

Whenever we know we are headed toward remediation there's a groan around the table because we know it's going to be a lot of work. That for us is an ethical obligation, so we do it. But the easy ones never work, you know. And of course when you have someone with a personality disorder, remediation is not going to

probably fly, and we just don't have the time. Our role isn't to diagnose people

who are staring us in the face in terms of a psychological issue, we have to

document only in terms of professional behaviors and we're not particularly

hopeful. And we don't put in as much work, probably, when we think it's a

personality disorder. Our attention then goes into documenting the failures and the

behaviors in particular and moving the student out of the program.

With a somewhat different perspective, CD explained her sense that the training can usually

support most students' engagement with the counseling field in some way:

Usually I can help people at least be neutral. That is, they're gonna do no harm.

But I do believe, and this is talking out the other side, I do believe that some of us

are born with more ability to put ourselves in the shoes of another person and to

read the subtext and make a response. And so if there isn't some basic capacity

for that, then that person is always just going to be a ho-hum counselor. But there

is a place for them. You know, they might be really good at administration, they

might be very good at assessment. I mean, my idea is that most people, there's

somewhere they can work in the field of counseling if they are genuinely

interested in helping people.

Kate described how developmental theory guides her philosophy about how to support the needs

of students who are struggling:

Development, sometimes people think of in terms of—monolithically, but it's not.

Piaget called it décalage because in the domains of development people can be at

different places. Someone cognitively, academically can be very bright, handle

complex content, but ethically, you know slug-like. I mean you only have to look

at something like World War II – you know some of the brightest minds in

Germany did some of the most horrific things to other human beings. Some of the

brightest people on Wall Street have gutted—so the ethics isn't there. And then

you see special education kids who are the most loving, and can't get some—so

anyway, I think that domains of development are not necessarily in total sync.

And so if we're trying to promote development, sometimes I think it has to be

domain specific too.

Method: Participants discussed a diverse range of activities and supports they use for

remediation. Karen indicated that mandating therapy is not helpful, but mock therapy sessions,

empathy journals, and targeted readings can be effective. Karen also indicated that meetings with

advisors with specific feedback given to students and directed reflection activities about what

was heard by the student is useful. Alfred stated that students should be given individualized

growth plans for remediation, and Kate indicated that models of good therapy and a chance to

practice and change is critical for success. Andy and Kate suggested that sometimes people need

some time away from the program to do some work on themselves and then return. Several

participants emphasized that remediation requires a large amount of time and investment of

resources on the part of faculty focused on one student and therefore the admission selection

processes is critical.

Legal Concerns: Several participants said that many of the actions that faculty take with

regard to remediation of student deficits are dictated more by legal issues than professional

values. For example, Karen explained:

> We've been controlled not by the profession but by the legal profession. We're
>
> very, very careful now, before we even get to a remediation plan, we have a very
>
> complicated review system we do every semester, with every student.

Several participants described the need for an ongoing monitoring system to track student

progress, and the need for clear documentation about student progress.

Several participants explained that sometimes student remedial needs or lack of fit with

the field make it necessary to move students out of programs. Several participants also explained

that it is sometimes very difficult to dismiss students from programs given institutional concerns

about potential legal actions. Andy, for example, discussed his experience with the difficulty of

this issue:

> Now, it's very hard to get someone to leave the program, we've seen that with
>
> cases across the country… it's very difficult because what I've seen happen is that
>
> most of the time they get an attorney, and then you go through a long laborious
>
> process of going through all the aspects of the university and outside and so forth,
>
> and there is either going to be some kind of compromise, which could be some
>
> money involved, or could be a compromise that well, okay, the person gets back
>
> in the program. I've seen it rarely work in those cases where someone is
>
> completely done. The university is a little fearful of this. That's just the way it is.

Participants described how they have responded to these institutional concerns and legal

pressures with programmatic adjustments. For example, participants emphasized that

very clear expectations about student behavior and required competencies should be

communicated from the start of the program and present in programmatic documentation.

Andy described how in his program specific behaviors of students are tied directly to

grades, and this assists in convincing students to leave the program instead of receiving failing grades. Participants also explained that they are particularly careful and need to be strategic and convincing when meeting with students about their lack readiness or fit for the field.

Training Needs & Trends

Throughout their discussion regarding particular aspects of training, participants' discussion tended to center around trends and needs that they perceive in training programs. Participants indicated areas of training that they think should be emphasized either in response to the trends occurring in the field of mental health, or in response to the training needs of trainees. Participants expressed their perspectives on the need for emphasis in specific courses and skill development or on more comprehensive training components in terms of overall structure or programmatic emphasis. The data that emerged from these conversations has been organized accordingly.

Specific Courses and Skills: Participants expressed a range of courses and skill areas that they see as important for greater emphasis or inclusion in training programs. Several participants discussed ways in which they see a movement towards teaching more techniques and evidenced-based practice in a way that neglects other important aspects of training, such as basic facilitative helping skills. Alfred explained:

> I think that programs need to balance the student need to know techniques and
> evidence-based practice at least equal, if not more so with sound foundations in
> the basic people helping skills. Because I've had students that have come in, I've
> also had students in workshops that could tell me a lot about what technique to
> pin on a client, but they had a hard time getting the client to that point where the

client trusted them enough to be able to engage in procedures and interventions

that would help them… I'm afraid that the emphasis on those basic skills, given

the greater emphasis on time-limited, shortness of therapy, and evidence-based

practice, I think those basic skills are starting to slowly get squeezed out—I hope

I'm wrong.

Kate expressed her sense that there needs to be more emphasis on models of good therapeutic

work for students:

I don't think we let our students see good counseling enough first. I really think

we aught to be getting more of us as faculty, advanced doctoral students,

practitioners in the field, we need to be showing them what it looks like. I think

sometimes we expect them to just spontaneously combust into wonderful

counselors by having the knowledge and going over the skill base, and I think it

has to go beyond doing the interpersonal stuff with each other, although I think

that's a critical part of it. But I think there's the watching that I think we're not

doing quite as good at.

Several participants indicated that they felt that training areas that used to be foundational and

important to the identity of counselors such as Group work and Career counseling are being

neglected by programs and need greater emphasis. Jack expressed his sense of the diminished

role of these areas:

We're far less capable of teaching group work I think, just be cause it is time-

consuming. You just can't get folks to commit to it, and it's difficult—I think it's

differential across the country, some do better than others…I think too that career

development has become an afterthought in our effort, particularly in psychology,

in our effort to match clinical, we've just lost our sense of what is unique and neat about counseling. There aren't very many who ever end up with decent competencies in career counseling, much less exceptional.

Participants described their perspectives on the needs of community mental health, which signifies that there should be more emphasis on particular areas such as alcohol and substance treatment, working with elderly populations, and preparation for working in integrated care settings with interdisciplinary teams.

Some participants indicated that training in philosophy and epistemology is incredibly important, but generally neglected by training. Alfred explained that the philosophical underpinnings of theories are important because, "it's very hard to integrate ideas if you don't understand where the ideas emerged from originally."

Training Components: Several participants emphasized the importance of a more integrated curriculum. Kate said that training should be an "integrated sequence" of courses and experiences. She explained particular difficulties she has experienced that students have in integrating knowledge and practice:

> I think that in the clinical, whether it's service learning or practicum or internship, they also need to help students not throw the baby out with the bathwater. You know I think sometimes it's very easy for graduate, Masters students for instance, not to fully make the transition from classroom to practice without giving up some things. And we do want the clinical work to be a place where it becomes, three dimensional. But we've go to help them translate what they've read in book rather than abandoning it. You know, see where it fits, so there's a delicate dance.

CD explained a similar perspective that the curriculum should be a "spiral or slinky" instead of "chunks of information." CD explained her concerns about what is currently happening and may be missing from programs:

> Our mistake is that the easiest kind of learning is knowledge. And now a days you can do that without being in a class. But the hardest thing to do is to transfer knowledge to a particular set of circumstances. Transferring is a much higher learning skill and that's what we've just left to happen within the students in practicum or internship. And that often doesn't happen…so we've got to figure out in the curriculum, that we need to have a way to go over the same subjects again, but combined…but that's hard teaching. And many of the programs, they think that the program learning outcomes are just the standards and they take this very, I think, block approach.

Similarly, several participants emphasized the need for training to be grounded in theoretical frameworks, rather than just following accreditation guidelines.

A few participants expressed that they feel that quality supervision is critical, and Jack explained that he is concerned about how he sees as supervision being "farmed out" and being done less and less by faculty and more and more by clinical site supervisors which creates challenges for ensuring quality supervision.

Kate emphasized how important she believes training cohorts are for trainee development and expressed concerns about programs using cohorts for "administrative convenience" rather than investing in groups so that they are leveraged to be important learning environments as "the most authentic representations of social systems in which we will work."

Jack expressed concerns that there needs to be greater emphasis on impacting students in a deep or meaningful level, which requires more "human touch" and less "cerebral stuff." He explained that this takes a great investment on the part of faculty, and explained: "This isn't just cerebral input. You know if you're going to try to change people with your head, it just doesn't work… you've got to invest, you've got to put yourself into it." He expressed feeling like there has been a shift away from putting this kind of energy towards student development among faculty and departments with shifting priorities in higher education and demands on faculty time.

