2018

Experiences of Faculty Members Transitioning from Land-Based to Online Counselor Education

Natalie Hale
Walden University

Walden University

College of Counselor Education & Supervision

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

Natalie Hale

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee
Dr. Corinne Bridges, Committee Chairperson, Counselor Education and Supervision Faculty
Dr. Geneva Gray, Committee Member, Counselor Education and Supervision Faculty
Dr. Adrian Warren, University Reviewer, Counselor Education and Supervision Faculty

Chief Academic Officer
Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University
2018

Abstract

Experiences of Faculty Members Transitioning from Land-Based

to Online Counselor Education

by

Natalie Hale

MA, University of Texas at San Antonio, 2009

BS, East Texas Baptist University, 1991

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Counselor Education and Supervision

Walden University

November 2018

Abstract

A growing trend in counselor education in the United States is to accommodate current technological change by including more online academic opportunities. Slow to emerge in the counselor education literature is information that highlights how instructors have negotiated the move from land-based teaching to online teaching. A lack of knowledge about this transitional experience is concerning because counselor education programs might overlook important opportunities to support indeed, facilitate the transitional process. The purpose of this research study was to illuminate the experiences of counselor educators who have transitioned from land-based to online teaching. A transcendental phenomenological approach provided the framework and guided the methodology. This study highlighted the experiences of 6 counselor educators from small universities across the United States who transitioned from teaching counseling courses in the classroom to teaching them online. Semistructured interviews provided the data for this study; analysis used Giorgi's systematic process of data reduction. Four major themes of common experience emerged from the data: (a) high expectations and low support from university leaders, (b) limits to transitional enthusiasm among counseling faculty, (c) solutions for transitional success for counseling faculty, and (d) support essential for the counselor educator's transition. Results of this study confirm a need for greater attention to the transitional process. Counselor educators requested more opportunities for experience and support. When considering social change, understanding the needs of counselor educators in this transition can help inform much needed training strategies and supportive services in counselor education programs.

Experiences of Faculty Members Transitioning from Land-Based

to Online Counselor Education

by

Natalie Hale

MA, University of Texas at San Antonio, 2009

BS, East Texas Baptist University, 1991

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Counselor Education and Supervision

Walden University

November 2018

Dedication

I dedicate this project to my wonderful husband, Barry Hale, who has provided unconditional love, support, and encouragement throughout this process. I remember my very first day of class when I questioned my decision to go back to school. Only because of my husband's sweet words did I finish that first day. He has been a constant source of support and has celebrated every accomplishment. Barry, you are the best! In my eyes, we have earned this degree together, and I will always be grateful for your unconditional love and support.

I also dedicate this work to my three girls, Brittany, Bailey, and Brooke. Knowing that you all were watching my process helped motivate a desire to never give up. You girls have encouraged me all along the way, and I hope that I will always get the opportunity to encourage you. I have learned that if you just believe in yourself, it is amazing what you can do.

Acknowledgments

Many have contributed to the completion of this research project with their unconditional dedication, support, and encouragement. I have the greatest admiration for all of those individuals, and I am thankful for their willingness to join me on this academic journey. I would like to thank my family who has sacrificed so much to help me accomplish this dream. My husband, Barry, has provide great stability, encouragement, and support along the way. I am also thankful for my children who never seemed to doubt that I could make this happen. Brittany, Bailey, and Brooke were the best cheerleaders. Finally, I cannot forget my lifelong motivator and teacher. It was my Dad's passion for psychology and his lifelong dedication to teaching that truly inspired my desire to learn, grow, and develop in the field. I will forever be grateful for the example he set by never wavering in his integrity and commitment to learn.

I am also tremendously thankful for a dedicated committee of counselor educators who worked tirelessly to help me develop and refine this research project. Thank you to Dr. Bridges, my research chair, for being a source of continual support, encouragement, and dedication to academic excellence. I am also thankful for Dr. Gray, my second committee member, who provided wonderful guidance and encouragement along the way. Another thank you goes to Dr. Warren, my university research reviewer, for dedicating valuable time and expertise to see this project through. Finally, thank you to my online colleagues who became a great source of support and encouragement as we journeyed together toward this meaningful academic goal.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Academic practices in counselor education are rapidly evolving with the growing use of technology (Association for Counselor Education and Supervision [ACES], 2016). As the concept of educational delivery begins to shift in higher education, researchers have noted evidence of both excitement and fear among many stakeholders who find themselves in the path of this change (Blackmon, 2016; Mandernach, Mason, Forrest, & Hackathorn, 2012; Schmidt, Hodge, Tschida, 2013). Students and organizational leaders appear more open to embracing these technological advancements while researchers characterize faculty members as often a bit more hesitant (Allen, Seaman, Poulin, & Straut, 2016; Naidu, 2014).

Faculty members in higher education often feel uneasy about moving traditional land-based or on-ground courses to an online academic settings (Keengwe & Kidd, 2010). Online courses typically deliver 80% or more of academic content through a technology-based format (Allen et al., 2016; Keengwe & Kidd, 2010). Online courses also require educators to use a unique pedagogical style conducive to synchronous or asynchronous instructional methods (ACES, 2017; Limperos, Buckner, Kaufmann, & Frisby, 2015).

When exploring the resistance faculty members may experience when faced with online teaching, researchers have suggested possible barriers, such as assumptions about online academic practices, a lack of training, or limited exposure to online teaching methods. All could fuel this distrust (Baran, Correia, & Thompson, 2011; Blackmon,

2016; Schmidt et al., 2013). Although researchers seem to agree that faculty members need help making a move from land-based to online teaching practices, limited literature exists to illuminate what counselor educators might require to teach online courses effectively (ACES, 2016; Bridges & Frazier, 2018; Sword, 2012). To support faculty members as they contemplate a move from well-established land-based practices to more innovative online approaches in counselor education, it seems important to develop knowledge related to this transitional process. Research that illuminates the experiences of faculty members who have made this transition might offer valuable insight to support development opportunities for counselor educators who would like to include online teaching skills in their toolbox of academic practice.

In this chapter, I offer an overview of the current literature available on online teaching and highlight what is still needed to understand this transitional process. I discuss how a lack of confidence in online teaching practices among faculty members in counselor education programs could pose a problem because online teaching is becoming more expected of faculty members across disciplines in higher education (Baack, Jordan, & Baack, 2016; Mandernach et al., 2012). Below, I outline the theoretical framework, purpose, and questions for this transcendental phenomenological study, and I speak to the nature and significance of the project. Finally, I discuss the focus, clarity, and reliability of this study by defining the primary terms as well as consider possible assumptions, limitations, and delimitation associated with this research.

Background

Limited research was available related to the transition between teaching land-based and teaching online courses in counselor education. However, when exploring the topic with a wider lens, a growing body of literature was available on online teaching and learning across various disciplines in higher education (Allen et al., 2016; Keengwe & Kidd, 2010; Blackmon, 2016). Researchers have explored perceived motivations and limitations for teaching online as well as some best practices for the online academic experience (Baran et al., 2011; Chiasson, Terras, & Smart, 2015). When narrowing the focus to counselor education, some literature was available to address best teaching practices (Malott, Hall, Sheely-Moore, Krell, & Cardaciotto, 2014), but few resources emerged to describe current teaching environments and best practices for teaching online in counselor education (ACES, 2016, 2017; Bridges & Frazier, 2018). When considering the transition from land-based to online teaching, researchers across various disciplines in higher education have suggested faculty members need training, experiences, and institutional support to help rethink pedagogy and engage in a successful transition process (Blackmon, 2016; Mandernach et al., 2012; Moore, 2014).

As technology continues to infiltrate higher education, more research is needed to help bridge the divide between land-based and online academic experiences. Many research opportunities exist for counselor educators who want to provide a more in-depth examination of various online academic practices. One significant gap found in the counselor education literature was a lack of information on the experiences of counselor educators who transitioned from land-based to online teaching practices. Offering the

professional community scholarly research on counselor educator experiences during this transition could help to broaden perceptions and determine what is truly needed for faculty members to navigate change effectively and become more successful with both land-based and online teaching modalities.

Problem Statement

Technology has become a formidable presence in society, infiltrating many aspects of modern life, including higher education. Traditionally, university faculty members have adhered to well-developed patterns of land-based academic practice (Mandernach et al., 2012). However, scholars are now being challenged to consider the possibility of expanding pedagogical styles to include more online teaching methods (Mandernach et al., 2012).

Blackmon (2016) explained that in 2012 over half of faculty members in higher education felt uncomfortable with the idea of online learning; considering the practice a radical transformation of the academic experience. A lack of support for online learning was substantiated in the following years as other researchers found stakeholders in higher education were still hesitant to fully embrace the value of online academic practices often questioning the rigor and integrity of the approach (Karl & Peluchette, 2013; Reamer, 2013). A lack of confidence in online academic methods among faculty members in higher education is a problem as online learning has started to take root in many academic programs including counselor education (Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs [CACREP], 2018).

Resistance to online learning among faculty members in higher education is well documented in the literature. Reasons for this resistance were attributed to comfort with traditional academic practices and acceptance of broad assumptions about online learning methods (Blackmon, 2016; Karl & Peluchette, 2013; Reamer, 2013; Urofsky, 2013). Blackmon (2016) and Smith et al. (2015) attributed resistance to a fear of the unknown among faculty members who lacked training in online academic practices. Without proper training, faculty members who are asked to teach online courses might feel discomfort due to a limited understanding of how to critically analyze the effective development and delivery of online courses. Sword (2012) supported this finding in a study with nursing faculty members. They reported that they were often asked to transition from land-based to online courses with no previous experience or training in online methods leaving them lacking confidence in their online teaching approach.

The growing trend of online academic programs has necessitated a greater number of faculty members to become proficient in both land-based and online teaching practices (Sword, 2012). Although there was some evidence in the literature to suggest training was needed to help faculty members smoothly transition from land-based to online teaching experiences in higher education, a significant gap exists in the professional counseling literature to understand exactly what counselor educators might need to reduce resistance and facilitate a smooth transition to online counselor education. Understanding what is needed to help facilitate a better transitional experience will inform training practices that support the transitional process.

Purpose

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to illuminate the lived experiences of U.S. faculty members who have transitioned from teaching land-based counselor education courses to online courses. Studying their experiences should increase knowledge in the field of counselor education regarding factors that may support or limit this transitional process. The results of this study are to inform policies and practices surrounding training activities in higher education that might help to facilitate a smoother transitional experience for counselor educators.

Research Question

What are the experiences of U.S. faculty members who have transitioned from land-based counseling courses to online courses?

Theoretical Framework

I used transcendental phenomenology as the theoretical frame to guide this exploration into the transitional experience of counselor educators who have moved from land-based to online academic settings. Husserl (1931) described this philosophical perspective as knowledge coming from the meaning of the human experience. This knowledge develops through the participant's current perceptions found in their immediate awareness (Giorgi, 2009). Using this approach, I bracketed any prejudgments or personal perceptions to ensure the collection of uncontaminated information (Husserl, 1931). This approach to understanding the transitional experience of faculty members from land-based to online settings was not unique as Sword (2012) employed a transcendental phenomenological frame when exploring the transitional experience of

nurse educators. By focusing on the participants' experiences from their current awareness, patterns emerged from structural and textural descriptions and offered themes of common perceptions that culminated in the essence of the transitional process (Sword, 2012). For this project, transcendental phenomenology provided the lens with which to view the transitional experience of the participants who have a direct, personal knowledge of the transition.

Nature of the Study

A transcendental phenomenological approach guided this exploration into the lived experiences of faculty members who have transitioned from teaching land-based to online counselor education courses. With limited research available in the field of counselor education to inform teaching practices, few would argue that both quantitative and qualitative forms of research are necessary to increase understanding in the field (ACES, 2016; Bridges & Frazier, 2018). For this study, I was interested in exploring the experiences of counselor educators as they transition from teaching in the classroom to teaching online. A quantitative approach would provide an objective, numerical view of the educational experience, but my research questioned the human condition of teaching in counselor education. A qualitative design offered the best opportunity to address the personal descriptions, experiences, and observations of counselor educators as they made the transition (Husserl, 1931). When considering the best qualitative approach to use for this exploration, I found a narrative approach too broad because I was not interested in a sequence of events. I considered a case study too narrow in scope because I wanted to understand experiences across counselor education programs. I chose instead to use

transcendental phenomenology as this would allow me to focus on the lived experience of various counselor educators across the United States.

This qualitative approach allowed faculty members to share rich, thick descriptions of their transition experience. These descriptions included supports that promoted a positive transition, especially in the areas of student engagement and the facilitation of learning, and barriers that may have impeded their progress. Consistent with the transcendental philosophical perspective, collected data came specifically from the participant's current awareness (Husserl, 1931). As patterns emerged from their descriptions, themes of common experience revealed the essence of the transitional process for counselor educators (Giorgi, 2009). Learning from faculty members who already transitioned from land-based to online settings in counselor education could help to facilitate a better transitional experience for future faculty members.

Definitions

Land-based academic experience: A face-to-face course that used relatively no online technology, but instead, content was delivered in writing or orally by the instructor. Learning was bound by location and the physical presence of the instructor and the students (Allen et al., 2016; Keengwe & Kidd, 2010).

Hybrid academic experience: A blended form of learning that included both online and face-to-face delivery. Some educators view hybrid learning as a valuable method to attend to various learning styles by incorporating both online and land-based experiences (Allen et al., 2016; Bridges & Frazier, 2018).

Online Academic Experience: A technology-based format with student-centered

learning unbound by time or space (Allen et al., 2016; Keengwe & Kidd, 2010).

Land-Based Teaching: Teaching practices that occur on-ground in a classroom setting. These practices are often instructor focused and rooted in educational tradition (Bilbeisi & Minsky, 2014; Bridges & Frazier, 2018).

Online Teaching: Teaching practices provided in a virtual environment that rely on unique pedagogy conducive to synchronous or asynchronous instructional methods (ACES, 2017; Limperos, Buckner, Kaufmann, & Frisby, 2015).

Transition to Online Teaching: The holistic interplay among personal, pedagogical, contextual, and organizational factors that contribute to change from teaching in a classroom setting to teaching online (Baran & Correia, 2014).

Assumptions

This study was subject to three assumptions: (a) online teaching and learning would remain a relevant and growing trend in counselor education; (b) the demand for online courses would directly correlate with the demand for online teachers; (c) participants would answer truthfully and would fully disclose their thoughts about the transitional experience.

Scope and Delimitations

A large body of literature points to uncertainty among faculty members in higher education related to online teaching and learning (Baack et al., 2016; Blackmon, 2016; Baran & Correia, 2014). Absent from the counselor education literature was rich information on the transitional experience for counselor educators who moved from land-based to online academic settings. More research was needed to illuminate the

experiences of counselor educators in relation to training, institutional support, and experiential opportunities or a lack thereof to better understand what supported or hindered faculty members as they moved from land-based to online teaching opportunities.

Criteria for inclusion in this study included being a faculty member at a small institution of higher learning with a total enrollment of less than 2,500 online students. Participants were required to (a) be currently teaching an online course in a counselor education program and (b) to have taught at least one course in a land-based counselor education program prior to teaching online. Using faculty members who experienced both land-based and online teaching provided the richest data for this project.