Q3: What particular educational trends, challenges, and needs do training professionals see in the current populations of graduate students entering counselor training programs?

Participants reflected on the needs and trends they have observed and experienced with Millennial generation students. Several participants expressed some ambivalence about the idea of the Millennial generation being distinctly different from past generations, and noted that there are qualities that have been similar across generations. Other participants expressed the philosophical belief that it is just "human nature" that every generation views the younger generations as "privileged and spoiled" in comparison to their own. CD described, however, her perspective of how different and surprising the Millennial generation was as compared to previous cohorts. CD explained her experience upon returning to teaching in 2011 after being away from the classroom and serving as a dean in an administrative capacity for twenty years:

When I started teaching again, and it was like, Oh my God, what a shock! … I guess it was me coming back having been so gone so long, it was a huge shock, where for the rest of that faculty it was, you know, they saw the trend slowly.

Many participants expressed their sense that higher education needs to adjust to address the needs of the Millennial generation, which have been more evident for the past 7-8 years, and

several participants also expressed their sense that aspects of the Millennial generation should be of concern to faculty members in institutions of higher education.

The ways participants described Millennial trainees is represented by Figure 2, below. The data has been organized to align with three categorical lens through which observations were made by participants: Characterlogical; Developmental; and Contextual. As illustrated in Figure 2, given the complicated nature of the data, there is often overlap between these categories. The Characterlogical lens enabled participants to make statements that the described aspects of the essential nature and traits of Millennial learners. The Developmental lens used by participants grounded observations about Millennial learners in a framework of growth and potentiality. Participants made statements using a Contextual lens when describing external and societal influences that have influenced Millennial trainees.
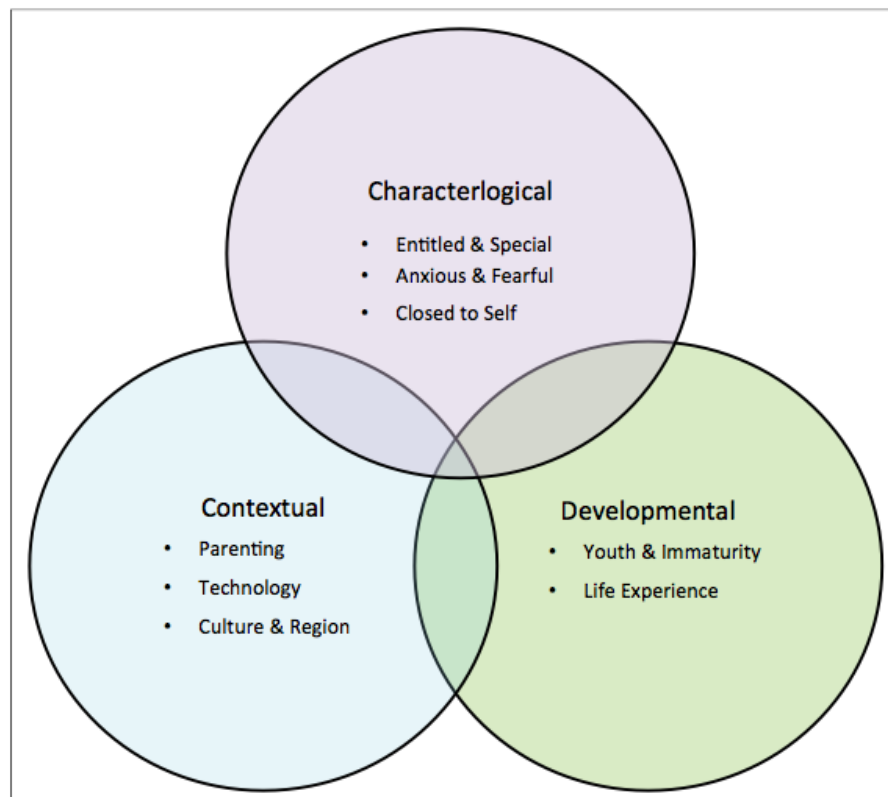

Figure 2: Categorical Lenses for Millennial Students

Characterlogical

The strongest and most emphasized data, which achieved the most consensus among participants, were Characterlogical themes. The Characterlogical lens participants used allowed participants to discuss characteristics of the Millennial students which clustered around three core themes: Entitled & Special; Anxious and Fearful; and Closed to Self.

Entitled & Special: Nearly every participant in the study described Millennial learners as entitled, explaining that Millennial students are "not hard on themselves" and want "free rides" on academic tasks and responsibilities. Alfred explained:

> They're grown up with an entitlement mentality. And so, I paid my money, I expect to get an A. Regardless of the level of work I do. Well you can see it in the, in relationships with Millennials. When they get married, they seem to have this Hollywood notion that if marriage is hard work, there must be something wrong, and let's quit. Well, marriage is hard work, living with people is hard work… And Millennials seem to have this mythology that anything you really have to work hard at, you must have made the wrong choice. Because a lot of them have the notion that, it's always been given to me. There's two types of things, people that have come from privilege tend to be like, you should give it to me because it's always been given to me. People come from very distressed economic and environmental situations often times will develop, I've never had it, so you should give it to me. And so, both are problematic, because what you need to do to become a really good counselor is hard work.

Several participants noted that entitlement or feelings of being special give rise to anger, and disrespectful and thoughtless behavior by students when faced with difficulty or disappointment.

Some participants also noted that sometimes this behavior appears as a lack of professionalism and a more informal nature with faculty members. For example, Olivia described how she feels that Millennial students lack an "internal editor:"

> I've said to students, 'Watch your tone in your email.' People who send things off way too quickly without thinking… Students respond I think in very inappropriate ways… and it happens because people are writing an email in the middle of the night and they're not thinking about the effect that it's going to have on people…and I think that they're sort of a little more casual… a little less professional and I'm always a little bit surprised by that. They don't seem to have an understanding about responding to administrators or faculty, not that they should see people as better than, but there's a professional-ness that seems to be lacking for some people, where they think they can get angry and obnoxious sometimes and when it happens, boy, I really find it offensive. So I think there's some editing that's missed for some students, they need an internal editor.

> *Anxious and Fearful:* Most participants expressed their sense that Millennial students have been protected and sheltered from experiencing hardship and failures. Most participants also stated that Millennial students are highly anxious and fearful about taking risks. Additionally, most participants discussed the perfectionism of students in this cohort as it relates to anxiety and fear of making mistakes. CD describes her observations of this generation of students:

> They are consumed by perfectionism. Part of the problem is their parents, or society, they believe they can't fail, you have to get all the As, and they grub, they grub for grades, and to them that is success. And maybe their parents have never

let them fail, and so when they don't do well on their first test, it's just like

horrible, and they get angry at you... they're scared to fail and so they won't take

risks.

One participant, Karen, however, expressed how she takes issue with the idea that this generation

is perfectionistic. She indicated her perspective that while Millennial learners seek validation

through achievement and grades, they also appear to feel entitled to success rather than engaging

in hard work to achieve it. She explained:

You know, they say that all the time. I'm a perfectionist, therefore, give me an A.

And I think, wait a minute, perfectionists work really hard to avoid negative

feedback. (chuckles) I do hear their self-description often is that they are

perfectionists. I don't see the behaviors that I certainly pair with

perfectionism…[they're] very grade oriented, but are they really going to do three

drafts of something before they turn it in? No.

Several participants expressed their perspectives that the Millennial generation trainees needs to

learn about failure. Brandon explained how he attempts to begin to teach his Millennial trainees

this lesson:

One of the things that I do particularly when I get to practicum, you know,

typically you tell your supervisors, well, they're just starting out…give them easy

cases to start with, they're just getting started. I don't, I tell the supervisors, scare

the crap out of them. I want them to realize that they don't know everything. And

get it: you're going to make mistakes, you're not perfect. And the analogy I often

use is that if you've never played tennis before, what do you think you're going to

look like when you get out there on the court? You're going to look like an idiot.

And that's okay, because everyone has to start there.

Several participants described how they must negotiate Millennial learners resistance to feedback, and described how they tend to "bristle" and get "upset" or "offended" when offered feedback about their performance. Olivia illustrates her sense of frustration around this issue:

Just the other day I had a student who got a conditional pass on her comps, and she just came in and she was like, well I said it here, and I said it here. I said to her, 'How hard are you on yourself? Because you are not hearing it, you are not hearing me, you're just justifying what you've done so you don't have to deal with the fact that you haven't done as well as you'd have like to.' So for me it's that perfectionism stuff that I hate, because it creates situations where people can't hear.

Most participants expressed their experience of how the anxiety of Millennial learners causes them to be over-reliant on others, demonstrating diminished self-efficacy, and requiring exact instruction or direction and which leads to their interest in prescriptive models for engaging professional activities. Alfred explains:

They want to be told what to do. When I was an undergraduate, basically I wanted to be told what was the right thing to do. Then I got into Masters work and started finding stuff more for myself. This group—it's kind of moved up. Now, the Masters-level students want to be told what to do. Just tell me what to do. I plug this technique with this particular problem…well, even medical doctors talk about, okay you have these kind of medicines for these kinds of problems, and you can do that, but the human mind, and human interpersonal problems are much more complex than a cold. And so you have to understand things much more

contextually and ecologically. So you have to understand, and that takes a lot of

work to understand things contextually. You have to think things through at a

much deeper level.

Another participant, CD explained that often Millennial students "get really frustrated" when

they feel they have executed a task according to a provided model. She described how they tend

to respond with "I did what you told me" rather than thinking independently about the particular

needs of each situation or individual service needed.

Closed to Self: Several participants expressed concerns and frustrations about Millennial

trainees' resistance to introspection and self-reflection in the process of becoming counselors.

Participants referred to Millennials as not being "psychologically complex," or lacking

"psychological depth." Jack explained that he feels Millennial students have "been so focused on

achievement, that they are less developed psychologically."

Several participants also associated Millennials' resistance to self-reflection as being

connected to an inability to tolerate ambiguity or tolerate distress, as well as being related to

anxiety and dependence. Alfred, for example, explained:

I tell my students that you can only take a client as far as you are willing to go

yourself. And a lot of them are not willing to go very far with themselves. Part of

that is tolerating discomfort, and another part is tolerating ambiguity. Counseling

is an inherently ambiguous enterprise… There is introspection that you need to

do, so that can develop insight into your own process, whereby you can become

empathetic for clients… you've got to take a hard look at your values so you can

be non-judgmental. You've got to be fully yourself. You can't be fully yourself

and be congruent if you don't really have a strong sense of who you are. And

that's the key thing I was thinking with the Millennials. A lot of the Millennial

generation I see struggling of knowing who they are. And that probably ties into

that anxiety— it's hard to have a strong sense of self-confidence and self-efficacy

if you're not really sure about the self in the first place.

Andy described the limits to the quality of depth or productiveness he observes in the self-

reflection of Millennial students when introspection does occur:

I think they want to look and talk about themselves, but they don't want to look at

everything about themselves. In other words, there's a narcissistic quality about it.

It's not a complete: I want to discover things and I want to understand why I

would do things like this or that, or what motivates me, or how I might be able to

change that. I think it's reflective, but I don't think there 's much wisdom to the

reflection. I think it's at the superficial level.

CD described how she has been frustrated that Millennial trainees are having difficulty

demonstrating competencies with basic counseling skills in part due to limitations in

themselves:

I started my career teaching intro to counseling skills and I'm going to end my

career teaching [this course] because I've been complaining, they're not getting it.

That's a real challenge. Because essentially, they are not ready to help others

sometimes because they need help themselves.

Developmental

Participants discussed their perceptions of qualities of Millennial trainees within a

framework of growth and potentiality. A major theme that emerged when participants made

observations from this lens pertained to the shift in typical age of trainees in counselor graduate

training over the past several years. Participants noted that graduate programs used to attract older students, and currently, more and more often students are coming into graduate school right out of undergraduate programs. These observations centered around two significant themes: Youth and Immaturity (1) and Life Experience (2).

Youth and Immaturity: Participants made statements about how younger-aged students impact training. Kate, for example, explained that she misses the "age differentiation in our Masters program that we use to have" and how it impacted the "richness and cross fertilization" that occurred in the classroom and cohort dynamic. While acknowledging that age and development are not necessarily aligned, Kate noted:

> Some of it is more of an age thing. They just haven't had quite enough to develop, and some of our students have lived very privileged lives, and so getting out of the comfort zone that's associated with that is scary to them. So I guess in terms of psychological concepts I connect with it, it may be fear as well as psychological immaturity, and just a lack of experience that would allow them to do that fluidly.

There was also the sense among several participants that Millennial generation students regardless of age, are less developed and more immature than previous generations. CD explained that she believes Millennial trainees "aren't old enough" to acquire all that they could from counselor training. She explained her perspective in terms of ego development theory:

> They are learning to be self-aware, and it's a transitional stage between the conformist, who essentially a lot of the students show up as. That is, there's a right way and there's a wrong way, I either get A's or I'm failing—to make the transition to being self-responsible and responsible for others. That's a huge

transition period that takes a number of years. Everything that we do to try to increase students' awareness, that's wonderful, but the problem is that to be a counselor, you've got to be self-responsible and be willing to be responsible for others. In other words, take on that responsibility, and it's just not there. Very smart, I mean the brightest students I've ever had are here, but really dumb about life. They're very driven to become an adult, and that's appropriate, it just doesn't make for a very good graduate student.

Life Experience: Often related to age, participants noted that life experience is very important for becoming an effective counselor. Jack explained his perspective that older trainees typically have experience that better equips them for the training:

They're better students, they're better therapists…I like today's student as much as yesterday's with the one exception of experience. I wish they were just a tad older. I just think a couple years of working makes a difference. And we just tend to get folks straight out of undergrad.

Several participants noted how life experience is connected to understanding self and others. CD, for example, remembered when the average age of counseling students was 31 years old: "Almost all of them had gone out and done something, they'd worked, they'd lived, and research shows that it's very hard to develop empathy—people often cognitively don't develop true empathy until they're in their late twenties."

Contextual

Several themes emerged from participants' perspectives about the external and societal influences that have shaped Millennial trainees from a Contextual lens including: Parenting; Technology; and Culture and Region. It is notable that there was somewhat less consensus

among participants about these Contextual themes as compared with other perspectives on Millennial trainees with the exception of the theme of Parenting, which was common to the majority of participants.

Parenting: Many participants expressed their experience of the parenting of Millennial trainees as relatively problematic and related to Millennials being risk-adverse, dependent, entitled, and sheltered. The idea of "helicopter parenting" or parents that hover protectively around their children was often referenced. As Jack, for example noted, "I mean they talk about the helicopter, and students always laugh as if it's not true, but you know when you are in graduate school, you ought not to be hearing from students' parents, ever, ever." Other participants described experiences of actively needing to negotiate challenges regarding the relationships with Millennial students' parents, such as getting calls from parents about grades or having to tell parents they were not allowed to participate in program admissions interviews.

Technology: Several participants discussed the importance of technology to Millennial counseling trainees. Karen, for example, explained her perspective on the significant role technology has played in shaping development, and how they are "never alone with themselves." She also described how technology has shaped a decreased level of engagement and investment in relationships with faculty and each other in programs:

> A few years ago, I would ask [my students] what was the most historically important event in their lives, and they used to say 9/11. Now they get it as a question, and they say the first time I had a cell phone. I think technology has really, really changed the developmental process. So that no one ever feels disconnected so long as their cell phone is powered up. They over-rely on other people rather than face small challenges themselves. It does feel that working

with students now who are so connected to their support base all the time, and

with us in a different way, is different, if you know what I mean. We might have

students who would move to us to get their Masters, and they were having to

make friends, they were having to look to us for guidance. Now they're on their

cell phone during break, checking back in with their parents or back in with their

friends from home. So they're not—they don't have to make that transition they

used to, and I think that probably somewhat defines what they are, makes them

different from former cohorts.

Other participants shared their perspectives that social media and electronic communication has

significant impacts on the interpersonal skill development of Millennial students. Alfred, for

example, explained his perspectives about how the training may need to shift to attend to address

issues with regard to Millennials' technology use:

They're way more technologically savvy, but part of the problem with being so

technologically savvy is you don't have to have very good people skills to interact

with people. There's not a lot of depth to texting or Facebooking, seeing

Facebook messages. Another thing too is this notion of lack of boundaries—the

sharing of this really personal information to anybody and everybody. And then I

think there can be come concern about to what degree younger, to what degree do

we need to address in a very firm manner the separation of client and counselor

boundaries.

Culture and Region: Several participants noted that the culture and background of

Millennial trainees may influence the relative expression of certain characteristics, and

particularly entitlement behaviors and attitudes. White privilege and socioeconomic status, for

example, were described by some participants to often lead to more entitled perspectives, while minority status or being a first generation graduate student where seen by participants to mitigate expressions of entitlement. Additionally, several participants reflected on how they have experienced variation in entitlement behaviors among populations of Millennial students at private versus public institutions. Several participants noted that as faculty members, they have also experienced difference in the expression of Millennial characteristics that were attributable to regional differences and regional attitudes towards higher education.

Q4: What are the benefits, challenges, and barriers to CACREP accreditation?

Participants reflected on their experiences of CACREP accreditation and how it impacts training contexts. There was a great deal of commonality and consistency among the experiences of participants as they discussed CACREP accreditation and impacts on training. Most participants indicated overall that they believe there are important benefits to training from accreditation. Participants described how accreditation generally, and particularly CACREP accreditation, elevates the rigor and standards of training and protects students against institutional abuses. All participants spent a great deal of time talking about how CACREP particularly impacts training and the field beyond simply maintaining accountability and training standards.

Six core themes emerged from the data: Historical "Fight;" Arbitrary Divisions; Oppression and Power; Reciprocity and Fairness; Unhappiness, Resignation and Fatigue; and Resolve and Acceptance. These themes are illustrated in Figures 3 and 4 (pp. 81-82). The figures represent the evolution of the conflicts and tensions between the professional realms of Counseling and Counseling Psychology from forty years ago and current day, as was depicted by

participants and captured in the data in this study. These themes are described in the following pages of this chapter.