Research participants for this study came from small universities across the United States. Focusing on this population made the study not widely generalizable to other populations (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). According to Allen et al. (2016), smaller universities across the United States have the lowest acceptance of online learning. By offering details on this project, other small universities may find aspects of this research relatable to their unique situation (Priest, 2016). Participants in this project also represented various cultures, genders, ages, employment statuses (full time and adjunct), years of experience, and teaching styles to help with transferability. I followed a specific data collection and analysis procedure, such as using verbatim transcription from recordings, to help readers evaluate the scope of transferability to their unique setting (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Limitations

Limitations to consider in the development of this research study included researcher bias and the collection of an adequate sample size. I was a student in a fully online doctoral counseling program who perceived that a sigma may exist in higher education surrounding online learning. I was aware that I valued my learning experience and wanted others in higher education to also value an online learning opportunity. This bias could influence conclusions of the study. The criteria for participation in this study required respondents to have experience as online and land-based faculty in small university counselor education programs. Small universities may operate with a few, overly taxed faculty members with limited online teaching experience. These faculty members were hard to recruit putting the study at risk for not reaching saturation.

Significance

Currently, in the United States, there are both land-based and online CACREP accredited counselor education programs (CACREP, 2018). These different modalities offer academic opportunities to a diverse group of aspiring counselors and counselor educators across the country and even internationally. Smith et al. (2015) suggested that in an age where higher education was becoming more expected for career advancement, online academic options often provided opportunities for non-traditional learners, who were already vested in family and career responsibilities, to return to school. Broadening educational opportunities beyond the traditional classroom setting invites individuals, who may not otherwise be able to participate in higher education due to family

obligations, work schedules, or geographic constraints, to further their personal and professional aspirations (Smith et al., 2015).

Emerging support for the inclusion of online learning is growing among college students with more than 33% of all students in higher education now taking at least one online course (Allen & Seaman, 2014; Mandernach et al., 2012; Blackmon, 2016). Along with greater student support, many university administrators are also beginning to perceive the value of online learning opportunities. They see that online courses provide avenues for broader geographic reach, increased enrollment, and positive economic gain (Baack et al., 2016). Despite increasing acceptance of online learning among students and university systems, there is skepticism among other stakeholders in the higher education about the value of an online academic course (Urofsky, 2013; Bilbeisi & Minsky, 2014).

Critics of the online academic process often question the quality and integrity of the method along with suggesting other ethical concerns such as issues with access to technology, professional gatekeeping, academic honesty, and student privacy (Reamer, 2013). In relational fields, educators were also challenged to understand how the online academic process could allow for the accurate assessment of interpersonal abilities, professional demeanor, and clinical skills (Blackmon, 2016; Mandernach et al., 2012; Reamer, 2013). Underlying skepticism among faculty members was concerning as Mandernach et al. (2012) suggested the effectiveness of an online academic experience was most often dependent on the perception of the faculty member. As students and university administrators begin to offer more encouragement for the inclusion of online

courses, faculty members may find themselves feeling pressured to teach online courses while still feeling uneasy or ill prepared to meet the challenges (Sword, 2012).

This research project was significant as it explored assumptions among faculty members in higher education surrounding online learning and helped to illuminate important issues in the transitional process from land-based to online counselor education settings. This research gave voice to faculty members on the leading edge of educational change and allowed them to share their transition experiences. Collecting real experiences offered insight to help educate the counseling community about what was truly needed to promote an effective transitional experience. This insight also provided meaningful information about training strategies that might prepare counselor educators effectively for work in educational systems that are more technology inclusive.

Summary

The influence of technology has ignited a process of change in the higher education academic experience; it seems to challenge long-held teaching and learning practices. Faculty members now have the opportunity to broaden their pedagogy to include both land-based and online teaching styles. Faculty members in higher education suggested they often felt uncertain about the change process, and they needed support to help facilitate a smoother transition from land-based to online teaching. Limited information was available to help institutional leaders understand how to help facilitate a successful development experience for faculty members, and with this study, I offer insight to counselor education programs as to what instructors need to expand their pedagogical perspective. A transcendental phenomenological approach provided the

framework to illuminate the experiences of counselor educators who transitioned from land-based to online academic settings. In Chapter 2, I present a comprehensive review of the current literature on online teaching in higher education, online teaching in counselor education, and the transition between land-based and online academic settings.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Online learning is becoming a common phenomenon in higher education (Allen et al., 2016). Many institutional leaders have endorsed online academics because of the potential economic benefits, and because students also are displaying positive support by taking more and more online courses each year (Allen et al., 2016; Kearns, 2016). With growing acceptance among institutional leaders in higher education and consumers of education, many faculty members are feeling pressure to embrace online teaching and learning in higher education (Baack et al., 2016; Mandernach et al., 2012).

This pressure presents a problem because many instructors rooted in traditional academic practices are slower to embrace the value of online learning; they feel uncomfortable with pedagogical change (Baack et al., 2016; Karl & Peluchette, 2013). Teaching practices have remained consistent in higher education for decades, causing new ideas surrounding online learning to appear as though they were hastily adopted by organizational leaders without careful attention to proactive planning, training, or guidance to support the transitional process (Schmidt et al., 2013). The lack of confidence some educators feel toward teaching an online course is problematic because online academics are gaining a formidable presence in many counselor education programs (ACES, 2016; Bridges & Frazier, 2018).

The purpose of this, phenomenological study was to illuminate the experiences of faculty members who transitioned from land-based to online counselor education settings. By offering the opportunity for instructors who taught in both formats to share

information with other counselor educators, I sought to foster a collaborative process of learning and growing in the counselor education community and to enhance learning for student across educational formats. Outcomes from this research can increase understanding of what counselor educators might need for a successful transition from land-based to online teaching settings and help to mitigate any fears that faculty members might experience in the process. Finally, this research was designed to inform policies and practices surrounding training activities in counselor education to help facilitate a smoother transitional process.

Limited literature was available on online learning in counselor education. No literature was found in this search to directly address the transitional process experienced by faculty members moving from teaching in a land-based setting to teaching in an online setting in counselor education. However, researchers have shown interest in understanding online teaching and learning practices and perceptions of faculty members across various disciplines in higher education (Blackmon, 2016; Mandernach et at., 2012; Sword, 2012).

After an extensive review of the literature, themes surrounding online teaching and learning in higher education were found to include perception held by students, organizations, and faculty members about online teaching and learning (Baran et al., 2011; Chiasson et al., 2015; Keengwe & Kidd, 2010). Faculty member's perceptions of barriers and motivations on online teaching and learning were also noted (Baran et al., 2011; Chiasson et al., 2015; Keengwe & Kidd, 2010). Another noticeable theme in the literature surrounded best teaching practices in online education, which included

pedagogical development, faculty characteristics, instructional design, and course delivery (ACES, 2016; Baran & Correia, 2014; Dockter, 2016).

When narrowing the search to literature specifically on teaching in counselor education, less information was available. A few sources offered some evidence of best teaching practices in counselor education and best practices for teaching online in counselor education (ACES, 2016; Bridges & Frazier, 2018). Two final but important themes that emerged from the literature were faculty member resistance to change from land-based to online teaching in higher education and the need for training to reduce this resistance (Allen et al, 2016; Blackmon, 2016; Kirkpatrick, 2015).

Literature Search Strategies

The review of literature for this study focused on peer-reviewed articles published within the last 10 years relevant to the major themes of the project. The following databases were used: Google Scholar, PsychARTICLES, PsychINFO, and Academic Search Complete. The following search terms, in various pairings, were used: *counselor online education, counselor online teaching, counselor online learning, online education, distance learning, distance teaching, distance education, teaching in higher education, teaching innovation, and teaching online*.

The search revealed a variety of literature to address the perceptions and experiences of faculty members who engaged with online instruction. The literature also offered emerging evidence of best practices in online academics in higher education, and some literature was available to specifically highlight best online practices in the field of counselor education. Another emerging theme detected in the literature surrounded a

need to help faculty grow their online teaching skills (ACES, 2017; Blackmon, 2016; Hall, 2016; Mandernach et al., 2012).

Although literature continues to emerge in the area of online teaching and learning in higher education, this search highlighted that the literature remains quite limited to understanding teaching and learning in online counselor education programs. An extensive review of literature also produced no research directly aimed to address the experiences of counselor educators who are transitioning from land-based to online educational settings. To address this significant gap in the counseling literature, I gathered available research surrounding online academic experience and the transitional process in higher education. I also reviewed any literature specifically on the online counselor education experience including faculty perceptions, emerging evidence-based practices in online teaching, and online teaching skill development. Providing current findings on online teaching in higher education and counselor education might offer various aspects critical to the transitional process for counselor educators who are moving from land-based to online teaching settings.

Theoretical Foundation

Counselor education programs are currently growing to include online academic options, and educators are beginning to transition from solely land-based instruction to teaching online courses in counselor education. Limited information was available to understand this transitional process for counselor educators. For this study, transcendental phenomenology offered the theoretical framework to underpin the

exploration of counselor educator experiences through the transition from land-based to online counselor education settings.

Transcendental Phenomenology

Edmund Husserl (1931) is considered the founder of this holistic philosophical approach, and he viewed knowledge as coming from the meaning of human experience. From this perspective, what a participant holds in conscious thought is important to study as it represents the knowledge between the individual and the world (Giorgi, 2009). Husserl (1931) suggested scientifically exploring thoughts required an attention to detailed descriptions of what participants perceived to appear in the here-and-now. These descriptions offered information about the individual's unique perceptions and knowledge based on the phenomenon experienced in the moment. Consistent with Husserl's (1931) perspective, all knowledge outside of the individual's immediate awareness was considered inconsequential.

Descriptive vs. Interpretive Methods

Scholars who have followed Husserl's theoretical perspective have traditionally taken two roads when considering how to make meaning from research findings (Giorgi, 1997; Heidegger, 1962). Some of these scholars value a descriptive method while others support a more interpretive method for understanding the information collected from individual experience (Giorgi, 1997; Heidegger, 1962). Descriptive researchers believe the foundation for understanding experiential data is through analyzing the language used to articulate the experience with nothing added or taken away from the description (Giorgi, 2012; Heidegger, 1962). This descriptive process differs from the approach

taken by interpretive researchers who uses their informed explanations to help guide understanding of what is given (Giorgi, 1997; Heidegger, 1962). When considering the experience of counselor educators, I will use a descriptive method to collect direct, descriptive data of experiences that will not require interpretation as the data will offer inherent meanings for greater understanding of the transitional process for educators (Giorgi, 2012).

Researcher Bias

Compatible with transcendental phenomenology, the meaning of unique counselor educators' experience emerged in a new and uncontaminated manner as I worked to put aside any prejudgments or personal perceptions that I may held about the experience (Husserl, 1931). Since researcher bias was a direct threat to the integrity of this qualitative research, I began this study with a careful exploration of my personal thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions on teaching in counselor education. Intentional bracketing allowed me to set aside any preconceived ideas I brought to the discovery process (Husserl, 1931; Giorgi, 2012). More specifically, I thoughtfully considered my experiences in counselor education, and set aside any knowledge about teaching counselors and the online teaching process to give the participants in the study the opportunity to present fresh information from their unique experiences in the moment (Giorgi, 2012).

Data Reduction Process

Building on the work of Husserl (1931), Giorgi (2012) developed what he considered a pretranscendental method of understanding human consciousness

specifically related to the human world. Giorgi's (2012) work outlined steps to uncover

meaning from raw data of experiential descriptions. Giorgi's five steps of the reduction

process include (a) getting a sense of the whole, (b) establishing meaning units, (c)

transforming the data, (d) reviewing the transformed data, and (e) returning to clarify and

interpret the raw data (Giorgi, 2012).

In the first step, the researcher is required to collect concrete descriptions of the

phenomenon and consider the information for the first time as a whole. In the second

step, the researcher will return to the beginning of the data and slowly reread the

descriptions of experience. This time, the researcher will identify meaning units with

each transition of the descriptive data. The third step is key to the method, as this begins

the process of data transformation. The researcher will return a third time to the

beginning of the data and consider each meaning unit again while transforming the

wording of each unit in a manner that offers a more psychological perspective of the

information. Husserl's (1931) process of free imaginative variation is important to

remember at this point of the process as it will help accurately convey the fundamental

meaning of the phenomenon in its purest psychological sense. In step five, the researcher

will use the created structures of meaning to help clarify and explain the original data

(Giorgi, 2012).

Researcher Attitude

An assumption to consider in this reduction process is that derived meaning will

most likely directly correlate with the attitude of the researcher and different researchers

will identify with different meanings. Consistent with Giorgi's (2012) method,

standardizing the researcher's attitude of phenomenological reduction is critical to generating the most accurate meaning possible from the data. For example, the researcher should resist any temptation to already know something about what might come from the data and must treat the information as a freshly presented phenomenon. The researcher must also refrain from using any past knowledge and focus only on information given to describe the current phenomenon. Finally, the researcher must remain mindful of adapting both a psychological perspective about the data as well as sensitivity to the particular type of phenomenon explored in the project (Giorgi, 2012). For example, counselor educators and firefighters experience different types of phenomenon in their unique settings, and these experiences might differ significantly in meaning based on the type of phenomenon experienced by the participant. Giorgi's (2012) clearly delineated guidelines for transcendental phenomenology offered important signpost of standardization for researchers to follow and might offered the opportunity for greater confidence in study results.

 Similar Study

Using a phenomenological approach was not new to understanding faculty experiences with online teaching in higher education across various disciplines (Chiasson et al., 2015; Kammer, 2015; Kearns, 2016; Schmidt et al., 2013). Sword (2012) specifically used a transcendental phenomenological approach to highlight the experiences of nurse educators who transitioned from land-based to online teaching. By focusing specifically on participant experiences, Sword (2012) noted patterns that emerged from the participant descriptions. These patterns offered themes of common

perceptions that culminated in the essence of the transitional process. The current literature offers evidence of a transcendental phenomenological approach successfully used to understand the experiences of nurse educators. With this in mind, it is plausible to suggest that this theoretical perspective would also provide a similar opportunity to understand the experiences of counselor educators who transitioned from land-based to online learning formats. The theoretical perspective of transcendental phenomenology underpinned this exploration and thus, allow for uncontaminated meaning to emerge from the uniquely human experience of counselor educators.

Online Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

The way educators conceptualize teaching and learning in higher education is quickly evolving with the development of technology. Many academic institutions are challenging educators to rethink their traditional teaching practices to include more innovative approaches (Baack et al., 2016; Keengwe & Kidd, 2010). Understanding the growth of technology in higher education along with opportunities and barriers of innovative approaches seemed important as this offered a look not only at the foundation of educational development but it provided a roadmap for progress that could inform new opportunities surrounding the creation and delivery of the educational experience.

History

Although distance education began many years ago, it has only been since the 1990s that technology has transformed the idea of educational delivery in a way that has significantly impacted institutions, students, and faculty members (Bridges & Frazier, 2018). Distance education was traced back to the 1800s with mail delivered

correspondence courses (Naidu, 2014). The purpose of this educational strategy was to provide individuals who could not physically attend land-based institutions educational access and opportunity (Baack et al., 2016; Naidu, 2014). Although innovative for its time, there were limitations to the approach such as a slow, unreliable mail service as well as a lack of interaction between instructors and students that sometimes led to frustrating academic experiences (Naidu, 2014). In the 1980s, the term 'correspondence education' would begin to take on other names such as distance education, blended learning, online learning, or e-learning (Naidu, 2014). Distance learning remained an academic option for many years but did not significantly influence change in higher education until the explosive growth of technology in the early 1900s (Bridges & Frazier, 2018). Advancements in computer technology and the creation of the internet altered many aspects of society perceived as unchangeable in organizational structure. Institutions of higher education have also experienced this transition toward change. By the late 1990s, technology became more effective, efficient, and user-friendly bringing greater opportunities for interpersonal engagement in the online academic setting (Bridges & Frazier, 2018; Naidu, 2014). This educational experience developed even more by 2005 with advancements in audio and video conferencing and social networking that provided opportunities for teachers and students to engage in an even more effective and efficient manner (Kruger-Ross & Waters, 2012; Keengwe & Kidd, 2010). Although researchers can easily share the growth of technology in higher education, the quickly changing academic landscape of educational delivery has provided relatively little time for researchers to adequately explore or effectively analyze how online academic

practices are embraced and effectively utilized in higher education (ACES, 2016). Thus, it becomes valuable to consider what is known and what is still relatively unknown on online teaching and learning.