Historical "Fight"

All participants described the current tensions that exist in the field as related to CACREP as a "battle" or "fight" and most participants reflected on the long-standing and "unseemly" nature of the battle, with a "long history which has been ongoing for the past 40 years. There was consensus among participants that historical battles were about "turf," which is illustrated by Brandon as he explained the necessity of political activity, skills, and leadership:

> As I've learned, way back in the '70s up to the present time, if you don't toot your horn, if you don't stand up for your rights, somebody else is going to take them away—they're going to take your clients, they're going to take your scope of practice.

Arbitrary Divisions

Participants described the arbitrary nature of the divisions between Counseling Psychology and Counseling Education fields, with most participants describing the division as "unfortunate" or "tragic," and some expressing their belief that it is damaging to the field. Karen explained her sense of how this occurred:

> So the fields sadly got more disconnected because of licensure and needing to establish themselves. When really counseling and counseling psych were really one—one group of people at one point, and then probably later, then split… the executive director of NBCC likes to make the point that had APA embraced the Master's level practitioner for licensure, we'd all be psychologists. And I think he's absolutely right. And so when APA continued to say, no we only want PhD

folks, it left a whole opening for a professional group to endorse the competitors

for the MSW. And counseling became that profession.

Most participants expressed their belief that the training is essentially the same, and what is

distinguishing between the fields is name on the degree, rather than the content of the training.

Brandon described his sense of the differences between the fields:

I think that the counseling profession has spent decades trying to distinguish

themselves from counseling psychology by well, 'We're more into wellness, and

we're not so much into the sickness model, or we're more multicultural'—that's

all bull-crap. I mean there are plenty of psychologists and counseling

psychologists that identify with wellness and social justice. That's all artificial.

The division is strictly political and legal… And unless counseling psych or

counselors fold up their tents and disappear, the division will not go away and it

will just get—it will simply boil down to where you get your degree.

Some participants additionally expressed frustration about how the name on the degree has been

used to constrain scope of practice, as Alfred explained:

To me, it shouldn't matter what the label is, have you had the training and

supervision? If you have, then you should be able to do it… It's a territorial

issue—psychologists will say they are better trained and so they should be the

ones doing testing. They should be the ones doing diagnosis and things of that

nature. And I think you have to look at individuals, you can't look disciplines. I

think that there are some psychologists that are very, very good at diagnosing and

diagnostics and testing and the like. I think they're very, very good, and I know

some that suck. I know some counselors that are very, very good at testing and diagnostics, and some counselors that suck at it, and they shouldn't be doing it.

Oppression and Power

All of the participants in this study described APA and psychologists as having created an oppressive context for counselors. Participants described APA and psychology as acting arrogant, superior, exclusive and elitist, and creating a hierarchical dynamic which denigrates counseling. Further, CD explained how she felt that Counseling Psychology currently tends to fail to recognize how the field has historically treated counselors in oppressive ways:

> I don't think there is really any ownership that for many years… they looked
>
> down on masters, they couldn't support masters-level and all that for so many
>
> years, and all of us who really got very involved in ACA and ACES, we were sort
>
> of contaminated too.

Many participants explained current decisions and actions by CACREP as a response to being oppressed by psychologists. Karen explains how she views the current divisions and tensions in the field:

> It's hard because I think until everybody feels powerful, you're not going to see
>
> those lines of demarcation disappear. And I think for so long counseling was the
>
> stepchild in the mental health field. Or they were the last to get the goodies.
>
> They're just enjoying their power. CACREP has really grown. It is a powerful
>
> organization now, with a lot of accredited programs, so they're just enjoying
>
> that… for a lot of folks in counseling, it's a show of strength that we finally have
>
> arrived.

Similarly, Alfred described how he views CACREP's aggressive actions to consolidate power as a reciprocal action from past experiences of oppression:

> Francis Bacon said knowledge is power, and Foucault said no, power is knowledge: whoever has the power, determines what's worth knowing. So as people, or groups of people who a have been oppressed gain power, they often become and behave very similar to how they were treated. And so they have become what they detested. And so I think some of that has happened.

Reciprocity and Fairness

Most participants described the recent decision by CACREP to limit core faculty in Masters of Counseling programs to professionals with Counselor Education degrees as an issue of equity and fairness. Brandon described the position in many departments prior to the recent CACREP change: "Faculty who are counselor ed grads are generally not allowed to teach in the counseling psych program, but the counseling [psychology] faculty are free to teach anything in both programs…It's a one up, one down situation." All participants described the recent CACREP decision as also being fundamentally about fairness in hiring graduates, as Alfred explained:

> To me it is an equity issue. So, talking to a psych program, so you want me to fill my positions in my faculty with people who are trained in your program, but you won't take any students from my program to teach in yours. How is that fair?

Unhappiness, Resignation & Fatigue

Most participants expressed disagreement with current CACREP actions and unhappiness generally about the current climate in the field. Jack, for example, expressed his sense of

disappointment especially in the context of inadequate funding and support for community mental health in many parts of the country:

> I'm just so tired of all the fights that none of that impresses me on either end...
> and I think we all benefit when we all stay together… we shouldn't be fighting
> each other we should be helping each other.

Several participants also explained their sadness and sense of resignation about how they feel constrained in being able to contribute to both Counseling and Counseling Psychology in the context of the current tensions. Many participants had been active in both professional arenas and described how the current conflicts in the field have caused them to withdraw or limit their involvement in organizations in which they had been quite active.

Several participants also reflected on the ways that the historic and current tensions in the field create divisions among faculty in programs, and ultimately have a negative impact on training. Kate explained: "I think there are some things, with the CACREP example, that it's set some things in motion that have put barriers between colleagues and make people feel devalued."

Resolve and Acceptance

While most participants expressed unhappiness and resignation with the current climate and tensions in the field, there were a few participants who expressed resolve and acceptance of the situation. These participants expressed their sense of the conflict as simply the reality of the situation and natural evolution of events. As Brandon explained:

> It's the reality of the world…there are legal regulations that have to be met and
> that's why there is a separation and there will be a separation. You can get two
> licenses. We have two people on our faculty right now who are licensed

psychologists and licensed clinical counselors. That's fine, there's nothing wrong with that. But in order to do that, they had to jump through extra hoops. And CACREP, after the first of July, it's going to become even more difficult for anyone to do that. Because it's going to become, they're going to have their identity as a professional counselor or their identity as a professional psychologist. People are unhappy about it, but it's changed, it's what happens… You can argue philosophy and sing kum-by-yah all you want, but at the end of the day, it's politics.
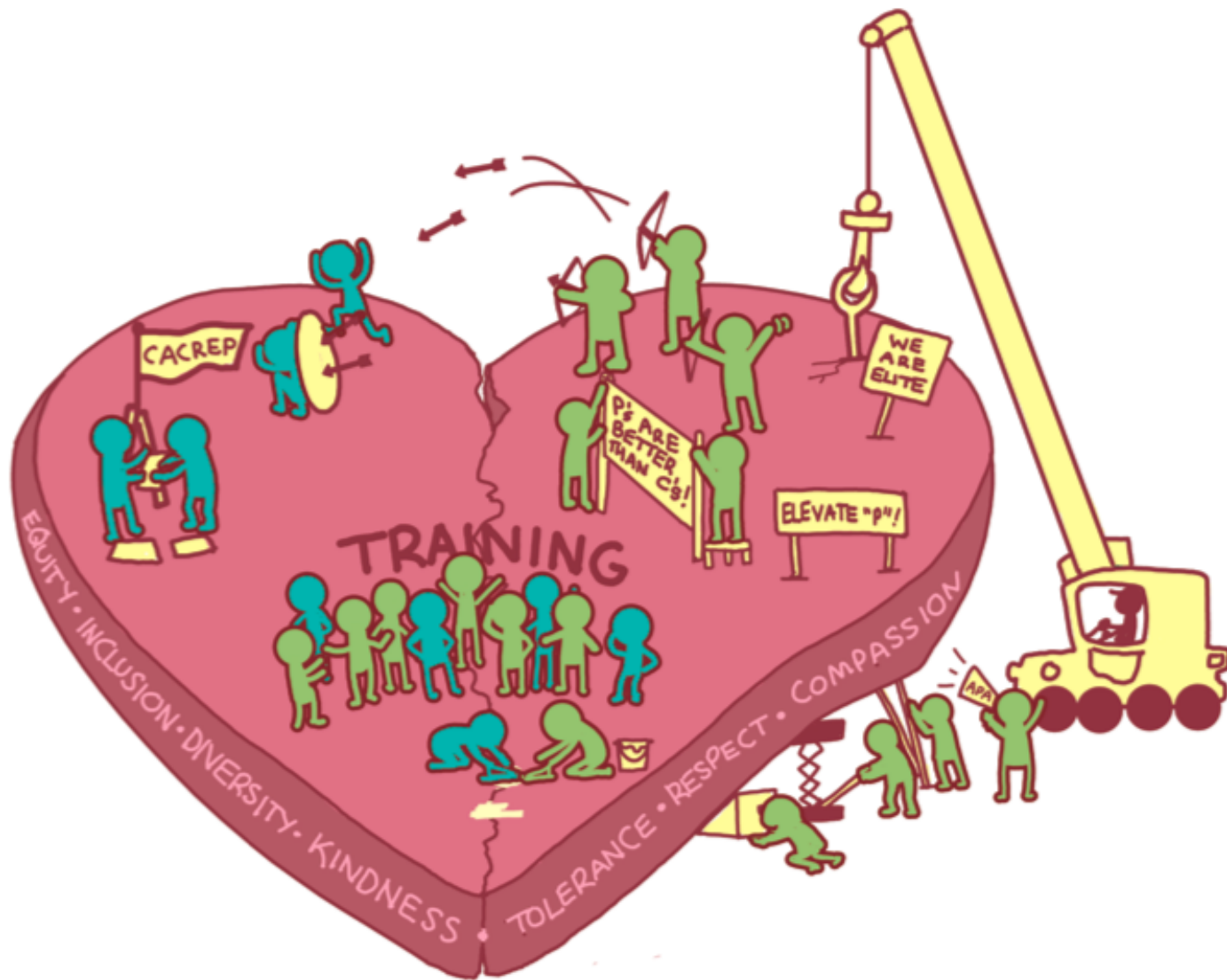
Artwork by Eric Neville