Evolving Student, Organization, and Faculty Perceptions

Base on the recent evidence provided of increased acceptance, the growth of online academic practices in higher education is clear. Allen et al. (2016) explained that in 2002 less than 50% of leaders in higher education saw online learning as a critical factor in their long-term organizational growth. However, by 2015, this number rose to 76.3% of leaders at institutions with less than 2,500 online students and 90.3% of institutions with more than 10,000 online students across the United States endorsing online learning as an integral part of their long-term academic strategy (Allen et al., 2016). Also, interesting to note was that the greatest critics of the online academic process were primarily from very small institutions with limited resources and little experience with distance education (Allen et al., 2016). In fact, Hall (2016) supported this finding in a qualitative study of counselor educators who mostly endorsed online academics as a valuable experience, but the only respondent to not see online counselor training as effective was from a small private institution. Overall, the increasing rate of acceptance for online learning in higher education offers evidence that online learning will likely continue to grow rather than decline in the years to come. However, viewing the larger picture of acceptance with a finer lens is necessary to understand exactly who is supporting the inclusion of online academics and who is possibly more resistant to the process. Understanding this information helps to identify the needs in higher education

to facilitate a more effective transitional experience from land-band to online learning in higher education.

As online academic practices begin to increase in higher education, the literature highlights various perspectives that have emerged surrounding the value of online learning. Researchers agree that a positive trend is evident toward online academic practices among many university systems, and this acceptance is attributed to an appreciation of limitless enrollment possibilities, increased revenues, and decreased expenses when offering online academic opportunities (Baack et al., 2016; Keengwe & Kidd, 2010). Smith et al. (2015) also suggested online learning was becoming a popular option for college students who often characterized the online academic process as more convenient, timely, and relevant for their purposes. This perception among college students coincides with the rapid growth of online classes across the United States with over 33% of all students in higher education now taking at least one online course (Allen and Seaman, 2014; Mandernach et al., 2012; Blackmon, 2016).

Although the literature reveals support for online learning among students and organizational stakeholders in higher education, researchers suggest both fear and acceptance still exists among faculty members when considering online educational modalities (Baran et al., 2011; Blackmon, 2016; Hockridge, 2013; Mandernach et al., 2012). Some scholars express comfort with technology and are promoting the value of online learning as a progressive and effective option (Moran & Milsom, 2015). However, more tenured educators who have developed strong traditional pedagogical practices without the influence of technology were found more apt to question the rigor

and integrity of the online academic approach (Karl & Peluchette, 2013; Schmidt et al., 2013). This is an indication that although the concept of teaching in higher education is quickly evolving, change is often difficult for those who have experienced comfort, confidence, and success in traditional education settings.

Barriers to Online Teaching and Learning

The current literature offers common themes of barriers to online teaching and learning. For example, a perceived barrier is the traditional pedagogical practices held by faculty members (Horvitz, Beach, Anderson, and Xia, 2014). In a review of qualitative literature over the last ten years, Blackmon (2016) found other common faculty member perceptions of challenges associated with online teaching such as a perceived lack of administrative support, time and workload constraints, student readiness, and a lack of interpersonal interactions. Also noteworthy were multicultural issues identified in the literature as potential barriers to success in the online academic format (Bridges & Frazier, 2018; Sampson & Makela, 2014).

Traditional pedagogy. Well documented in the literature are the limitations faculty members perceive in their knowledge, skill, and perception of how to effectively engage in online instruction. Faculty who are not well-versed in online course development and delivery methods may find themselves trying to use well-formulated and tested traditional educational practices in the online setting (Baran et al., 2011). Perceptions and assumptions on online teaching often lead to low confidence and limited satisfaction with the process (Baran & Correia, 2014; Horvitz et al., 2014). Keengwe and Kidd (2010) mention that not all educators, just as not all students, may prove suited for

the online academic environment. Faculty members who perceive the value of face-to face-interactions with students may find technology does not effectively support their pedagogical style (ACES, 2016). A lack of understanding surrounding how to teach online results in ineffective practices and higher levels of frustration which are internal barriers to success in the online environment.

Administrative support. Many experienced educators with a limited understanding of the skills needed to effectively design and deliver an online course look to their academic institutions for support. Educators often require assistance with online technological, design, and delivery strategies (Chiasson et al., 2015). Instructors can spend a significant amount of time preparing and trying to deliver an online course especially when they lack the knowledge and skills required for efficient delivery (Chiasson et al., 2015; Mulig & Rhame, 2012). These instructors often report technical and pedagogical support offered by university systems is limited, which acts as a barrier to successful online teaching (Baran & Correia, 2014; Horvitz et al., 2014; Roby, Ashe, Singh, & Clark, 2013).

Workload and time. Another common theme among faculty perceptions was that administrative leaders had little understanding of the time and effort required to prepare an online course (ACES, 2016, Blackmon, 2016). Qualitative literature has consistently shown faculty members to express a significantly greater amount of time was needed to plan, design, and deliver online courses when compared to land-based counterparts (Baran & Correia, 2014; Chiasson et al., 2015; Mulig & Rhame, 2012; Schmidt et al., 2013). For example, to ensure challenging academic rigor, instructors in online settings

must actively and consistently engage students and promote collaboration (Mulig & Rhame, 2012). This active engagement requires a significant amount of written information to offer course content, student engagement, and evaluations which significantly increased the amount to time spent teaching online (Bridges & Frazier, 2018; Mandernach et al., 2012). Faculty members also perceived limited institutional support in this area citing few financial incentives or release time options available to encourage the extra work of an online course. Institutions need to become aware of barriers to online instruction and sensitive to the needs of online instructors by allowing adequate time, resources, and training for successful online course development and delivery (ACES, 2017).

Student readiness. Researchers are in agreement that online courses have a higher attrition rate than their land-based counterparts, and Rockinson-Szapkiw, Spaulding, and Spaulding (2016) suggested the rate was up to 10-20% higher. In another quantitative study to compare outcomes of a psychology course taught in both a land-based and online settings, Garratt-Reed, Roberts, and Heritage (2016) found that although student grades and satisfaction were deemed high in both settings, student retention was significantly lower in online courses. Garratt-Reed et al. (2016) and Moore (2014) both concluded that understanding student diversity and the characteristics needed for success within various academic settings in higher education was important.

Found in the literature was a common description of students who often thrive in the online academic setting, including those who were well-versed in technology, independent thinkers, self-motivated, and organized. Students who lacked these qualities

often appeared to struggle more with the process (ACES, 2016; Bridges & Frazier, 2018; Smith et al., 2015). Researchers have also found students who require more immediate feedback, have learning disabilities, lack access to technology, display poor communication skills, or struggle with self-motivation are less likely to succeed in the online academic setting (Moran & Milsom, 2015; Reamer, 2013; Smith et al., 2015). Sampson and Makela (2014) cautioned that students who sometimes wish to participate in an online academic experience might hold unrealistic views of their technological abilities, self-management skills, or willingness to seek assistance when problems occur. Therefore, online programs might consider incorporating ways to help students develop the appropriate skills, knowledge, and perspectives needed to succeed as independent learners (Rockinson-Szapkiw et al., 2016). Instructors may perceive not fully understanding how to effectively meet student needs in the online academic setting as a barrier (Bridges & Frazier, 2018).

Multicultural considerations. Also, a common theme that presents in the literature is the challenge of multicultural students. For example, many adult learners are returning to school to forward personal and professional goals and utilizing online courses in the process (ACES, 2016). Adult learners who engage in the online academic format often have families and careers that compete for their time making the coordination of home, school, and work responsibilities a barrier (Bilbeisi & Minsky, 2014; Mulig & Rhame, 2012). Adult learners also represent various ages and experiences with technology, and a limited understanding of technology could act as another a barrier to student success (Bridges & Frazier, 2018). Certain student

disabilities and economic disadvantages might also present as a barrier in the online

format. For example, the more reliant distance education becomes on technology, the

harder it is for those who have limited, unreliable, or unaffordable internet access to

engage in online learning (Naidu, 2014; Sampson & Makela, 2014). Instructors who are

limited in their understanding of technology may feel challenged to understand how to

ensure all students are equipped and ready to use the necessary tools for success in the

online educational setting (Bridges & Frazier, 2018).

      Student connection. Another challenge frequently noted in the literature was

isolation, due to a lack of face-to-face interactions among students, instructors, and peers

in the online setting (Blackmon, 2016 Bridges & Frazier; Mandernach et al., 2012; Smith

et al., 2002). Moore (2014) compared university land-based and hybrid introductory

Spanish courses to understand if students were at a disadvantage when utilizing the

online portion of the hybrid model. The study emerged due to heavy resistance from both

instructors and students to the idea of online learning. Moore (2014) found students in

the hybrid courses experienced higher levels of frustration and a significantly lower sense

of community compared to students in the land-based courses. Due to the nature of

online learning, students are often required to take on greater responsibility for their

learning, seek out help, and manage their time which may influence negative perceptions

(Moore, 2014). To limit barriers, instructors must intentionally work to support

connection and a sense of community in an online course (Moore, 2014).

Motivation for Online Teaching and Learning

Although faculty members have expressed challenges associated with teaching online, the literature also offers themes that suggest online modalities are becoming more widely accepted due to convenience and immediacy (Blackmon, 2016; Bridges & Frazier, 2018; Keengwe & Kidd, 2010; Smith et al., 2015; Tang & Lam, 2012). Benefits of online teaching endorsed by faculty in the literature also suggest instructors may enjoy acquiring new skills and improving student performance outcomes (Blackmon, 2016). Interesting to note is that sometimes the same constructs that pose barriers to online learning such as pedagogy, student learning, and connection, when viewed through a different lens, are considered motivations for online teaching and learning (Blackmon, 2016; Keengwe & Kidd, 2010).

Convenience and immediacy. One of the most noted benefits of teaching and learning in the online setting was the convenience and immediacy of the process. Blackmon (2016) found that over 80% of faculty members mentioned they enjoyed teaching online because it offered more schedule flexibility. Faculty members also perceived students had more flexibility with time and resources when working in the online setting. Simply being able to self-schedule, not travel, and have time for other life responsibilities were all considered motivating factors for using an online format (Blackmon, 2016). Smith et al. (2015) also promoted the value of online modalities by suggesting that in an age where higher education was becoming expected for career advancements, online academic options provided opportunities for individuals who might not otherwise be able to participate in higher education due to family, work, or

geographic constraints. Although online learning can present access challenges for low-income students, the method also might open opportunities and increase student persistence because of the convenience to complete coursework around job and family responsibilities (Schmidt et al., 2013).

Pedagogical development. Another motivation endorsed by faculty members was the opportunity to work with new technology and reconceptualize pedagogy to deliver information and engage students in the learning process (Blackmon, 2016). Kearns (2016) conducted a phenomenological study to understand how the experience of teaching online influenced an instructor's overall thinking, planning, and enactment of teaching practices across delivery methods. Over 90% of respondents in the study suggested developing and teaching an online course helped them reflect on their classroom teaching process and over 80% of respondents suggested teaching online helped them improve their classroom teaching experience. Kearns (2016) identified trends in the data, which suggested instructors valued the structure, organization, and reflection time offered in the online setting. These instructors also expressed teaching online gave them the opportunity to become more versed in technology that supported teaching both in and outside of the classroom setting (Kearns, 2016). Instructors learned to incorporate online discussions, videos, and documents in both their online and land-based courses (Kearns, 2016). To rethink pedagogy, faculty members might consider similarities and differences between their online and land-based teaching approaches and reflect on what online and land-based practices might enhance teaching experiences in each format (Kearns, 2016).

Increased interactions. Some faculty members perceived that the number of one-on-one faculty to student interactions increased in the online setting as faculty members were able to focus more on individual students (Moran & Milsom, 2015). Smith et al. (2015) conducted a quantitative study to understand differences between online and face-to-face courses and found that students in both online and land-based settings exhibited gains in levels of learning; however, a significant difference existed between groups in perceived learning efficiency. Interestingly, students were found to favor the online instructional modality, suggesting more frequent and consistent student-instructor interactions in the online environment. Tang and Lam (2012) support this finding suggesting a collaborative online environment provided the opportunity for learners to connect with instructors and peers in meaningful ways with ongoing discussions, feedback, and reflection to scaffold growth.

Student learning. Mandernach et al. (2012) and Moran and Milsom (2015) both found learning in an online format kept students more actively engaged in the process of critical thinking that was even higher than that achieved in the classroom setting. Lindsey and Rice (2015) supported this suggesting students in the classroom were often asked to engage in critical think and deliver appropriate responses immediately without time to reflect and thoughtfully consider their words. Also, instructors suggested a greater focus on individual students (Mandernach et al., 2012; Moran & Milsom, 2015), more concern for student-centered learning (Kearns, 2016), and more consistent interactions with the student all supported effective learning in the online setting (Smith et al., 2015). Other advantages of the online academic experience included encouraging

students to connect learning within their unique social context (Hockridge, 2013;

Blackmon, 2016). For example, some have suggested that modern age students often

display maladaptive social skills because they prefer online social connections to human

interactions; however, Lindsey and Rice (2015) suggested that in today's technology-

driven society, online communication could also be a marketable skill for many

individuals. Students who learn to effectively engage and interact with others using

various modalities might enhance their communication skills. Overall, researchers

supporting online learning suggest that the online academic experience has value as it

requires students to actively engage with others in an ongoing process of reasoning and

inquiry around shared problems and interests to scaffold knowledge for a common

understanding (Tang & Lam, 2012; Hockridge, 2013; Blackmon, 2016).

Best Teaching Practices in Online Education

Researchers suggest limited literature is available to understand online teaching

roles and competencies in higher education. However, Baran et al. (2011) and Keengwe

and Kidd (2010) both conducted a critical analysis of literature from the 1990s to the time

of their studies to understand educator's roles specific to the development and delivery of

online courses. Interesting themes emerged from these studies such as the importance of

pedagogy and personal instructor characteristics, as well as, the value of some dynamic

and multidimensional roles for online course development and delivery (Baran et al.,

2011; Keengwe & Kidd, 2010). When first creating an online course, researchers found

instructors focused primarily on aspects of personal readiness and instructional course

design. During the online course delivery phase, the instructor focused more on

managing other responsibilities such as facilitating, socializing, managing, and navigating the technology of the online academic process (Baran et al., 2011; Keengwe & Kidd, 2010).

Online Course Development

Development of an online course requires critical reflection on the part of the instructor. The instructor must carefully consider aspects of pedagogical style and personal characteristics that might relate to the online teaching process (Baran et al., 2011; Keengwe & Kidd, 2010). The instructor must also think carefully about appropriate curriculum for the online environment as well as ways to effectively design course content (Keengwe & Kidd, 2010).