Figure 3: Conflicts and Tensions of Counseling and Counseling Psychology: 40 Years Ago
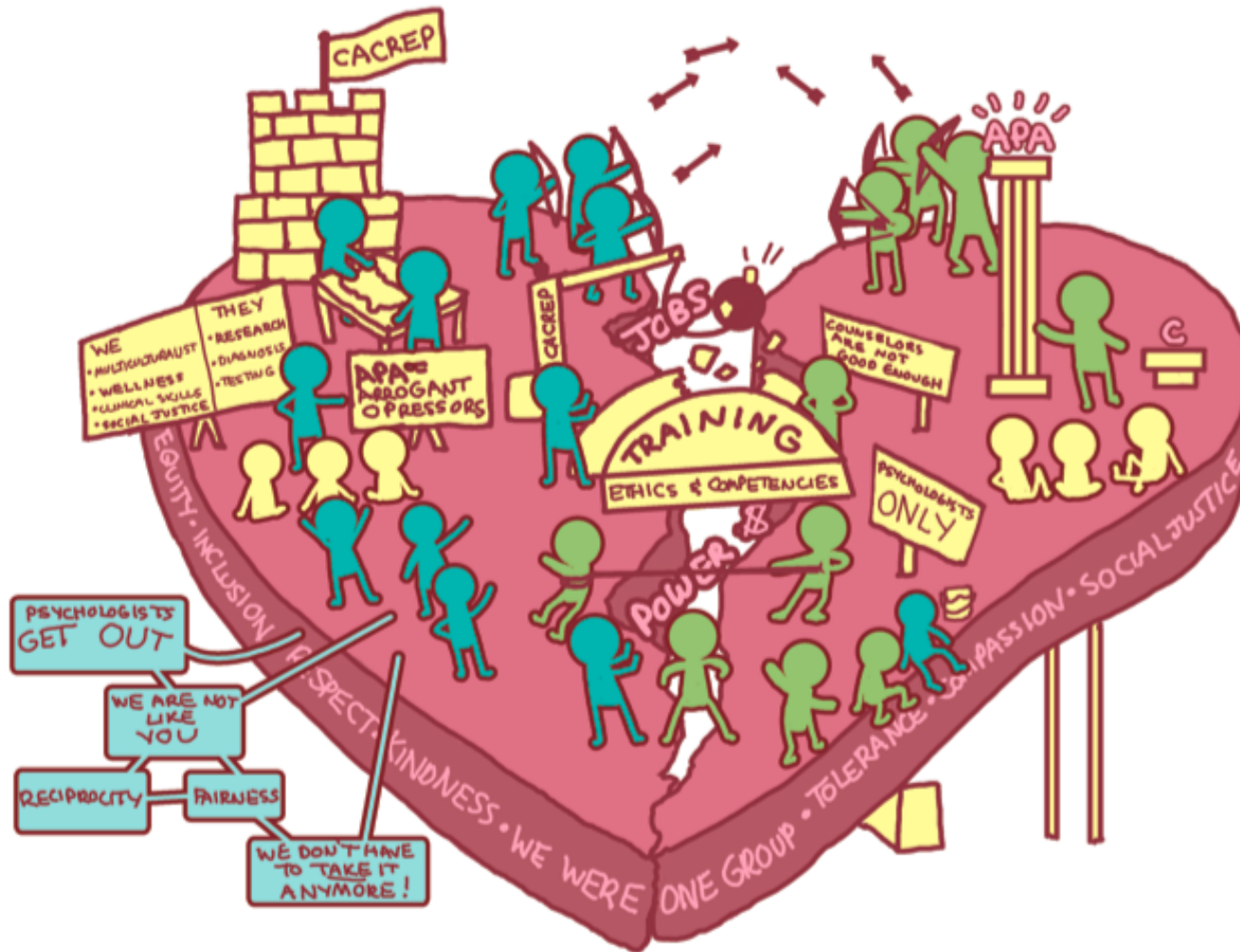
Artwork by Eric Neville

Figure 4: Conflicts and Tensions of Counseling and Counseling Psychology: Today

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The participants of this study shared their perspectives, knowledge, and expertise with researchers, based on having decades of experiences in training counseling students. They each shared a rich and strongly communicated set of experiences and perspectives with researchers, which have tremendous value and importance in helping understanding, analyze, and address important aspects of training and the field.

The lack of distinction made by participants between the training of Masters-level and Doctoral-level students and the great amount of overlap between the fields of Counseling, Counselor Education, and Counseling Psychology was both overtly stated by participants, and implicitly communicated through the ways they discussed aspects of training relative to trainees irrespective of training-level and programmatic affiliations. This finding is consistent with other statements made by participants about their perspective of the arbitrary nature of distinctions that have been historically drawn around issues of licensure and accreditation and professional scope of practice.

There have been strong efforts for some time within Counseling to define itself within the field as distinct from Psychology (Calley & Hawley, 2008) and yet there is little evidence about how this identity is distinct among Counselors themselves other than the claim of difference in emphasis or ideology (Mellin, Hunt, & Nichols, 2011). Mellin and colleagues (2008), for example, found that counselors see themselves distinct from Psychology by being grounded in wellness, prevention, and developmental stances. Yet these are stances also associated with

Counseling Psychology's values and training. The assertion of difference does not make it so. Indeed, some scholars have argued over the years that trying to insist on differentiation between fields where therapy is the mode of service is an impossible illusion (Hanna & Bemak, 1997). How counseling psychologists view their identities distinctly from Counselor Education and Counseling has not been the subject of empirical investigation. If, in the context of the current political maneuvering in response to recent CACREP actions and to protect professional scope, Counseling Psychology intends to distinguish itself from Counselor Education and Counseling, the distinctions should be concrete and authentic, and should be reflected in the training itself. How psychotherapy and therapy are distinct, for example, should be evident, empirically supported, and communicated to the public. If practitioners themselves are unclear about the training and service distinctions within the field, there can be little expectation that the public understands these differences. Insurance companies may be currently demonstrating this confusion most powerfully by equalizing reimbursement rates for counselors and psychologists. Further, while interdisciplinary treatment and integrated services remains a priority for the field (APA, 2014), there can be little expectation that other health care professionals understand these differences in professional purview. Effective collaboration between professionals requires an accurate understanding of the particular knowledge and skills of interdisciplinary partners (Bronstein, 2003). Clarifying this issue would appear, therefore, to be essential.

According to the present research, the historic and current divisions between Counseling, Counseling Psychology, and Counselor Education negatively impact training and training faculty. The arbitrary partitioning creates bad feelings and conflict between colleagues and erects needless barriers between professionals within training departments. These are issues which must be actively negotiated by faculty and have little to do with training itself or other

core functions of the professorate such as scholarship. It has been noted by scholars that there is fundamentally a shared knowledge base in terms of the scientific and research literature between these factions (Hanna & Bemak, 1997), and yet an open question is how much the current divisions negatively impact research and productive scientific inquiry, including publication or dissemination of important findings. It may be that with the growing distance and hostility in the field, it will be increasingly difficult to share and collaborate around research across this rift, and the potential siloing and intellectual wastefulness of such empirical segregation should be of great concern to the Academy.

The findings of this study with regard to the issue of CACREP and accreditation are aligned with calls for Counseling Psychology to address efforts made by CACREP to consolidate and solidify unilateral influence over training and licensure (Horne, 2013; Jackson & Scheel, 2013a; Jackson & Scheel, 2013b; Palmer, 2013). The findings help illuminate the antecedents and underpinnings of the tensions that have evolved in the field, and which must be negotiated in addressing these issues. It appears, therefore, that Counseling Psychology is at a crossroads, and in this critical moment of action, it is evident from this research that there are opportunities and also risks depending on how these issues are addressed.

The participants of this study describe the core conflicts in terms of oppression and power. Indeed, looked at objectively, the creation and perpetuation of artificial distinctions between people—differences that are subsequently used to denigrate and exclude some people and elevate and empower others for market share and economic benefit—are actions that are not aligned with the values of Counseling Psychology. Moreover, they are the actions aligned with patriarchal systems that produce oppressive and nefarious byproducts such as racism and colonialism. It may be important as Counseling Psychology contemplates action that counseling

psychologists re-examine their values and personal biases, and accept appropriate ownership of the historic harm that has been perpetrated in this regard.