Pedagogy. A common theme identified in the literature was that online teaching is significantly different from land-based instruction and requires instructors to rethink their pedagogical perspective (Baran et al., 2011; Keengwe & Kidd, 2010; Schmidt et al., 2013). Online courses should not be a recreation of the instructor's land-based educational process but should employ new and innovative approaches to teaching and assessing skills, knowledge, personal growth, and professional development (ACES, 2016). Fletcher & Bullock (2014) noted that an instructor's professional identity was often directly related to personal perceptions of their effectiveness as an instructor, and how they felt others perceived their effectiveness. Thus, educators often feel challenged to rethink how they relate to teaching and learning when faced with online instruction, and how they might create an effective and meaningful learning experience in an online academic setting (Baran et al., 2011; Keengwe & Kidd, 2010; Schmidt et al., 2013).

Faculty characteristics. Certain faculty characteristics were also suggested in the literature to support effective instruction and engagement in the online environment such as flexibility, openness, organization, clarity, presence, creativity, challenge, and timeliness (ACES, 2016; Baran & Correia, 2014). Krammer (2015) suggested faculty members who often flourished as online instructors were flexible and open to engaging with new ideas. These instructors were also organized and could offer clear expectations and guidelines with rubrics, timelines, and procedures for their courses (Baran & Correia, 2014). Effective online instructors were also characterized as able to convey a motivating presence with frequent, respectful, and supportive student engagement (ACES, 2016; Holzweiss, Joyner, Fuller, Henderson, & Young, 2014). Baran and Correia (2014) also found successful online instructors were creative in their approaches and willing to challenge students to continually engage in critical thinking. Finally, effective online instructors offered detailed and timely feedback to students and continually assessed their educational process to ensure they were meeting student needs. All of these educator characteristics help to create a positive online learning experience for students in the online environment (ACES, 2016).

Instructional designer. Beyond technology considerations, faculty members are tasked with planning, organizing, and structuring an online course in a manner that ensures the achievement of learning outcomes (Keengwe & Kidd, 2010). Instructional design includes connecting with strong learning resources and developing creative instructional strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners (Rockinson-Szapkiw et al., 2016; Shepherd, Bollinger, Dousay, & Persichitte, 2016). Some organizations

acknowledged that designing an online course requires greater support than creating a land-based course. These institutions sometimes offer experts in instructional design to support educators with their online course design, management, and technology needs (Baran et al., 2011). Assistance with instructional design, however, may sometimes come at a price. The collaborative process can offer much needed support, but also, might limit the autonomy and control instructors feel over their unique design and development process (Keengwe & Kidd, 2010).

Online Course Delivery

Delivering instruction in an online course requires an interaction between the instructor, students, content, and technology, and to effectively provide these interactions, instructors utilize various roles such as facilitating, socializing, and managing (Baran et al., 2011). Dockter (2016) even goes a step further to conceptualize these roles as three types of presence. Cognitive presence is when an instructor works to connect with students around meaningful knowledge. Social presence is when instructors looked for ways to represent themselves as real people in the online environment. Teaching presence is the instructor's intentional act of managing an educational environment to provide the necessary social and cognitive presence (Dockter, 2016).

Facilitating. Course facilitation is a primary responsibility of the online instructor as students most often take more responsibility for their learning in the online academic environment (Bilbeisi & Minsky, 2014; Moore, 2014). As a facilitator, the instructor is interested in cognitively engaging students to ensure they participate and remain actively engaged with the information presented each week in the online format

(Keengwe & Kidd, 2010). Cognitive engagement might take the form of presenting content online, focusing or summarizing discussions, asking thought-provoking questions, offering assessment and feedback to help scaffold understanding, inject knowledge from other diverse sources, or addressing concerns to redirect learning down more productive paths (Keengwe & Kidd, 2010).

Socializing. Socializing refers to an important affective role the online instructor plays when working to establish and maintain teacher-student relationships. Creating and sustaining a social presence in the online academic environment when comparted to the land-based setting is often more challenging and requires additional work on the part of the instructor; however, researchers agree that this connection is critical to student success (Bridges & Frazier, 2018; Dockter, 2016; Rockinson-Szapkiw et al., 2016). In fact, students reported greater satisfaction and perceived learning in the online environment when they felt connected to their instructor (Moore, 2014; Holzweiss et al., 2014). Conversely, Bridges and Frazier (2018) noted a lack of online instructor invest in student engagement could also lead to higher levels of student isolation and lower retention in online programs. Dockter (2016) found that simply relying on written communication in an online course was not ideal to establish a connection. Students may filter written messages through personal experiences and expectations which can result in the misinterpretation of content (Dockter, 2016). Instead, instructors are encouraged to offer purposeful, varied, frequent, and personal interactions intentionally created to help students gain connection and trust in the online academic setting (Dockter, 2016). Broadening non-verbal context and adding warmth to content might be done, for

example, by offering virtual office hours (Kruger-Ross &Walters, 2012), e-mailing

students who are falling behind to provide additional support, or create audio or video

feedback for students (Limperos et al., 2015). Consistent and meaningful interactions

help students find comfort and greater success in the online learning setting (Dixon,

2014).

Management. Managing an online course refers to the instructor's process of

organizing and planning. Managing the course would include becoming well-versed in

navigating an online course management platform such as Blackboard, Canvas, or

Moodle as well as integrating other communication opportunities such as conference

calling or e-mailing to engage students in the academic experience (Bridges & Frazier,

2018). Management also requires carrying out pedagogical tasks, monitoring students,

and evaluating outcomes throughout the course (Baran & Correia, 2014). One final note

on management includes thinking about time and how to fit academic responsibilities

with the demands of personal life (Kruger-Ross & Waters, 2012).

Technology. As technology advances in higher education, the number of

technology-related tools for academic platforms continues to grow, thus challenging

instructors to stay on the leading edge of educational change (Bridges & Frazier, 2018).

When teaching online courses, effective instructors have a familiarity with the technology

and resources needed to support the execution of course tasks. These instructors are also

able to help students who might struggle to navigate technological related course issues

(Kruger-Ross & Waters, 2012). Using technology without the proper skills and

knowledge can negatively impact a teacher's effectiveness in the online setting (ACES,

2016). Leaning to successfully utilize technology often requires developing new teaching skills (Naidu, 2014).

Attaining knowledge about important aspects of online course development and delivery is critical for instructors who plan to teach online, yet applying these teaching practices in the online environment can sometimes be more challenging (Shepherd et al., 2016). In particular, Shepherd et al. (2016), illustrated the lack of ease many land-based instructors displayed when trying to take on the various roles of online instruction. Shepherd et al. (2016) reflected on a course created specifically to train teacher educators in the effective design and implementation of an online course. Teachers in this program were required to design an online course using a learning management system and integrating multimedia aspects of design. These instructors were also to facilitate a meaningful discussion with students in the online environment. Shepherd et al. (2016) found that teachers displayed a significant deficit in their ability to effectively design courses and often fell far short when attending to student needs during both asynchronous and synchronous sessions. Shepherd et al. (2016) noted that instructors must become more aware of presence and community to reduce feelings of isolation. Also, clearly written and visual messages were imperative to reduce the chance for miscommunication in the online setting.

Limited research is available to understand how to help instructors effectively adapt to the online teaching experience. As the design and delivery of online courses continues to evolve, understanding valuable roles and competencies for online instruction could help to frame preparation and training experiences for educators. Continuing to

generate knowledge that encourages the development of more effective online

instructional practices could facilitate growth in counselor education.

Teaching in Counselor Education

Counselor educators are not immune to the influence of technological change as

counselor training programs are continuing to grow in online presence (CACREP, 2018).

Common to other scholars in higher education, counselor educators sometimes feel

challenged to understand how to effectively utilize technology to support effective

teaching practices and student learning (Bridges & Frazier, 2018). The counseling

profession acknowledges the need to stay relevant in an ever-changing society and

continue to make strides towards integrating technological advancements with counselor

training strategies (ACES, 2016). However, more research is needed on technology in

counselor education (ACES, 2016).

History

In the early 1900s, counseling began as a program of vocational guidance (Foster,

2012). Over the last 50 years, the field of counseling has grown into an organized

professional community that includes many different services to address mental health

and human development needs from a wellness perspective (Foster, 2012). The

organization of the counseling profession stemmed from the creation of American

Counseling Association (ACA) and later, the Association of Counselor Education and

Supervision (ACES), which were instrumental in defining the knowledge and skills

necessary for professional counselors (Remley & Herlihy, 2014). With the development

of professional standards, stakeholders in the counseling community also sought to

ensure counselor education programs were preparing emerging counselors to meet the high expectations established by the profession. In 1981, ACA and ACES established CACREP to regulate counselor training. Today, CACREP (2018) counselor education programs are recognized nationally for their quality and ability to meet the rigorous standards set by the profession.

As the counseling profession continued to grow, research was encouraged as a meaningful endeavor to support professional development (ACA, 2014). In the 1980s, researchers in the profession began exploring how counselors might incorporate emerging technologies with counseling services (ACES, 2016). By 2005, the ACA had included standards for distance counseling in their ethical guidelines (Trepal, Haberstroh, Duffey, & Evans, 2007), and when the ACA Code of Ethics was updated in 2014, it included even more safeguards and guidelines on the ethical use of technology in the counseling profession (ACA, 2014). Evidence of online academic acceptance in the counseling profession also came when CACREP required doctoral programs to provide emerging counselor educators with the opportunity to develop effective approaches for online teaching, and when the CACREP board offered accreditation to several completely online counselor training programs (CACREP, 2018). Understanding the evolution of counselor education and how the profession has worked to include modern advancements to support the growth and development of counseling students is imperative as it helps to inform the future development of the counseling profession (ACES, 2016).

Teaching Environments

To better understand the current climate of educational delivery in counselor education, it is important to first understand the various teaching environments utilized by counselor education programs. Counselor educators most often deliver content in either a face-to-face, hybrid, or online settings (Bridges & Frazier, 2018). Each of these academic environments offers a unique educational experience with both challenges and benefits to the approach.

Face-to-Face. Face-to-face instruction is considered a traditional form of land-based teaching that is conducive for verbal and non-verbal spontaneous interactions, personal engagements, and group activities (Bilbeisi & Minsky, 2014; Bridges & Frazier, 2018: Smith et al., 2002). Although the land-based approach to education can offer comfort due to predictable patterns of long-held educational practice (Dockter, 2016), there are also perceived challenges with this approach. Researchers have suggested that the face-to-face settings can sometimes lead to a more passive form of student learning, a greater focus on the instructor, and increased feelings of intimidation among students who are uncomfortable with corporate learning strategies (Bridges and Frazier, 2018; Kearns, 2016; Keengwe & Kidd, 2010).

Hybrid. Many counseling programs have started to consider the value of hybrid courses as a combination of both face-to-face and online academic practices. Moran and Milsom (2015) conducted a study to explore the advantages and disadvantages of a hybrid course in counselor education. The study analyzed the experiences of 15 counselor education students after taking a course that consisted of both classroom

activities and online assignments. Moran and Milsom (2015) found that students felt

more engaged and confident in their ability to learn independently with a more student-

centered educational approach. Students enjoyed being able to go back and review

materials in the online setting but also supported the classroom experience suggesting

these activities reinforced learning (Moran & Milsom, 2015). Disadvantages of the

hybrid model found in Moran and Milsom's (2015) study were a lack of immediate

feedback in the online format, concerns for students with specific learning challenges and

limited access to technology, as well as the considerable preparation time required for

instructors.

    Online. Fully online courses are becoming more common in counselor

education, and similar to other academic platforms, the online approach can present both

opportunities and challenge (ACES, 2016). A common benefit of online learning noted

in the literature is that it is often more student-centered and requires active student

learning which is an evidence-based practice in counselor education (Malott et al., 2014).

Online academics are suggested to provide opportunities that enrich student engagement

through an ongoing process of reflection, discussion, and problem-solving (ACES, 2016;

Dixon, 2014; Kearns, 2016; Keengwe & Kidd, 2010; Tang & Lam, 2012). Along with

possible benefits of online academic engagement also comes challenges associated with

the approach. Facilitating communication is often perceived as more difficult and time-

consuming in the online setting (Limperos et al., 2015; Kruger-Ross & Waters, 2012).

Group presentations and demonstrating counseling skills were also a concern with the

online format (ACES, 2016). Garratt-Reed et al. (2016) compared online and land-based

psychology courses and noted the only significant differences in student grades and satisfaction were on group work. Although the study found dissatisfaction with group work among students in both settings, students were found less successful with group experiences in the online environment. Garratt-Reed et al. (2016) suggested group work challenges in the online setting was a concern as group experiences offered important learning in relational fields by fostering collaboration, communication, and conflict management skills.

Group work and the demonstration of counseling skills are just two examples of various important considerations when offering online counselor education courses. Accommodations are needed in the online environment to ensure online courses are effectively providing essential learning opportunities equivalent to land-based academic experiences (Garratt-Reed et al., 2016). ACES (2016) suggested online counselor education programs might consider strategies such as using smaller groups and allowing students to prepare and submit demonstration videos online as a solution to minimize some of these differences.

The delivery of online teaching in counselor education programs often happens through platforms such as Canvas, Blackboard, or Moodle (Bridges & Frazier, 2018). Communication in online courses most often occurs using either asynchronous or synchronous methods, which provides the opportunity to meet various student learning needs (Bridges & Frazier, 2018; Tang & Lam, 2012). Asynchronous technology refers to communication that happens at different times such as e-mail, discussion boards, or texting (ACES, 2017). This method often allows students time to thoughtfully share

information in online discussions, which can stimulate critical thinking and scaffold knowledge (Lindsey & Rice, 2015; Trepal et al., 2007). Synchronous technology refers to communication that happens at the same time such as video conferencing or telephone calls. Video conferencing options such as Skype, GoToMeeting, or Google Hangouts offer opportunities for instructors to engage with student much like in a face-to-face setting (Bridges & Frazier, 2018). Some benefits of synchronous forms of engagement include the opportunity for more immediate responses, social interactions, and nonverbal cues (Trepal et al., 2007). This more direct form of interaction could also reduce chances for miscommunication, feelings of isolation, and potential frustrations surrounding the online educational experience (Bridges & Frazier, 2018).

Best Teaching Practices in Counselor Education

Although research is still needed to fully understand best practices in counselor education and especially online counselor education, Malott et al. (2014) conducted a review of the available literature to summarize what the counseling profession knows about effective practice in their educational programs. Malott et al. (2014) uncovered themes such as creating an effective learning environment, structuring intentional learning experiences, and assessing teaching effectiveness. Malott et al. (2014) suggested an effective learning environment in counselor education was warm, caring, and respectful. Instructors were interested in building rapport with students by using strategies such as offering welcoming e-mails, providing a syllabus with friendly language, sharing personal stories, checking for understanding, or using eye contact and warm facial expressions (Limperos et al., 2015; Malott et al., 2014). Structuring

intentional learning experiences was another aspect of effective practice in counselor education, and instructors endorsed methods that engaged students in active learning (Kammer, 2015; Kearns, 2016; Malott et al., 2014). For example, an instructor might stimulate a student's prior knowledge and encourage the student to engage in higher order thinking to challenge long-held assumptions and reframe understanding. Active learning included strategies such as comparing and contrasting counseling approaches, reflectively journaling, analyzing case studies, participating in discussion forums, and engaging with evidence based research (Holzweiss et al., 2014; Malott et al., 2014). A final theme of best practice found in the literature was assessing teaching effectiveness. In the academic environment, effective assessment required a systematic process of ongoing and immediate feedback among the instructor, students, and peers to support learning (Malott et al., 2014). Formative and summative feedback could take the form of written comments, individual meetings, or focus groups (Malott et al., 2014). The concept of teaching and learning is one that continues to evolve in counselor training programs, and with the inclusion of online academic practices, it is important for stakeholders to broaden the discussion of best practices to include the integration of innovative academic approaches (ACES, 2016; Bridges & Frazier, 2018).