The study finds that while CACREP accreditation helps to strengthen rigor and accountability with regard to training, the conflicts and political tensions associated with CACREP present significant challenges to faculty and negatively impact training programs. Nearly 82% of APA-accredited counseling psychology programs are affiliated with a Masters-level counselor training program (Jackson & Scheel, 2013a). Many faculty members and program leadership across the country may need support, advocacy, and assistance therefore in working to mitigate these negative impacts, which are likely to worsen in consequence to recent CACREP actions. There are efforts underway to organize a shift to the Masters in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Counsel's (MPCAC) Masters of Counseling (MCAC) accreditation as an alternative to CACREP, and to develop Master-level competency standards for training. Some leaders have suggested that CACREP's recent aggressive efforts to diminish the role and influence of Counseling Psychology in counselor training is an opportunity to reorganize and strengthen Counseling Psychology's role in Master-level training (Jackson & Scheel). While encouraging, it could be argued that the chief threat to such efforts to reorganize and advocate effectively is the historic and current ambivalence from within APA about Master's-level training (Dora, Goodyear, Lichtenberg, McPerson & Shullman, 2001). APA continues to maintain that only doctoral-level clinicians are appropriate for entry to independent practice, a stance that according to APA Executive Directorate leadership at a meeting during the Society of Counseling Psychology conference in Atlanta, Georgia in March, 2014, will not change. This position is unfortunately disconnected from the reality that all U.S. states license counselors for independent practice, and that the primary role of Master-level counselor training

programs is to prepare trainees for this very thing. APA's position is passé and counterproductive, and in the absence of actual evidence to substantiate their position that psychologists are better prepared for independent practice than counselors, represents the kind of hubris that has lead to the current hostilities and tensions in the field. APA could likely put an end to CACREP's clout and influence and all the related political maneuvering and difficulties by themselves subsuming Masters-level counselor training accreditation.

As things stand today, the doctoral degree in Counseling Psychology is not the most versatile and marketable degree for teaching in masters-level programs. According to this research, many students may discover their gifts and interest in teaching during their training programs; nearly all the participants in this study did not know they wanted to become faculty members until they had the experience of teaching in their doctoral programs. Counseling Psychology needs to address the tightening job market in institutions of higher education for counseling psychologists, along with informing perspective students about the potential limitations of their degree. It could be argued that new professionals and current students in doctoral programs are most impacted by these changes. These students also need to be informed about the potential threats these actions cause to the viability of their profession. Such consciousness-raising, may lead to important organization and advocacy by new professionals and current graduate students to assist with Counseling Psychology's efforts in this regard.

The participants of this study discussed the ways that higher education and the professorate has evolved. One of the striking aspects of how the pressures and requirements of faculty positions have shifted is that it is no longer practicable for faculty to maintain a practice and see clients on a regular basis. While several of the participants indicated that active connection to practice was critical to their instruction, the impact of faculty clinical activity on

instruction has not been the subject of empirical treatment. Intuitively it makes sense that involvement in clinical work would support high-quality instruction, and yet it is not clear what the lack of individual clinical emphasis in the professorate ultimately means for training. Findings also support the increasing likelihood that psychologists who themselves are more interested in research and scholarship rather than clinical practice are drawn to faculty positions. What impact this self-selection has on Masters-level training, where the emphasis is on preparing students for clinical practice is also unknown.

The findings of this study regarding the evolution of higher education and the professorate is aligned with observations that have been made about the increasing corporatization of universities (Mills, 2012), including the effect that this appears to have on Millennial students (Singleton- Jackson, Jackson, & Reinhardt, 2011). The participants of this study echo the findings of other researchers that a consumer-stance towards educational environments complicates Millennial trainees' expressions of entitlement and attitudes toward learning: "I paid my money, now give me an 'A.'" An interesting question is how much the professorate itself has been impacted by the business of higher education to the extent that it inadvertently contributes to this dynamic.

The increasing pressures on faculty to focus priorities on accruing funding and maintaining credit-hour production, and thereby placing less emphasis on teaching and instruction itself, limits the time and attention possible to invest in student development (Arum & Roska, 2011). The present research suggests that effectively training counseling students requires a tremendous amount of investment on the part of faculty—an investment which unfortunately is not necessarily rewarded by institutions, nor aligned particularly with institutional priorities. The incapacity or de-prioritization of impacting trainees in a deep or significant way as individuals

may be inadvertently perpetuating this consumer-driven entitlement dynamic. The unfortunate reality that money has become a governing priority of institutions of learning is disquieting. Even more distressing is the notion that money is greatly shaping the priorities of faculty and training itself, and this issue would therefore appear to demand greater attention and advocacy.

It is evident from the findings of this study that participants experienced difficulty consistent with the empirical literature in their complicated calculus for weighing impacts of training on counselor effectiveness. Yet despite these acknowledged challenges, participants revealed a more practical focus on the need to achieve integration and transfer of knowledge by trainees, which has been emphasized as a more productive question for the field on this issue (Roth & Fonagy, 2005). A related finding of this study is that that accreditation should not serve simply as a way for programs to check off areas of skill instruction, and effective training instead gives emphasis to cultivating trainees' skill integration and generalization of learning. Aligned with this concern about accreditation standards, as the competency-based movements of mental health training develop (Sperry, 2010) and training moves away from curriculum-based standards to competency-based training, it may be important to include competencies that focus on integration and transfer of learning in applying knowledge and skills to novel circumstances and situations.

This study's findings that trainees' capabilities for integrating knowledge, and transferring learning to practice as vital outcomes of training is aligned with emphasis in counselor training literature (Roth & Fonagy). It is important to note that while integration is an important aim, this study also finds that a current trend in training programs is more curricular emphasis on evidence-based techniques, and less attention given to theory and philosophy which are pivotal in helping students with integrative processes (Scott & Hanley, 2012). It appears that

if faculty are to be successful in facilitating trans-curricular synthesis and generalization of knowledge, greater curricular emphasis needs to be given to philosophy which provides critical conceptual underpinnings for epistemological and theoretical stances.

Another important training issue that emerged from this research is the thorny question of the degree to which empathy is a teachable skill in the context of counselor training. There is a substantial body of empirical support for the importance of empathy to therapeutic process and outcome (Elliott, Bohart, Watson, & Greenberg, 2011; Mohr, 1995). Empathy is a complicated and multidimensional skill which, according to researchers, involves diverse components including automatic emotional mimicry (Hess & Blairy, 2001) or mirroring and synchrony (Preston & DeWaal, 2002); affective recognition and self agency (Decety & Summerville, 2003), cognitive processes (Frith & Frith, 2006) and perspective-taking in understanding the client (Elliott et al., 2011), and behavioral responding such as attending to emotional distress (Eisenberg & Eggum, 2009). Researchers have also found somatic components to empathy, with therapists having significantly higher levels of physiological concordance and empathy than non-therapists (Messina et al., 2013). There have been instruments designed to evaluate therapist empathy, but given the complexity of empathy, it remains a difficult skill to evaluate operationally, and most methods of measurement rely on subjective perceptions about the experiences of participants or observers (Imel et al., 2014). Participants in this study provided equivocal and qualified responses about empathy and the degree to which counselor training can have an impact on this complicated, necessary skill. While empathy is widely considered a skill that can be cultivated and enhanced through training (Neukrug, Bayne, Dean-Nganga, & Pusateri, 2013), an important open question is how much of this core skill does a trainee need to be an effective therapist? Is there a threshold level of empathy required for counseling versus, for

example, accounting work, policing, or other fields? What level of proficiency is needed, and how is competency determined? As it stands, it seems that empathy as a critical competency is a kind of "X-factor"—a nebulous essential element that is implicitly felt—trainers know it when they see it or feel it. In the context of another finding from this study that removing students from graduate programs is difficult and fraught with litigious potentialities, it appears that the subjective nature of this determination greatly complicates training programs' important gate-keeping role, and therefore it would seem these questions should be the subject of further research and scholarly attention.

Participants revealed that there is a hidden curriculum within counselor training programs which is an important finding with implications for the field. The elements discussed as a part of the hidden curriculum: tolerating ambiguity; tolerating distress; knowledge of self; being active versus passive; and intentionality about growth and professional development are skills which were emphasized as critical components of counselor training, and yet were not skills explicitly worked into coursework or necessarily contained in training competencies. As the competency movement evolves (Sperry, 2010), it may be important to ensure that these hitherto embedded skills are in fact specified more overtly in competencies. There is some evidence to support the theory that these skills are foundational for the integration and transfer of knowledge as discussed by participants. Tolerating ambiguity and accepting that there may be more than one way of understanding any give situation, for example, is often critical to integrative development (Scott & Hanley, 2012). Further exploration and research regarding how these skills may be related to integration and capacity to transfer learning might be helpful to training professionals. It would seem important for these skills to additionally be made more explicit to students and

perhaps enjoy greater intentionality in terms of being deliberately incorporated into training goals and activities on the part of faculty.