Best Practices in Online Counselor Education

Although limited literature is available surrounding technology in counselor education, ACES (2016) acknowledged a need to address teaching practices in counselor training programs and outlined standards for best practices of teaching and learning in counselor education with a section specially dedicated to teaching in the online setting.

The following year, ACES (2017) provided guidelines specifically directed toward online teaching and learning in counselor education. These guidelines highlight key issues relevant to the development of quality online courses. Some common best practices identified in the literature included the need for effective communication, feedback, connection, and ethical practices in online programs (Bridges & Frazier, 2018; Malott et al., 2014).

Communication. Communication is key to a student's success, and the burden of communication in the online environment most often rests with the instructor (Dixon, 2014). Researchers found clarity was an essential aspect of communication (Dixon, 2014; Limperos et al., 2015: Malott et al., 2014). From the beginning of an online course, instructors must offer clearly defined objectives and guidelines that inform aspects of course design such as the content, activities, and feedback (Dixon, 2014; Limperos et al., 2015). Language was considered an important tool for clarifying thoughts and checking for understanding in the online setting (Malott et al., 2014). Trepal et al. (2007) suggested that counselors must consider the unique use of language to effectively convey thoughts, feelings, and nonverbal behaviors online. Limperos et al. (2015) explained that enhancing clarity promoted connection in the online learning environment, which helped to generate goodwill, trust, and student motivation. Roby et al. (2013) supported this idea, suggesting that the quality of communication and level of immediacy between students and their instructor was directly on a student's sense of connectedness and feelings of success in an online course.

Relationship building. The counseling profession is a relational field, and training counselors requires the ability for instructors to not only teach but model skills specifically directed toward relationship building. In a study conducted by Dollarhide et al. (2013), peer and faculty relationships were critical to a counselor educator doctoral student's growth as relationships were key to supporting the student's transition through stages of identity development. Bridges and Frazier (2018) suggested effective relational dynamics between instructors and students required positive and consistent interactions through various teaching, mentoring, researching, and supervision interactions. Malott et al. (2014) noted that simple practices such as connecting with students outside of class, calling students by name, using affirming comments, and inviting responses could all encourage relationship.

Feedback. Also, researchers suggest offering consistent, timely, and detailed feedback was an effective teaching practice across all academic settings but especially needed in the online academic environment (Bridges & Frazier, 2018; Garratt-Reed et al., 2016; Malott et al., 2014). Dollarhide et al. (2013) suggested a cycle of learning, practice, and feedback from faculty and peers helped counseling students move from a place of dependency to autonomy in their professional development. Holzweiss et al. (2014) noted feedback should encourage student interactions, critical thinking, and reflection. From their years of experience, Bridges and Frazier (2018) explained that the intentional engagement of students in the learning process required balanced, specific, and positive feedback from the instructor directed frequently toward individual students in the online academic setting.

Ethical practice. The ACA Code of Ethics (2014) provided standards to help safeguard the professional development of emerging counselors. When using technology, there are potential ethical issues to consider such as student access, computer literacy, privacy, confidentiality, and honesty (Sampson & Makela, 2014; Shepherd et al., 2016; Trepal et al., 2007). Although instructors may feel challenged to know how to help students gain access to technology, they do have an ethical responsibility to help learners understand what is expected in an online course, when to seek help, and how to connect with needed assistance (Sampson & Makela, 2014). Confidentiality and privacy are also potential problems in the online academic setting. The potential for others to overhear, observe, or even obtain access to online academic work puts a student's sense of privacy and right to confidentiality at risk (Sampson & Makela, 2014). Academic honesty is also a concern as instructors are sometimes challenged to understand how to keep students from cheating, working together, or plagiarizing work in the online academic setting (Blackmon, 2016; Mulig & Rhame, 2012). Bridges and Frazier (2018) explain educators must continually seek out the best security measures to offer more privacy and integrity in the online setting.

Instructors who cultivate healthy relationships with students and work to do no harm can create a safe, trusting, and comfortable online learning environment, which researchers suggest is imperative to the success of distance learners in counselor education (ACA, 2014; ACES, 2016; Bridges & Frazier, 2018). Along these lines, however, best practices require instructors to also remain aware of healthy boundaries with students (ACA, 2014). Instructors must continually balance between engaging

students with support while also challenging students with consistent and reliable expectations (ACA, 2014; Bridges and Frazier, 2018).

Finally, when considering best practices in online counselor education, it is important to note that the ACA Code of Ethics (2014) considers the development of knowledge and skills surrounding the use of technology an ethical obligation for those in the counseling profession. Utilizing online modalities in counselor education invites unique ethical challenges, and the ACA Code of Ethics (2014) specifically states that educators are only to use technology if they are competent with the process. The need for educators to understand best practices for ethically communicating and connecting with students online highlights the value of proper training in best practices for online teaching. Training is a critical step in the process of effectively integrating online learning into counselor education programs (ACES, 2016; Blackmon, 2016; Mandernach et al., 2012).

Making the Transition from Land-Based to Online Counselor Education

Even with growing acceptance of online learning among student and institutions in higher education, Allen et al. (2016) found only 29.1% of university leaders believed their faculty members accepted the legitimacy of online academic practices. The literature supports this statistic with formidable evidence of concerning perceptions among faculty members surrounding online learning in higher education (Blackmon, 2016; Hockridge, 2013; Mandernach et al., 2012). Moore (2014) explained this resistance among faculty members was often rooted in absolute thinking and broad assumptions about academic methods. Reamer (2013) also supported this idea,

suggesting some educators faced with the thought of broadening their pedagogical

perspectives to include online teaching methods endorsed the assumption that online

courses produced inferior outcomes to their land-based counterparts.   Researchers

suggest that the effectiveness of online courses depends not only on the development and

delivery of academic material but also, success is rooted in the belief that the faculty

member holds about the online academic experience (Baran & Correia, 2014;

Mandernach et al., 2012; Tang & Lam, 2012). If faculty members perceive online

learning as inferior to land-based options with no prospect for equalizing learning

opportunities across platforms, they might prove less likely to promote the successful

implementation of online courses (Mandernach et al., 2012).

Kirkpatrick (2015) conducted a qualitative study to understand resistance among

faculty members to the implementation of universal design for online courses at a

university. In this study, faculty members characterized their transition to teaching in the

online setting as both rewarding and exciting as well as scary and uncertain. In

Kirkpatrick's (2015) study, faculty members resisted change due to pitfalls in the

transition process such as a hasty, under-planned, and unclear change experience as

implemented by an unproven university leader. Faculty members expressed they would

have liked the opportunity to discuss the transition with other faculty members, had more

training opportunities, and experienced greater institutional support (Kirkpatrick, 2015).

Kirkpatrick (2015) concluded that faculty members need to experience change at a slow

pace allowing plenty of opportunities for training, practice, and supported to help

mitigate resistance. Malott et al. (2014) also suggested change needed to happen with

time and support allowing faculty members the opportunity to rethink pedagogy as well as engage in meaningful development experiences.

Institutional Support

Instructors need opportunities to not only critically consider pedagogy but grow in their ability to effectively utilize technology, create and implement online courses, and engage in meaningful strategies of communication and connection within the online environment (Keengwe & Kidd, 2010; Lindsey & Rice, 2015; Schmidt et al., 2013). A prevalent theme in Hall's (2016) study with online counselor educators was the need for institutional support to develop these important skills. Hall (2016) found that only one-third of counselor educators interviewed in the study considered training at their institution helpful, and faculty members endorsed needing more training and mentoring opportunities to feel successful in the online academic environment. In a phenomenological study to understand the experience of faculty members new to teaching online, Krammer (2015) also concluded that organizational support was critical for the transition to online teaching. Faculty members needed help to secure reliable technology as well as opportunities to expand their toolbox of teaching skills with exposure to effective strategies for online course development and delivery (Kearns, 2016). Faculty members also needed to connect with valuable institutional resources such as instructional designers that could support course development (Kammer, 2015). Hall (2016) noted even more valuable were instructional designers and technology support personnel who were familiar with the unique needs of counselor education programs.

Another aspect of institutional supported noted by Chaisson et al. (2015) and Baran and Correia (2014) was the need for university systems to acknowledge that facilitating online courses increased an instructor's workload and a lack of time was often a barrier to success. Faculty members desired financial or release time incentives to accommodate for the labor-intensive process of online teaching (Baran & Correia, 2014; Hall, 2016). Also important to point out is that faculty members characterized the experience of online teaching as isolating (Baran & Correia, 2014). Baran et al. (2011) explained that faculty members benefit when they have a collaborative environment to help scaffold new ideas around innovative teaching context. Other researchers agree that faculty members need mentorship opportunities where they can observe and develop new skills in a safe and supportive environment (Baran et al., 2011; Fletcher & Bullock, 2014).

An organizational culture conducive to the healthy development of online courses is critical to the success of online academic programs (ACES, 2017). Institutions of higher learning have an ethical obligation to provide instructors with opportunities to grow in the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively design and deliver an online counselor training course because this enhances student learning (ACA, 2014; ACES, 2017; CACREP, 2018; Hill, 2016). For a successful transition to online teaching, instructors must have time to grow in their understanding of how to integrate content, technology, and pedagogy within their unique teaching contexts (Baran et al., 2011; Bridges & Frazier, 2018). The more support faculty members perceive in their professional development through instructional training and exposure to new innovative

teaching strategies, the more open they might become to change (Keengwe & Kidd, 2010; Schmidt et al., 2013).

Pedagogy

When considering a change in teaching practice, Schmidt et al. (2013) explained faculty members often perceived themselves as self-taught educators, and many felt uneasy when faced with the prospect of teaching online. Schmidt et al. (2013) explained that when teaching in the classroom setting, new educators can often draw from their past experiences as students in classroom settings to mold their teaching practice. However, in the online academic setting, many instructors had never experienced being an online student with no point of reference for the development of online courses. Hockridge (2013) and Mandernach et al. (2012) found that faculty members teaching in the social sciences were especially challenged to understand how to effectively teach applied skills and assess interpersonal abilities in the virtual environment.

Researchers suggest effective online instructors feel a confidence in their ability to connect and help students learn successfully in the online setting (Baran et al., 2011; Horvitz et al., 2014). With limited understanding and few resources to help rethink pedagogy, faculty members are often challenged to adapt to the new roles and skills needed for online instruction (Baran et al., 2011). Faculty members require space to critically reflect on their past experiences, assumptions, and beliefs about learning and teaching (Barran & Correia, 2014). Keengwe & Kidd (2010) explain instructors needed time to understand not simply the task of teaching but the art of teaching online.

Interestingly, in a phenomenological study conducted by Kearns (2016) to understand instructor experiences of online teaching, instructors suggested that when faced with teaching online they began to reflect and rethink their pedagogical styles. Instructors in this study noticed a shift in how they conceptualized their teaching roles, suggesting a greater focus on how students learn in the online environment (Kearns, 2016). Similarly, Chiasson et al. (2015) suggested faculty members noticed less personal control in the online environment as they were no longer the focus of educational delivery and more of a facilitator. Instructors explained that students took on more responsibility for learning in the online academic setting (Bilbeisi & Minsky, 2014).

In a qualitative study, Hockridge (2013) determined instructor-student connections were a key factor that shaped how instructors and students viewed their educational experience. Hall (2016) also found counselor educators highly attuned to the need for instructor-to-student interactions and connections to help integrate content, knowledge, and experience. Counselor educators acknowledged difficulty facilitating this process, especially in the online format suggesting the lack of eye contact and non-verbal cues as barriers (Trepal et al., 2007). Thus, instructors needed to understand how to adjust their pedagogical practices to meaningfully facilitate interactions and connections with students and support their professional development and skills in the online setting (Fletcher & Bullock, 2014). Hockridge (2013) offered some insight into connections which developed through one-on-one interactions, mentoring, peer support, and student reflections.

Experience

A successful transition to online teaching for most instructors requires the knowledge, skills, and the support necessary to bolster confidence in their ability to meaningfully teaching and connection with students online (Keengwe & Kidd, 2010; Horvitz et al., 2014). Most research available to understand the transition to online teaching for faculty members comes from various programs in higher education and does not specifically speak to the needs of counselor educators. However, Hall (2016) conducted a study to understand the experiences of counselor educators who were developing and delivering online courses in counselor education and found some commonalities between the perceptions of counselor educators and other faculty members across programs in higher education. For example, Hall (2016) found that counseling instructors who expressed an internal motivation for learning and growing as an online counselor educator with time and experience became more comfortable with the online academic process. Mandernach et al. (2012) and Schmidt et al. (2013) also noted that instructors who had previous online teaching experience or displayed an intrinsic desire to learn new teaching approaches were the most open to the idea of integrating online teaching methods. In a cross-sectional survey study to understand challenges faculty members face when transitioning to the online academic settings, Horvitz et al. (2014) supported this finding by showing a significant correlation between the number of online teaching experiences an instructor has and the instructor's attitude as well as confidence with the online teaching approach.

Horvitz et al. (2014) also suggested instructors with years of traditional education experience could have high teaching self-efficacy in the classroom setting, but this did not readily translate into online teaching opportunities. Instructors needed online teaching experiences to help them build confidence across their teaching platforms (Horvietz et al., 2014). Instructors endorsed online teaching as making them more organized, prepared, and precise in their methods. Also, in a phenomenological study conducted by Chiasson et al. (2015) to understand faculty member experiences with the creation and facilitation of online courses, educators suggested becoming more familiar and well versed with technological tools opened new teaching possibilities for them both inside and outside the classroom setting (Chiasson et al., 2015). Kearns (2016) concluded that to reduce resistance, faculty members needed the opportunity to experience online teaching, consider the similarities and differences between their various teaching platforms, and reflect on what teaching processes might enhance their ability to connect and teach students in various settings.

Summary

With the growth of technology, many stakeholders in higher education are rethinking traditional forms of educational practice to accommodate a generation of more technology savvy learners. A concerning limitation of the online academic experience in counselor education surrounds faculty members who are not familiar with online academic approaches and are challenged to understand what it takes to develop and deliver an online course. These instructors are often expected by university systems to

intuitively know how to effectively teach in the online setting, and this is problematic as many instructors have not grown up in the age of technology.

Technological advancements have produced an array of innovative tools to make teaching and engaging students easier than ever before in the online setting, but instructors who are challenge to manipulate essential online tools can feel at a disadvantage with educational change. It is not uncommon for faculty members to struggle with understanding how to facilitate learning, community, or assessments in the online format. Above that, faculty members are often lost when thinking about how to transform their traditional pedagogy to the online setting. Effective instructors benefit from the ability to integrate their philosophy of teaching with evidence-based teaching practices across various academic platforms. Online instructors must come to the place of connecting personally with their practice of course creation and student engagement in various academic settings. Instructors who gained knowledge and experience with new teaching tools and pedagogical practices suggest greater confidence in the design and delivery of courses across platforms. Faculty members in counselor education who are asked to teach online courses could benefit from institutional support, training, and experiences that address not only technological tools for online courses but helped to align pedagogy.