    Taken together, the participants of this study revealed important aspects of training that can be integrated conceptually as a theoretical model which is depicted in Figure 5, below.
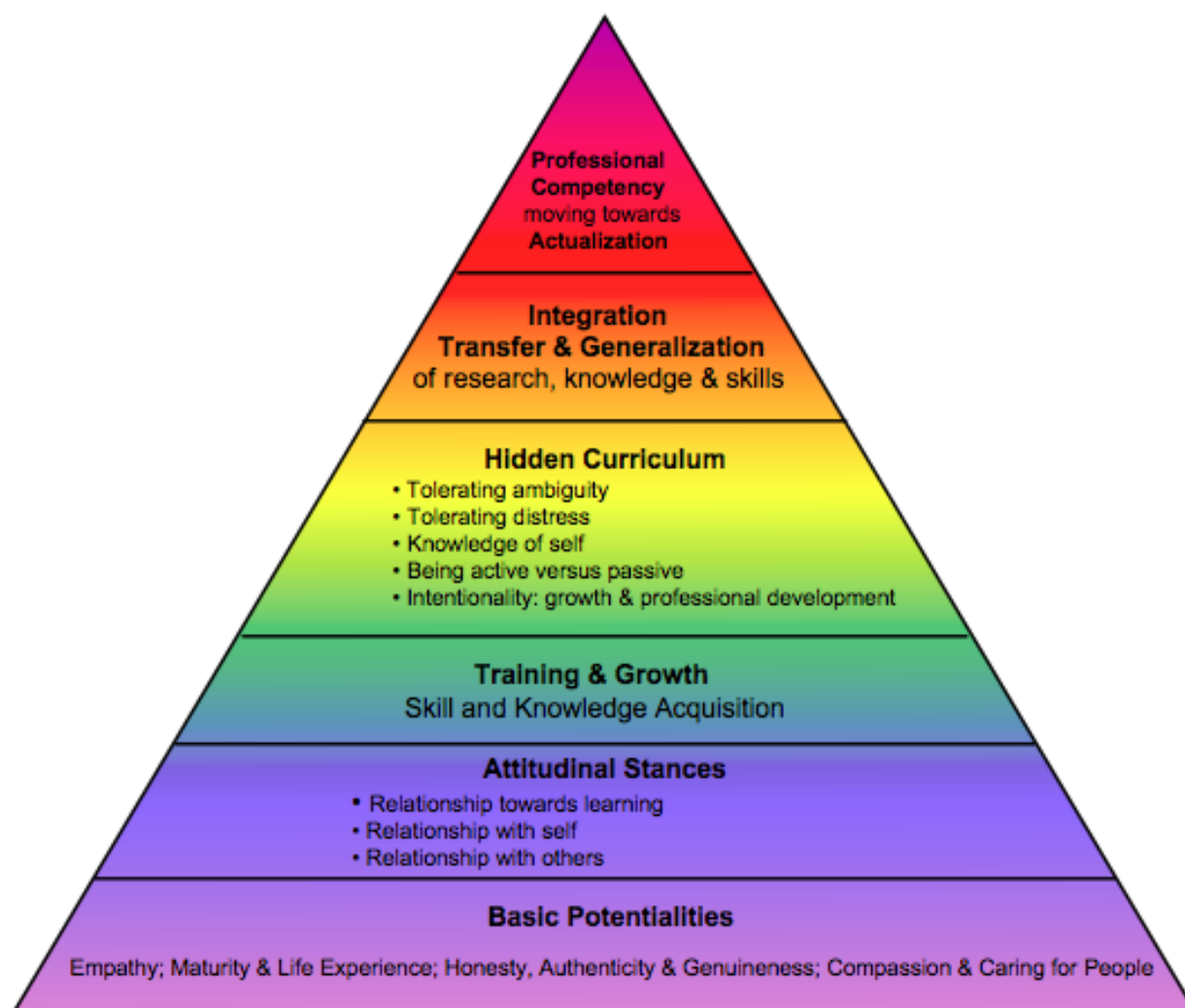

Figure 5: Training Hierarchy of Needs

    Findings from this study regarding elements of training that lead to professional competency and actualization in terms of counselor development can be placed on a hierarchy of needs, echoing Maslow's original structure (1943). As the figure illustrates, there are a set of

basic potentialities and attitudinal stances which are foundational and essential to training, and which participants described as characteristics that are screened for as a part of selection for admission. Training components build upon these essential characteristics and qualities in developing the skill and knowledge acquisition for trainees. Training is further enhanced by the cultivation of skills described as the "hidden curriculum" by participants. According to this research, an ultimate goal of training is the integration, transfer, and generalization of learning, which leads to a kind of capacity for further growth and development and enables trainees to journey towards professional competency and actualization. Further research is needed to validate this theoretical model which emerged from synthesis of participant data and integration of this study's findings.

To the extent that an aim of this study was to develop "best practices" for admissions and remediation processes in counselor training, this study has not been particularly successful. An important finding of this study is that there was little consensus and even some contradictory statements among participants about admissions processes, which unfortunately is aligned with an absence of empirical consensus in the literature regarding candidate selection. There was agreement among participants about important qualities in students that are associated with core conditions (Rogers, 1957; Traux & Carkhuff, 1967), but less consensus about other characteristics. This study reveals very little about how faculty assess candidates based on characteristics that they feel are essential. They agreed only that personal interviews are an important part of the process, and this appears to be because interviews facilitate selection based on observation and qualitative judgments about candidates, which is a finding consistent with previous research (Norcross, Stevenson, & Nash, 1986). Given the accepted importance of screening of applicants for admission to programs, it is noteworthy that there appears to be no

standardized admissions practices, even among the participants of this study who have been involved in admissions processes for many, many years and have made selection decisions for thousands of candidates. Driven mostly by clinical instinct about candidates, participants of this study noted that admissions processes tend to be an imperfect and flawed process. While it can be argued that more research is needed to measure and standardize admission processes, it may be that much like the complexity of therapeutic processes as related to client outcomes has in many ways defied effective empirical quantification, attempting to quantify admissions processes as related to trainee outcomes is similarly illusory. Nonetheless, it is clear that increased knowledge and empirically-based criteria to assist faculty in making admissions decisions could be very helpful to training programs.

Another related finding of this study is the absence of consensus regarding remediation processes. Among the participants of this study there was little agreement about remediation except that it is difficult and time-consuming for faculty. Research suggests that between 10% and 18% of counseling students are skill deficient or poorly suited for clinical work (Gaubatz & Vera, 2006), and that many students graduate from programs without these deficiencies being addressed through remediation (Gaubatz & Vera, 2002). Much of the literature regarding remediation seems to focus around potential litigation issues with students, which was referenced as a concern by participants of this study. The literature particularly emphasizes processes needed justify remediation efforts in court cases such as systemized documentation of student issues and specific, formalized procedures for remediation (Kerl et al., 2002; McAdams & Foster, 2007). There has been less attention to what is effective in terms of remediation itself. Given the lack of agreement among participants, and expressed sense of being challenged about how to effectively remediate student deficiencies, along with the absence of helpful standards of

practice in the literature, it is evident that greater attention needs to be given to this issue by researchers.

The finding that there are particular challenges related to the instruction of Millennial students in counselor training programs is aligned with other research that has found generational characteristics to be challenging for educators (Chambers, 2010; Olsen, 2009; Glockler, 2008; Venne & Colemen, 2010). The findings of this study suggest that while faculty may be gradually shifting in small ways to address the particular set of challenges Millennial trainees face as counseling students, there is not yet a particular emphasis or systematic view of adjusting counselor training to meet Millennial needs. The disparity between the characteristics and qualities that the participants describe as important or detrimental for trainees in terms of admissions criteria, and the characteristics and qualities that the participants use to describe Millennial trainees is striking when compared side-by-side, as illustrated in Figure 6, below.

Admissions	Millennials
Important Characteristics:	**Characteristics:**
• Empathy	
• Maturity & Life Experience	• Immature & "Dumb about Life"
• Honesty, Authenticity & Genuineness	
• Compassion & Caring for People	
• Relationship to self:	• Closed to self:
–Self-awareness, introspection	–Resist depth
–Cognitive flexibility	–Rigid, anxious
• Relationship to learning:	• Entitled
–Curiosity, engaged with learning	–Want "free rides;" "grub for grades"
–Openness to feedback	–Resistant to feedback
• Relationship to others:	• Relationship to others:
–Sensitivity to diversity	–Dependent, over-reliant on others
–Collaboration	
Detrimental Characteristics:	
• Narcissism, ego-centrism	✓ Narcissism
• Immaturity, not enough life experience	✓ Immaturity, not enough life experience
• Perfectionism, competitiveness	✓ Perfectionism
• Resistance to Feedback	✓ Resistance to Feedback
• Fight Learning	✓ Fight Learning

Figure 6: Admissions Characteristics versus Millennial Characteristics

Further comparison, represented in Figure 7, below, between the hidden curriculum described by participants as a critical part of training, and training areas which represent a particular struggle for Millennial students is also conspicuous regarding the obvious discrepancy.