Some literature was available on online teaching and learning practices in higher education, but more research is needed in this area. Limited literature exists on online teaching and learning in counselor education programs, and a significant gap was found when trying to understand the transitional experience of counselor educators when

moving from land-based to online settings. Exploring the benefits and challenges of the transitional experience was helpful as this might promote open discussions and invite critical analysis of the process. More research is needed in counselor education to help the professional community embrace the changing tide of educational development in a more proactive and positive manner.

In chapter 3, I will outline the methods used for this research study. I will provide a detailed description of the study's design, rationale, and procedures. I will also discuss validity, reliability, and generalizability.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

This research study was designed to illuminate the experiences of educators in counseling programs who transitioned from land-based to online academic settings. An important step of this qualitative research was to carefully underpin it with clear evidence of rigor and ethical soundness to bolster confidence in results (Priest, 2016). In this chapter, I offer a detailed description of the design, rationale, and procedures to support the validity, reliability, and possible generalizability of this endeavor. I describe the methodology for this transcendental phenomenological exploration with attention to participant selection, collecting and analyzing data, establishing trustworthiness and ensuring ethical soundness. I also provide a transparent view of myself as the primary research instrument in this study. Highlighting areas of related personal experience and acknowledging the potential for researcher bias was an important step to minimize the possibility of skewed study results (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

Research Design and Rationale

The central question for this research study was: What are the experiences of U.S. faculty members who have transitioned from land-based counseling courses to online courses?

Limited research was available to fully understand the experiences of educators in counselor training programs. Even less was known about how counselor educators transitioned from well-established, land-based, academic teaching practices to engage with innovative, online academic approaches. I used a phenomenological approach to

illuminate this transitional experience for counselor educators.

Phenomenology offers a variety approaches to help researchers explore and understand experience. For example, using a hermeneutical approach meaning emerges as the participant and researcher weave together and co-construct knowledge (Heidegger, 1962). Transcendental phenomenology, however, is distinctly different from this interpretive philosophical perspective because it views any knowledge coming from outside the participant's immediate awareness as completely inconsequential to the study results (Giorgi, 2012).

I chose to use a transcendental method because it focused specifically on the participant's perception as the object of scientific study (Lopez & Willis, 2016). I relied solely on the participants' direct description of experience coming from their intimate engagement with the phenomenon (Giorgi, 2012). By focusing on the language of participants as they recalled their experiences, I sought rich, thick descriptions to emerge that would culminate in deep truths about the transition (Maxwell, 2013).

As the researcher utilizing this descriptive approach to knowledge, I was aware that I needed to give attention to putting aside any prejudgments or personal perceptions that I brought to this project (Husserl, 1931). Setting aside researcher perceptions required a process of personal reflection and the bracketing of preconceived view, assumptions, and biases so as to allow the most natural meaning of faculty member experience to surface (Giorgi, 1997). Helping the counseling community gain knowledge on educating emerging counselors is important. Sword (2012) successfully utilized a transcendental phenomenological strategy when studying the experiences of nurse

educators who transitioned from land-based to online teaching settings. This method also

provided a valuable strategy to capture the uncontaminated meaning of counselor

educator experiences related to this transition.

Role of the Researcher

As the researcher, I was the primary instrument for gathering and analyzing data

in this qualitative study (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). With this in mind, it was

important that I offered a transparent view of my interest and relationship to this project

to guard against any personal assumptions, beliefs, or biases that might influence the

interpretation of meaningful results (Giorgi, 2009). I recruited research participants from

counselor education programs at universities across the United States.

 I was interested in exploring the experiences of counselor educators as they

moved from land-based to online academic settings because I had noticed that this

transition was sometimes a challenge for educators. Several years ago, I worked at a

local college and witnessed a decision to include online learning as an academic option

for a variety of programs. Working to provide both land-based and online offerings,

faculty members appeared to struggle with understanding how to effectively deliver their

land-based courses in the online settings. I also perceived limited institutional support

was available to help individuals navigate this process. As a result, online teaching at

this institution appeared to take many different forms based on individual instructor

interpretation of the innovative teaching and learning process.

Since that time, I gained another perspective of online learning by engaging as a

fully online counselor education student. I experienced counselor education as a student

in various settings. I earned a land-based Master's degree in counseling at a large, public university, and I pursued a CACREP-accredited Counselor Education and Supervision (CES) Ph.D. degree at an online university. In the beginning, I had little understanding of online learning, but as I engaged more in the process, my perspective of learning began to broaden. I gained a new appreciation for the online academic experience. Through engagement in various academic settings, my perception became that my online program, in many ways, provided more opportunities for active engagement and critical thinking than the other land-based educational endeavors.

Although I have grown to appreciate the value of online learning, my decision to embrace this academic setting has sometimes met with resistance. Along the way, I have encountered faculty members in land-based counselor education programs who have expressed concern over my chances for employment in higher education due to pursuing an online degree. These experiences have all peaked my curiosity and spurred my interest on online teaching and learning in counselor education, and I am aware that these experiences directly inform my unique perspective on this research project.

Fully eliminating any personal bias that might emerge from these experiences was impossible, but as the researcher, I employed strategies in this project that would help to manage my preunderstandings so that new meanings could emerge (Husserl, 1931). Bracketing was one strategy I used to help reduce the influence of my personal bias in this study (Finlay, 2014; Giorgi, 2009). Bracketing required that I reflect on personal knowledge gained from outside sources along with intrinsic beliefs, biases, and perspectives that influenced my objectivity (Giorgi, 1997). By openly sharing and

accepting personal responsibility for assumptions and perspectives on learning and teaching in various settings in counselor education, I hoped to minimize its influence on the collection and analysis of data for this project (Maxwell, 2013).

Methodology

A transcendental phenomenological approach provided the lens through which to illuminate experiences of counselor educators who had transitioned from land-based to online academic settings in the United States. To support the integrity of this work, I gave attention to establishing the complexity of analysis (Hayes et al., 2015). I delineated the research plan by carefully outlining the procedures for sampling, data collection, and data analysis.

Sampling Strategy

To ensure rich descriptions of meaningful experience, I utilized purposeful sampling to recruit well-qualified homogenous interviewees (Cleary, Horsfall, & Hayter, 2014). Selecting participants with direct experience with the phenomenon ensured the most highly relevant information (Giorgi, 2009). Criteria for participation included faculty members who (a) were currently teaching at least one online counselor education course, (b) had prior experience teaching land-based counselor education courses, and (c) represented a college or university with less than a total enrollment of 2,500 online students. Allen et al. (2016) found that individuals at smaller universities were the most resistant to the inclusion of online academic practices. Narrowing the sample to this particular population was meaningful as faculty members meeting these criteria provided

the most relevant information to address the research question as they had lived the reality of the phenomenon (Priest, 2016).

Recruitment Procedures

I recruited counselor education faculty members from universities across the United States. I engaged with faculty members through information from university websites and snowballing techniques. I began with an e-mail to invite counselor education faculty members to participate in this study. In the e-mail, I introduced myself and outlined the purpose, criteria, time commitment, confidentiality, and incentives of participation (Moustakas, 1994). I also ensured that potential participants understood that they were free to leave the study at any time (Qu & Dumay, 2011). If I did not receive adequate responses to this e-mail, I followed-up with phone calls to invite individuals to participate. I also used snowballing to inquire about others who might show interest in sharing their knowledge on the research study (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). As I recruited, I looked for a diverse group of participants representing different ages, cultures, and years of experience for triangulation (Gunawan, 2015). I recruited and interview six participants which allowed for saturation (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

Data Collection

Data for this study came from semistructured, face-to-face and video individual interviews with faculty members who were currently teaching online but also had previous experience teaching in the classroom setting. As the interviewer, I was the primary research tool during this qualitative data collection process (Giorgi, 1997). The semistructured interviews with faculty members lased approximately 60 minutes. I

guided these interviews with open-ended questions and follow-up non-structured probes to collect the most accurate textural descriptions of what participants experienced and structural descriptions of how they experienced the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994; Qu & Dumay, 2011).

For each interview, I followed a pre-planned, systematic procedure of conducting, recording, saving, and transcribing the interview data so as to ensure the most accurate representation of information (Giorgi, 1997). Face-to-face interviews took place in a comfortable, private setting such as a secure counseling room at a counseling center. I did not conduct face-to-face interviews in public settings or in private homes. I also used Skype conferencing as a method to connect with participants. This online video format helped to provide access to more interviewees from various geographic locations across the United States. When conducting an interview via Skype, I only audio recorded the interview.

Each interview procedure began with an introduction, followed by questions, and ended with a systematic wrap-up procedure (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). I used an audio recorder to ensure the collection of concrete verbal descriptions during the interview, and I also made brief notes after the interview to record any nonverbal cues that might enrich the understanding of context (Giorgi, 2009). During the wrap-up procedures, I asked participants if they had any additional information to add for greater understanding. I also asked if I could possibly follow-up with each participant if additional information was needed to enhance clarity at a later date (Knox & Burkard, 2009). I discussed with

participants the importance of member checking to reduce bias and ensure the most accurate representation of information (Giorgi, 2009).

After the transcription of each interview, I sent the transcript to the participant for review to verify the accuracy of recorded language. I also asked participants to engage once again with member check by sending them the results of the study for review. I asked participants to ensure that the emerging themes identified in the study accurately represent the essence of their experience. Giorgi (2009) explained that checking findings with a critical other strengthened confidence in the scientific results.

I ended interviews by thanking the interviewees for participating in the study to bolster feelings of support and appreciation for their role in the research process (Frankfort-Nachmias, Nachmias, & DeWaard, 2015). Immediately after the interview, I recorded additional field notes and memos to ensure I offer both the reflective and descriptive information needed to help accurately analyze the data and guard against any researcher bias in the process (Saldaña, 2016). Finally, I stored all collected data for each interview in a password protected computer file and used no personal identifiers to directly link the data to the participant (Remley & Herlihy, 2014). I repeated this process with each interview until I reached saturation.

Data Analysis

In using a transcendental phenomenological approach, data analysis began during the data collection process as carefully designed interview questions and probes were used to uncover what faculty members perceived and understood in their immediate awareness (Giorgi, 2009; Qu & Dumay, 2011). After completing each interview, I

transcribed the audio recording by first using Happy Scribe's program for voice recognition software and then, personally reviewing each transcript to adjust language for accurate wording. I then sent a summary of this transcript to the interviewee for member checking. This process of member checking was to ensure that the transcript language represented the most appropriate wording and meaning for accurate information (Gunawan, 2015).

Participants were given one week to confirm transcript accuracy before I continued with data analysis. For analysis, I used Giorgi's (2012) systematic process of data reduction and began with a careful review of the transcript language along with any field notes and memos to get a sense of the whole interview experience (Giorgi, 2012). Next, I returned to the beginning of the data to reread the descriptions of experience at a slower, more methodical pace. During this stage, I established meaningful units by marking every shift in meaning found in the data (Giorgi, 2012). A third time, I returned to the beginning of the data and considered each of these meaning units now through a more psychological lens (Giorgi, 2009). This step required a psychological attitude and more time for dwelling on the data beyond the surface of the information so as to draw out the deeper meaning (Finlay, 2014; Giorgi, 2009). Husserl's (1931) process of free imaginative variation helped during this transformation stage as I framed the wording of each unit in a manner that aligned with the purest psychological sense of the phenomenon (Giorgi, 2009). I repeated this data analysis process until all meaning units were discovered and transformed in a manner that highlighted the collective faculty member experience (Giorgi, 2009).

Trustworthiness

Qualitative studies, such as this one, offer a unique dimension to social science research as they explore the meaning of experiences and offer rich descriptions of human phenomenon (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The information collected in this qualitative research was fluid in nature making it difficult to definitively prove the validity and reliability of study results (Hammarberg, Kirkman, & de Lacy, 2016). Yet, producing trustworthy results remains a hallmark of scholarly research requiring the qualitative researcher to establish the integrity of the work (Miles et al., 2014). To bolster confidence in results, I discuss strategies incorporated in this research project used to help underpin the trustworthiness through the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of findings.

Credibility

Much like the internal validity of a quantitative research project, credibility surrounds the believability of a qualitative work (Hays, Wood, Dahl, & Kirk-Jenkins, 2015). I employed various strategies to establish credibility such as triangulation, informed consent, planning, and descriptions. Triangulation comes from using diverse sources of data so as to enhance the reliability of results (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Triangulation in this study included the recruitment of faculty members who represented a variety of universities, ages, cultures, years of experience, and teaching styles (Shenton, 2004). Also, providing faculty members an informed consent before agreeing to participate offered them details about confidentiality and explained that they were free to leave the study at any time (Qu & Dumay, 2011). Transparency about the process in the

informed consent helped participants to feel more comfortable with giving honest

responses and accurate accounts of information (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Another strategy

for bolstering credibility was to carefully outline the plan for data collection and analysis

as this supported the reliability of the interview process (Shenton, 2004). Data collection

in this project included not only audio recordings but field notes and memos that offered

reflective commentary during and after the data collection and analysis process (Shenton,

2004). I also described how study findings were directly related to the data and not

formulated from my preconceived assumptions about the transitional experience (Ravitch

& Carl, 2016). Finally, offering rich descriptions of participant experiences and

supporting these descriptions with direct participant quotes helped to better illustrate

findings (Finlay, 2014). All of these strategies were incorporated to support credibility.

Transferability

Transferability refers to the application of finding to other situations such as

participants, settings, and time frames (Hays et al., 2015). Results of qualitative studies,

as a rule, are not easily generalized to other populations, and this project was no

exception (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Understanding that generalization is difficult in

qualitative research makes it even more important to offer a detailed description of

various aspects of study design such as population, context, data collection, and analysis

procedures. These details might help others determine if they can generalize aspects of

this study to their unique setting (Priest, 2016).

This study included six participants from small universities with counselor

education programs across the United States, and recruitment continued until the study

reached saturation with no new themes emerging from the data (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). Participants included faculty members who were currently teaching online counselor education courses and had prior experience teaching land-based counselor education courses. Participants in this study also represented various ages, cultures, years of experience, and teaching styles (Maxwell, 2013). Each university represented in this study had less than 2,500 online students. Providing details about the population, setting, and context might enhance opportunities for like groups to glean helpful information from these research results.

Dependability

Dependability speaks to the quality of this study, and the higher the dependability, the greater the opportunity other researchers might have to replicate this work with similar results (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I bolstered the dependability of these results with saturated data of rich, thick descriptions (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Triangulation also helped with dependability as data came from participants representing various universities, ages, cultures, years of experience, and teaching styles. Using diverse participants supported the richness of information and also helped to minimize the potential for investigator bias (Gunawan, 2015). Finally, by offering the careful description of the research process and procedures, I hoped to increase the likelihood other researchers could replicate the work in their unique settings (Gunawan, 2015).

Confirmability

Confirmability is related to a sense of objectivity in study findings, and this is often difficult to establish due to the subjective nature of qualitative studies (Hays et al.,

2015). However, I created strategies to ensure the results of this research project stem

directly from the ideas of the participants instead of from the researcher's predetermined

assumptions (Shenton, 2004). I used a reflective process through journaling, field notes,

and memos to process personal beliefs, characteristics, and settings that might influence

the data gathering and analysis process (Hammarberg et al., 2016). I worked to provide a

transparent view of the interpretation of findings with rich descriptions and direct quotes

of participant experience (Finlay, 2014). I used a transcendental phenomenological

method to analyze data and make meaning directly from the participant's language

leaving no room for personal interpretations of this transitional experience (Finlay, 2014).

Ethical Procedures

Ethical considerations were important to support the safety of all research

participants and uphold the integrity of this research project (Remley & Herlihy, 2014). I

pursued an ethically sound study by first submitting my research plan to the Institutional

Review Board (IRB). The Walden University IRB approval for this study was 06-14-18-

0572588. The IRB ensured the project was grounded in quality procedures that allow the

proper protection of the research participants (Remley & Herlihy, 2014). I recruited

participants for this study who were faculty members over the age of 18 and not

considered part of a vulnerable population. I also remained aware that faculty members

could still feel vulnerable in other ways such as having an obligation to their academic

employers. This study included measures to minimize any occupational risks that faculty

members could experience due to their participation. I did this by providing participants

with an informed consent that outlined information both verbally and in writing about the

purpose, requirements, benefits, risks, and rights to confidentiality for the study (ACA, 2014). The informed consent also made participants aware that they could withdraw from the study at any time without negative consequences (Remley & Herlihy, 2014). All faculty members who agreed to participate and complete the interview process received a $10 Starbucks gift card as a thank you for participation. This gift card was not to coerce participation and all participants received this in gratitude even if they chose to withdraw from the study.

One other ethical consideration for this study was the establishment of equality with mutual respect and trust between the interviewer and interviewee (Qu & Dumay, 2011). I was the primary researcher as well as a doctoral student in Walden University's online Counselor Education and Supervision program. As the primary researcher, I remained aware that I had developed different relationships with many individuals in various academic programs. Recruiting faculty from Walden University to participate in this study could call the integrity of this project into question due to power differentials (Qu & Dumay, 2011). Understanding this ethical threat required that I exclude this population from the pool of prospective participants. Relationships that I maintained with faculty members at other universities where I collected data did not hold this same power differential.

Finally, to ensure the protection of confidentiality, I stored all collected data in a password protected computer file and use no personal identifiers to directly link the data to the participants (Remley & Herlihy, 2014). When quoting individuals in this study, I used the shortest wording possible and cleaned the information of any participant or

university identifiers. As the researcher, I had sole access to these data files and only shared transcripts with participants when member checking. I also plan to destroy all data files related to this research five-years after the conclusion of this study. Protecting faculty members who agree to participate in the study and protecting the integrity of this project were priorities of this work (ACA, 2014).

Summary

This phenomenological study was designed to understand the lived experiences of faculty members who had transitioned from land-based to online counselor education settings. Offering a scholarly exploration into a phenomenon requires more than interest but a structured procedure for scaffolding knowledge. To support the rigor and credibility of this work, I provided a transparent view of myself as the research instrument to help mitigate bias. This chapter also included a comprehensive plan offering details of the methodology and procedures for supporting trustworthiness. Finally, ethical considerations were highlighted to ensure the protection of research participants. Underpinning this work with evidence of rigor, trustworthiness, and ethical soundness was a critical step to help bolster confidence in results and support the usefulness of findings.

In Chapter 4, I will offers a description of the process, procedures, and results of this study. I will provide details related to the participants and interview setting. I will also describe data collection, analysis, and trustworthiness. Finally, I will outline the themes that resulted from this research.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

A growing trend in higher education has been to accommodate technological change by including more online academic opportunities (Allen et al., 2016; CACREP, 2018). This provision had both intrigued and perplexed many in higher education; including faculty members who often seem to question how they might continue to provide a rigorous and meaningful learning experience for students in both land-based and online academic settings (Blackmon, 2016; Reamer, 2013). Researchers have found that faculty members have relatively little experience or training to support their newer online teaching responsibilities and often need assistance to understand how to operate effectively in the online academic environment (Mandernach et al., 2012; Moore, 2014).

The counseling profession has taken proactive steps to include technology, such as providing for online supervision and online learning in counselor education programs (ACA, 2016; ACES, 2016). However, literature that supports best practices for online teaching and learning in counselor education is slower to emerge. To understand how counselor educators might best accommodate technology while still providing a rigorous and meaningful learning experience for counseling students, it becomes important to explore the experiences of counselor educators who have already navigated this transition from their traditional teaching responsibilities in the classroom to teaching counseling students online. Thus, the purpose of this research study was to understand the experiences of faculty members on the front lines of academic change in counselor education. Understanding barriers and supportive opportunities might help to inform

policies, procedures, and training strategies surrounding this transitional experience in counselor educators. The question guiding this research exploration was: What are the experiences of U.S. faculty members who have transitioned from land-based counseling courses to online courses?

In Chapter 4, I provide a detailed description of the process and procedures used in this study. I include information about the setting, the participants, as well as data collection and analysis. I offer evidence of trustworthiness by discussing the study's credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Finally, I discuss the themes that resulted from this research.

Settings

Interviews for this study took place in several private, confidential locations that were convenient for study participants. Two interviews occurred face-to-face with the first one conducted in a secure counseling room at a local career center. The other face-to-face interview took place in a secure room at another counseling center. I conducted three additional interviews via Skype conferencing from my home office. Although not originally planned, one final interview was conducted by telephone as this was the most comfortable method of communication for one participant who was unable to meet face-to-face due to geographic constraints. I was not aware of any conditions that influenced the participants or their experience during this data collection process.

Demographics

Participants provided self-report of their demographic information at the beginning of each interview. All participants were counselor educators with experience

teaching in both online and land-based courses in counselor education programs. Participants represented five different universities across the United States with fewer than 2500 online students.

Professor Able

Prof. Able was a 33-year-old White female from a Southern part of the United States. She had eight years of teaching experience and reported teaching adjunct for both the undergraduate and graduate levels. She described past experience at a large public institution and current experience at a private faith-based university.

Professor Bailey

Prof. Bailey was a 68-year-old White male from an Eastern part of the United States. This participant had 25 years of teaching experience and reported teaching both full-time and adjunct over his career. He reported currently working for a private institution.

Professor Cole

Prof. Cole was a 54-year-old White female from an Eastern part of the United States. This participant had 17 years of teaching experience and reported teaching adjunct in counselor education programs. She reported experience working in both fully online and land-based settings. She explained that she will begin a full-time faculty position at a small private Christian college this fall.

Professor Dixon

Prof. Dixon was a 48-year-old White male from a Southern part of the United States. This participant had 20 years of teaching experience. He reported teaching full-time in a counselor education program as well as acting as the director of clinical training. He reported currently working for a private Christian institution.

Professor Evans

Prof. Evans was a 35-year-old White male from a northern part of the United States. This participant had 11 years of both adjunct and full-time teaching experience. He reported currently working for an institution that has both land-based and fully online counselor education programs.

Professor Fowler

Prof. Fowler was a 36-year-old Black female from a southern part of the United States. This participant had three years of adjunct and full-time teaching experience. She reported currently working for a small private institution.

Table 1

Demographic Information

Participants	Age	Ethnicity	Location	Experience	Institution
Prof. Able	33	White	Southern United States	8	Private faith-based institution
Prof. Bailey	68	White	Eastern United States	25	Private institution
Prof. Cole	54	White	Eastern United States	17	Private christian college
Prof. Dixon	48	White	Southern United States	20	Private christian institution
Prof. Evans	35	White	Northern United States	11	Small land- based & online program
Prof. Fowler	36	Black	Southern United States	3	Private institution

Data Collection

I collected data for this study from six participants who had direct experience with a transition from land-based to online teaching in counselor education. I followed a systematic and pre-planned process for data collection that began with recruitment (Giorgi, 2012). I e-mailed invitations to counselor educators who I thought might fit the study criteria, and I only engaged with those who responded to the e-mail invitation expressing an interest in joining the study. Participants came from both direct e-mail invitations and snowball sampling. After talking with each potential participant and ensuring the individual met criteria for inclusion in the study, I e-mailed an informed consent document for review. Potential interviewees reviewed the informed consent and asked questions about the process. I requested that those still willing to join the study send a return e-mail with the statement "I consent." After receiving consent, I worked with each participant to determine an interview time and location. I intentionally recommended interview settings that were private, secure, and comfortable. Interviewees selected settings that were most convenient for their location.

The data collection process occurred over a 3-week period with two face-to-face interviews, three Skype interviews, and one telephone interview. The telephone interview was a variation in the planned data collection process and was included because it allowed me to accommodate for the needs of one interviewee. I interviewed each participant one time for approximately 45-60 minutes using a semistructured interview method. I began the interview by discussing the informed consent and asking if the participant had any questions or concerns. I then asked open-ended questions from the

interview guide (Appendix C) and followed this with non-structured probes to ensure I collected rich, thick data (Giorgi, 2009). I ended each interview by asking if the participant had anything else to add to the interview information. I also asked participants if I could contact them in the future with brief follow-up questions. Finally, I discussed member checking and asked if I could send each participant a summary of his or her interview transcript.

I used an audio recording device to capture each participant's language verbatim during the interview. I used Happy Scribe voice recognition software to transcribe the audio recordings. Once transcriptions were complete, I e-mailed a summary of each interview transcript to the participant for member checking. Participants were asked to review their transcripts over a one-week period to ensure accurate language and offer any feedback needed to clarify the narrative.

After each interview, I also recorded my immediate impressions with both reflective and descriptive information to help reduce researcher bias and bolster the accuracy of the data analysis (Saldaña, 2016). I stored all the interview recordings, transcripts, and field notes in a password protected computer file. I also scrubbed the data of all personal and institutional identifiers that could directly link the data to any one particular participant or university (Remley & Herlihy, 2014).

Data Analysis

A transcendental phenomenological method guided the analysis of interview data in this study with Giorgi's (2012) systematic process of data reduction. In the first step, I read each interview transcript and all field notes to get a sense of the interview

experience as a whole (Giorgi, 2012). Next, I took transcripts one at a time and reread

them slowly marking each transition in the meaning of the language. After this, I created

meaning categories and assigned portions of text from each transcript to various

categories of meaning (Giorgi, 2012). I repeated this process with each transcript. In a

third step, I returned to the meaning categories and reviewed them carefully noting which

categories had the greatest endorsement by study participants. In a fourth step, I took

time away from the meaning categories to reflect on each of the emerging themes in light

of the research question to consider the deeper meaning related to this study's purpose

(Finlay, 2014; Giorgi, 2009). Finally, clear themes of collective counselor educator

experience began to emerge in a psychological manner. The four overarching themes of

the transition experience included (a) high expectations and low support from university

leaders, (b) limits to transitional enthusiasm among counseling faculty, (c) solutions for

transitional success for counseling faculty, and (d) support essential for the counselor

educator's transition.
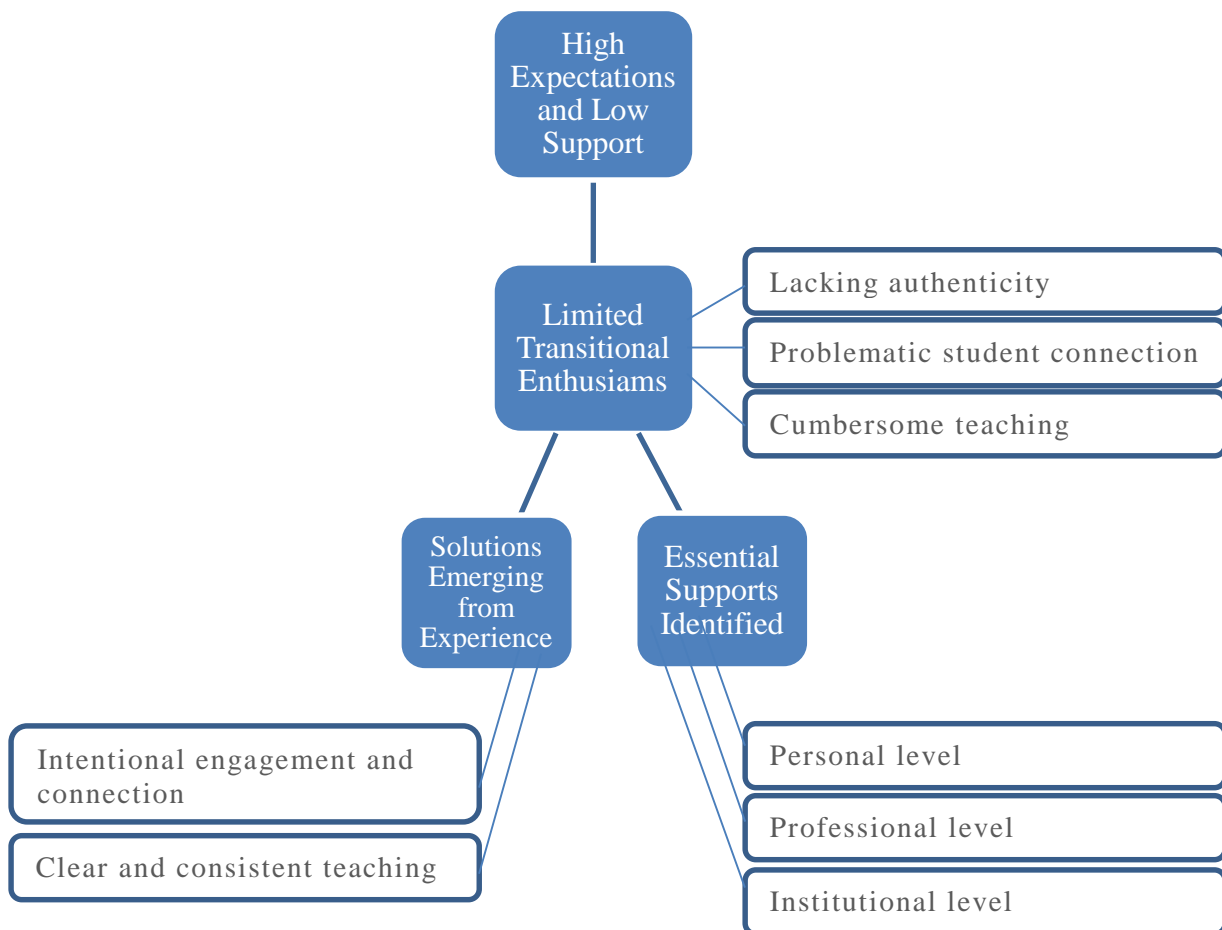
Figure 1. Themes of Counselor Educator Transitional Experience.

Themes

Theme 1: High Expectations and Low Support from University Leaders

When reflecting on the transition from land-based to online teaching, most of the respondents described high, mostly uninformed expectations from institutional leaders with low support to help navigate their transitional process. Prof. Dixon explained why institutions were interested in online academics by suggesting that "For educational

institutions to survive they have to do online education. That's just the way life is today. Online learning it's here to stay. It's like a bulldozer. It's coming in."

High expectations. All of the participants shared this view of online education as here to stay, and five out of the six respondents reported a struggle with what they felt were unrealistic expectations from university leaders when considering their transition to online academics. Professors Bailey and Cole explained that their university leaders wanted fully online programs by the end of the year. Several professors noted a similar push to include online courses quickly, and Prof. Bailey explained: "We are accessing students online who we would not normally have. Students no longer have to move their families to campus," and Prof. Cole summed up the thoughts expressed by the majority of participants that including online courses "is a great way for institutions to make money." All six professors felt high expectations to quickly accommodate technological change and offer courses online. Four of the professors agreed that the institutional message they received was as Prof. Cole stated, "You've been teaching this forever let's go teach it online." Prof. Cole explained that this felt as if the transition to online teaching was perceived as easy without extensive modifications needed to accommodate for the new academic setting.