Hidden Curriculum	Millennials' Training Challenges:
• Tolerating ambiguity	• Tolerating ambiguity
• Tolerating distress	• Tolerating distress
• Knowledge of self	• Knowledge of self
• Active versus passive	• Anxiety and Dependence
• Intentionality about growth & professional development	• Entitlement, grade-focused

Figure 7: Hidden Curriculum versus Millennials' Training Challenges

There are a number of implications that can be made regarding this significant gap. It may be that counselor training would benefit from a more formal, organized, comprehensive approach to addressing the apparent significant challenges of Millennial counseling trainees. Program faculty may benefit from increased support and resources for anticipating and addressing the challenges, and perhaps the findings of this study can help inform practices to help mitigate or remediate difficulty with Millennial students. Prevailing assumptions and expectations about trainee capability, characteristics, and behavior are likely greatly disrupted and often disappointed, which in turn may lead to faculty frustration and disillusionment. It is possible that these challenges are particularly depleting to faculty and supervisors, and faculty fatigue and burn-out should be concerns of program leadership. Intentionality in finding ways to understand generational differences, connect with students, and adapt training to Millennial culture and needs is important to faculty empowerment (Espinoza, 2012; Knowlton, 2013).

The finding that the field tends to pick up an issue or theory "du jour" to the exclusion of other ideas is a noteworthy critique and caution from participants about disconnection with core values and identifying professional stances in favor of popular trends. This issue has special significance where the current dominant ideology intersects with a Millennial generation of learners. According to findings of the present research, the evidenced-based movement has led to an emphasis in training and practice on manualized treatments and technique-driven modalities. Unfortunately, this mode of therapy as a prescriptive model for treatment colludes with Millennial anxiety, discomfort with ambivalence and disconnection from self, to evade developing skills in psychologically deeper, interpersonal-based therapy requiring therapist use of self as a therapeutic mode. This trend should be concerning to counselor training professionals, because it likely further complicates the training's ability to shift Millennials out of more comfortable stances. Additionally, as counselors with this training modality enter the field in large numbers, it may complicate the definitions of what therapy constitutes and how it should be defined for the field and for the public.

Limitations

There are several important limitations of this study. Generalizability is not the aim of Grounded theory methodology, and caution should be used in attempting to generalize the experiences of the eight participants in this study to all training professionals. First, the purposive sampling strategy that was used for this study required that for inclusion participants identified themselves as training professionals with more than twenty years of experience in training counselors. Additionally, the study's nonrepresentative sample was comprised entirely of White, university faculty members. No members of Generation X or the Millennial generation were represented in the sample, and most participants were from the Baby Boomer generation. Future

research should draw upon a wider and more diverse sample for results that have wider transferability.

Research bias is a limiting factor in all research. Sound qualitative method requires researchers to complete a reflexive exploration of themselves in relationship with their subject and how their bias shapes the lens through which their interpretations of data are made (Preissle, 2008). This issue of bias was addressed by this research team at the outset and throughout the research process and use of reflexive journals, peer debriefing, thick descriptions of participant codes, and member checking of the transcripts. An external auditor was also used to minimize the impact of research bias on the results of the study.

Conclusion

Higher education faces ever increasing economic constraints and pressures (Brooks & Heiland, 2007). Graduate training programs are facing challenges related to pressured to enroll more students, generate more income for their colleges and universities, and maintain competitive standards for training programs (Urofsky, 2013). Operating within institutional contexts and needing to meet accountability and evidenced-based standards, training professionals are served by empirical support for their decision-making related to their training paradigms. Very little empirical attention has focused on ways counselors are trained in graduate training programs (McLeod, 2003).

This exploratory study contributes to the undeveloped body of counselor training literature by investigating the experiences of training professionals with more than 20 years of experience in training counselors. Analysis of the data from qualitative interviews with participants generated several emergent theoretical models regarding training. These theoretical models illuminate important aspects of training including: the chief influences which currently

shape and effect counselor training; critical needs and trends in the selection, instruction, and remediation of counselor trainees; the challenges and needs of Millennial generation trainees; and the evolution of tensions in the field regarding CACREP accreditation and political challenges to professional identities. As anticipated, participants of this study contributed important information to the study by reflecting on their considerable expertise and rich professional experiences in training counseling students. The findings of this study illuminate a number of issues in need of further investigation by researchers. This research contributes to the field of counselor training by serving to provide important foundational data and theory about training upon which researchers can build future research.

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APPENDIX A

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

Dear Dr. _____:

My name is Eleanor McMahan, I am a counseling psychology doctoral student working under the direction of Dr. Georgia Calhoun in the Department of Counseling and Human Development Services at the University of Georgia. I am writing to invite you to participate in our qualitative study: "Counselor education: What 20 years of experience tells us about the challenges, needs, trends and best practices for counselor training."

The purpose of this study is to investigate the experiences of training professionals with more than 20 years of experience in counselor education to identify "best practices" in the selection, instruction, supervision and preparation of trainees for the field of counseling. If you choose to participate, we will ask you to complete a brief demographic questionnaire, and participate in an hour-long qualitative interview in person or on the telephone.

Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and the information you share in the course of this study will be confidential. The results of the research study may be published, but your name will not be used. Your identity will not be associated with your responses in any published format.

There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research. If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to contact me at 678-895-7493 or Dr. Calhoun at 706-542-1812. Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant should be directed to University of Georgia Institutional Review Board, 629 Boyd GSRC, Athens, Georgia 30602; (706) 542-3199; irb@uga.edu.

Please let me know if you would like to participate in this study.

Best Regards,

Eleanor McMahan, M.Ed.
Doctoral Student, Counseling Psychology
College of Education
The University of Georgia
678-895-7493

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

The University of Georgia

College of Education
Department of Counseling and Human Development Services

I agree to participate in a research study titled "Counselor education: What 20 years of experience tells us about the challenges, needs, trends and best practices for counselor training" conducted by Eleanor McMahan from the Department of Counseling and Human Development Services at the University of Georgia (678-895-7493) under the direction of Dr. Georgia Calhoun, Department of Counseling and Human Development Services at the University of Georgia (706-542-1812). I understand that my participation is voluntary. I can refuse to participate or stop taking part at anytime without giving any reason, and without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. I can ask to have all of the information that can be identified as mine returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

The purpose for this study is to investigate the experiences of training professionals with more than 20 years of experience in counselor education. If I volunteer to take part in this study, I will be asked to do the following things:

- Complete a demographic questionnaire (5 minutes)
- Complete a qualitative interview with the researcher about professional experience in the selection, instruction, supervision and preparation of trainees for the field of counseling (60 minutes).

The benefits for me are that I may enjoy the opportunity to share my expertise and reflect on my professional experiences during the interview with the researcher. There are no anticipated risks to me for participating in this study.

I may quit the study at any time with no penalty. I understand that this interview will be audiotaped and later transcribed. I understand that I may skip any questions I do not wish to answer, and may also discontinue the interview at any time without penalty. Any individually-identifiable information collected during the qualitative interview will be left out of the transcript of my interview, and the audio recording will be destroyed immediately following transcription. No individually-identifiable information about me will be shared with others without my written permission.

By participating in the telephone interview with the researcher at the appointed time, I am agreeing to the study procedures and consent to participation. The investigator will answer any further questions about the research and my participation during the course of the project.

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 629 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu.

APPENDIX C

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Please select a pseudonym for this study: _____

Number of years of experience as a counselor educator: _____

Age _____

Gender _____

Race/ Ethnicity _____

_____

Educational degrees:_____

APPENDIX D

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How did you become a counselor educator?

2. Counselor education generally involves coursework in ethics, theory, and research, helping skills instruction, and "hands-on" supervised counseling practicum and internship experiences.
   - How effective do you think these elements are for training?
   - Do you feel that emphasis should be given to one component more than the others?
   - What is missing from this combination that would benefit training?

3. In terms of a professional philosophy about counselor training, do you believe you are creating counselors or shaping what is already there?
   - Is it possible to teach empathy, for example?
   - Given this answer, is this combination of training experiences the best way to meet these training goals?

4. How do you select applicants for admission to your program?
   - If time, effort and expense were not a consideration, how would you conduct your admissions process?
   - What are the critical characteristics of counselor trainees for them to be successful in training programs and in the field?
   - What are characteristics that are to the detriment of student success in training programs and the field?
   - Are there characteristics that are important for trainees to have to be successful graduate students that are not aligned with important characteristics for the field?

5. What had been you experience for dealing with remediation of serious deficits in trainee aptitudes, and skills?
   - What has worked best?
   - What has been less successful?

6. The Millennial generation or "Me generation" has generated some notoriety about their particular style of engaging learning environments. They have been observed by some to be more academically entitled, for example. What have you observed about this current generation of counselor trainees? Or what other trends have you seen recently in the population of students entering training?
   - Are there characteristics of this current population that make them particularly challenging for counselor training?
   - Are there characteristics that benefit their training?
   - Do you have a sense of particular needs that this population has compared to others?

7. What are the most rewarding parts of training counselors?
   - What are the most challenging?

8. What has been your experience with CACREP accreditation?
   - What are the advantages of accreditation?
   - Is there anything enjoyable or particularly positive about the CACREP accreditation processes?
   - What are the barriers to CACREP accreditation?
   - What specifically are the most challenging aspects of CACREP accreditation processes?

9. How does accreditation impact your program and institution?
   - How does accreditation impact students? How does it impact graduates?
   - How does accreditation impact faculty? How does it impact faculty identity?
   - How does accreditation impact instruction and training