Lack of experience and support. Along with the pressure to quickly accommodate online teaching, five of the six instructors interviewed expressed a lack of experience and support to help with their transition. Prof. Bailey explained: "We do what a lot of schools do we put the plane in the air, and then we finish building." Prof. Able noted, "Few of them [instructors] had ever even done online at all; had never touched it;

didn't have a framework for it, and were having to just adapt their own ideas to online."

Prof. Evans shared his experience:

> When I was asked to teach online, I didn't have any training on it. I didn't have any introduction to say, hey this is what it should be like. I wasn't given the online shell. I was told here's the syllabus now teach it online, and unfortunately, the syllabus was developed for an on-ground land-based program. So for me, the challenge was how do I get creative in developing discussion post and developing assignments that met standards for CACREP but that were also adapted in a way that the online learners could still benefit the most out of it?

All of the participants in various ways described their start to online teaching as being "thrown in" to the process with a "trial and error" type of strategy to figure out how to best connect with students and teach online.

When reflecting on their experiences with online education over time, four of the instructors felt that support for online teaching was getting better at their institutions. Professor Cole explained:

> They've actually had to take a step back and say "Okay, we're going to do this a little more slowly than we first told you all." They realized that this is a whole different ball game for people who aren't comfortable with technology. This is going to be a lot different in how you teach and how you grade. There's going to be a lot more reading. There's going to be a lot more feedback needed and that kind of thing.

All participants acknowledged online education was still a fairly new phenomenon for many small university systems and that the development of quality online programs was a continual learning process for all those involved.

Theme 2: Limits to Transitional Enthusiasm among Counseling Faculty

When considering problematic issues faced in their transition to online teaching, all participants quickly suggested barriers that impeded their transitional enthusiasm including feeling (a) a lack of authenticity in the online format, (b) a lack of student connection, and (c) teaching practices that were cumbersome. Overarching, their lack of enthusiasm for online teaching was a common passion expressed by all the participants for connecting and teaching students in the classroom. Prof. Dixon explained, "I don't like teaching online. I'd rather not. I tell people I didn't go get my dissertation to sit in front of a computer. But that's because of the field I'm in. I'm in counseling and counseling is a very relational exercise." All participants in this study felt most comfortable with their classroom pedagogy and preferred teaching in the classroom regardless of their level of comfort with online academic practices. Prof. Able said:

> I enjoy the connection with people and the energy that comes from that, so being in a classroom setting, I feel like I come alive. I love sitting down with students, talking to students, and walking them through things.

Prof. Evans also shared this passion:

> I love people you know. I love that connection. I love being in front of the students. I love just that in the moment question and answer kind of banter going

back and forth. So professionally, that was a challenge for me, "How do I do that

effectively [online] without that real time synchronous learning?"

Prof. Cole explained:

The biggest difference has been that I realized how much I rely on my personality

and feedback from students [in the classroom].   I feel like I'm good on my feet,

so that's part of the classroom teaching that I enjoy. It's kind of what gives me

energy, and so sitting behind a computer just wasn't as comfortable or enjoyable.

A lack of authenticity online.   When considering what counselor educators lost

in the online setting, five of the six participants suggested authentic communication was

often missing from their online course. Prof. Dixon explained, "Our field values

transparency, values disclosure, realness and online you never know if you're getting

that." Professors were concerned that students might not present themselves authentically

online. When considering student authenticity in the online course, Prof. Dixon said:

On social media and even in online classes you can present a false self. I have

requirements for what they're supposed to post. You don't know if what they are

posting is what they are really thinking or you might be getting what they want

you to hear. You can make the argument that they can do that in class too, but I

think over time in class it's harder to do that consistently.

Interestingly, instructors also described themselves as lacking authenticity in the online

format.   Prof. Fowler explained students "don't get to see my personality and how I

present stuff. I don't want to say online is dry, but they just miss that person." Prof.

Dixon suggested:

I have had students tell me that I'm a little harsher, a bit more difficult online. I guess, in a way, I'm more disciplined online whereas in class I can probably be more myself. I don't have to hide behind a kind of professional facade in class whereas I think online that kind of comes with it. For example, I don't use a lot of humor online because it could be misinterpreted. When people read stuff, they can interpret things in different ways. In a classroom, when I use humor or sarcasm to make a point, students know that I am kidding, whereas, if I try to use sarcasm in a forum, it might get me into a lot of trouble.

Problems connecting with students online. A connection was by far the greatest challenge noted by all participants in this study. Prof. Able explained:

The biggest challenge I think was just making sure that I was as connected to the students as I felt the students connected with me on-ground. I wanted it to feel the same. I think it's just a challenge in general because you're using technology.

Prof. Fowler described it as, "You don't have that continuous one group conversation. You may have somebody who responds on Monday, and I respond to them. They may not respond again until Wednesday. So it's not that one conversation." Prof. Bailey suggested, "We have exchanged access for intimacy. I have people all over the world in all these different countries, but the intimacy is just not there." Prof. Evans offered an example to illustrate the difference in connection he felt between land-based and online learning,

When students are feeling overwhelmed or when students are really stressed out in the classroom, I have stopped the lecture and just kind of process with the

students like "Where are you at right now? I'm getting the sense that people are

really stressed out." A couple of times I've said, "Hey, let's take 10 minutes right

now", and I've done some deep breathing and meditation exercises. For me, it's

modeling to a future counselor the importance of self-care and the skills of

immediacy. Online it's hard because I can't visually see the students.

Also, when trying to engage students in learning online, professors were many times

frustrated. Prof Fowler suggested:

They'll give me like the minimum requirement. It will just be real dry for some

students versus face-to-face I can ask follow-up questions and really pull it out of

you. I definitely don't ask a lot of follow-up questions online because I don't want

the student to think I'm picking on them.

Prof. Cole noted:

They [students] were all working professionals with busy lives. They didn't have a

lot of extra time, so sometimes they would see things as extra when I feel like

they're an important part of counselor training. You're not just learning facts in

counselor education; you're learning how to be with people. They just weren't

going to post any more than they had to. It became really apparent that if the

posting is due on Sunday, they're going to post on Saturday, and they might give a

short response to one person maybe two people.

Teaching practices were cumbersome online. All six participants also

expressed that it was difficult to know if they were adequately teaching the course

content online. One issue discussed by three professors was a trend toward standardization of online course content. Prof. Cole explained:

> The part that I love about teaching is coming up with the content and teaching it well. So it's a little frustrating in that kind of setting [online] where so much of it is already preprogrammed into the course, and you just kind of have to live with it.

When teaching counseling skills, Prof. Dixon explained:

> We have [counseling] videos that they submit online. Typically, they will use family, and I got this feedback from students who have done both online and on-ground. They have found a huge difference between that [counseling family] and real counseling or even counseling a classmate whom they don't know.

Two professors also mentioned being leery of group work online with Prof. Fowler noting, "I feel like I can facilitate the group assignments better face-to-face than online because I see who's participating or who's not versus online." Prof. Evans summed it up with a question, "How do I meet the needs of my students? With every semester, that's constantly going to change because the needs of my students are constantly changing, so as an educator, I think I also need to." When discussing online teaching, many of the professors echoed Prof. Evans' desire to "remain flexible and figure out ways to enhance teaching so that students can benefit the most from it."

Professors also expressed concern over the fit of online counseling courses especially when it came to assessing character and teaching counseling skills. Prof. Bailey explained,

One of the hardest things it seems about not interacting online in an intimate fashion is it becomes much more difficult to develop character and skills. We've got to learn how to do this. Otherwise we will pretty soon give up lots and lots of technique and knowledge.

Prof. Dixon supported this line of thinking by suggesting:

On-ground they have exposure to us, to the counseling center, and to the therapeutic community. You don't get that [modeling] as much online which makes them greener. Students don't get the interpersonal, the intangible aspects of counseling, and that's kind of hard to teach online.

Prof. Fowler explained:

We know people who are book smart but don't have common sense. You might know the counseling knowledge, but you can't necessarily implement it, or that professionalism is not there. I'm concerned about how can you actually evaluate effectively in each [online] class.

Theme 3: Solutions for Transitional Success for Counseling Faculty

All of the professors interviewed for this study were actively engaged in the process of understanding how to make their online academic courses rich and meaningful for students. As they worked to navigate concerns about their online academic process, all participants also suggested helpful online teaching strategies were emerging. Participants spoke to improvement in their online student engagement and connection as well as teaching.

Intentional engagement and connection. The word 'intentional' seemed to resonate with most participants when discussing online connection. With student engagement, all of the study participants explained in various ways that instructors must think carefully about how to build a relationship with their students online. All of the professors suggested connection was an essential part of the counselor education process. When discussing this online student-instructor connection, Prof. Able explained:

I have students say all the time I feel so much more connected to my faculty in my online master's program than I did in my bachelor's program on-ground ever. It's just intentionality. It's incorporating more ways to connect, to see each other, to hear each other.

Three professors acknowledged greater faculty member responsibility in creating this intentional online engagement. Prof. Able explained:

Faculty members have to own it as part of their job. That's a big mindset shift when for so long it's been online students should reach out if they need anything. We train grads on-ground, but there's a lot built in for them on-ground that we miss sometimes in online, and we don't take that on.

Professors suggested just as instructors must reach out and connect with students in the classroom; they must take on the responsibility of connecting with their students online. Each professor discussed how they make this connection happen in the online format with strategies like (a) engaging students in discussions, (b) communicating openness (c) creating a personal connection, and (d) showing more humanity. Prof. Able explained how she engaged students in discussion boards:

Discussion boards are consistent in every single class. The point is to get people

to connect and discuss. A lot of times it just happens one post and two responses,

and that's where the discussion ends. But if I go in there, and I say "well, you said

this but what about this, and I need you to respond to it," and I actually make that

part of the grade, I'm prompting something that helps them to go in and engage

more. Because I'm engaging more, they are engaging more.

Prof. Dixon and Prof. Fowler both supported the need to engage often:

I usually interact Thursday, Friday, and usually one of the days during the

weekend. I interact, and I try to respond to most students. I think most students

would say that's different than maybe other professors, and they're usually

surprised that I interact so much.

Prof. Fowler explained a process of "constant interaction as I responded to the students

and interacted five days a week."

When trying to communicate, instructor openness was key in the online setting.

Three professors reported that they explained to their students e-mailing and requesting

phone calls equated to coming by the instructor's office. Prof. Able said:

I start from the beginning of class saying you have to treat this like I am available

to you, and your e-mail is not a bother. I frequently make myself very available

for phone calls, Skype or video chats, and I'll initiate them if there are things

going on.

Several of the professors were interested in how to establish a more authentic connection with students online. Professor Evans spoke directly to forming a human connection in the online environment by suggesting:

> One of the things that I would do was schedule video conferences periodically throughout the semester like office hours if I was at a land-based program. They can come and kind of ask questions. Then every week, I would always do a really brief minute and a half maybe even two-minute video introduction to the course just because for me as a student I liked that face-to-face connection. So from the educator's standpoint, I thought let me try to develop that personal connection the best way that I could, and I think it really does help in the online environment.

When considering authenticity in the online setting, Prof. Fowler mentioned counselor educators must not be afraid to "let their personality shine" in the online environment. Prof. Evans explained it was possible to be human and remain professional online:

> I think when you get people laughing together it reduces their defense mechanism, and it normalizes the environment. It's so much easier to include humor in a classroom, but I can't lose who I am in an online world. So I think I include more humor in my video introductions every week but also even in discussion boards. If a student says something that's funny, I will go back and be funny with them. And I think having that balance is so important. So I don't think it's more difficult. You have to be more strategic in how you include humor in an online environment.

Helping students learn online. Four professors also offered strategies for helping students learn online including (a) questioning, (b) planning and clarity, (c) consistency, and (d) modeling. Prof. Bailey explained:

> It's just like counseling. It's all about the question you ask. In my mind, counseling is not great answers or great thoughts; it's asking an appropriate question at an appropriate time. I think I taught my third or fourth online course before I really got that.

Prof. Cole explained when communicating it was important to, "communicate both in the syllabus and course description." Prof. Evans and Prof. Fowler both explained that they used video conferencing to enhance clarity:

> I realized students didn't understand some of the assignments, and so I started incorporating Zoom so they could see me on the first day of class. We would go over the syllabus, and I think that helped from the forefront to make things easier. Once I got familiar with Zoom, I said, "If you have questions, we can definitely do this face-to-face," and so, after that first day, they were fine. It was always an option if they needed it.

Another strategy was consistency in the online setting, Prof. Evans explained:

> At the very beginning, students are just really trying to get acclimated to the overall course itself, and it's sometimes overwhelming. I think the more consistent I was with video instruction every single week, the more comfortable they got with me as an educator.

A final strategy endorsed by several of the professors was finding ways to creatively model counseling behaviors for online students. Modeling happened through the language used online and intentional connections. Prof. Evans suggested, "Periodically, I will say okay this week I took some time for my own self-care, and I want you to take five minutes to do something for yourself over this next week."

All of the participants acknowledged connecting with students and teaching were more challenging and time-consuming in the online setting, and they all acknowledged still being in the process of growing in their understanding of effective online teaching. Prof 1 summarized the sentiment suggesting that educating counseling students, "is all intentionality, and that doesn't happen on ground or online. It happens when you make it happen."

Theme 4: Support Essential for the Counselor Educator' Transition

Another area of agreement among all study participants surrounded the need for greater support of counselor educators attempting to navigate the transition from land-based to online teaching. Support was conceptualized not only from external sources such as the profession and the institution, but professors also described support as coming from a deeply personal place.

Support at the personal level. Three participants expressed support must begin within the counselor educator. These participants explained that if an intrinsic motivation and internal support for online education was missing for the counselor educator, the instructor could struggle. Prof. Able explained online learning is a "challenge." "That doesn't mean it's impossible, but you have to be flexible enough to change the way you

do things and to rethink and be open." Prof. Fowler supported this, "You have to be willing to adapt and embrace it." Two professors suggested they believed online learning was possibly even more difficult than land-based learning, and Prof. Evans said:

> I think if there is a greater acceptance that online learning is as difficult if not more than on-ground learning, I think other educators might really shift the way that they think, and then, also, shift the way that they begin to teach and enhance online.

Prof. Able suggested:

> If you just take ownership of it and realize that it matters, it creates more confident faculty. Faculty who are engaging with their students from the knowledge and heart of it being done well and with good quality. It takes a belief that it can be done that way.

> **Support at the professional level.** Five of the six participants believed that more

support for online counselor education was needed at the professional level. Prof. Able said:

> I think that there is still a lot of disparity in people saying online programs are not good enough, and as a whole, we need to hold our own field accountable to support the decisions that our field has made to include online learning.

Prof. Dixon echoed this sentiment suggesting that if online academics are accepted by the profession that programs must find ways to skillfully "include it." Prof. Dixon explained, "It's not the redheaded stepchild, but it's like okay, this is what we've decided to have, so how are we going to do it well so that we can help our students?"

When considering what counselor educators might need from their profession to support effective online teaching, three professors noted more attention to standards and models for best online teaching practices in counselor education would be helpful. Two professors suggested refining CACREP standards for online programs. Prof. Cole explained:

> It's disheartening when you see that the standards aren't always where I'd like to see them be. It's not unique to online, but we've got to continue to say what are those? What are our standards? What are we really looking for?

Prof. Dixon offered an example:

> A problem is that there's [online] programs that don't have any residential requirements, and they just flock to those. We never know how those students are going to do in the field. I really I think that CACREP should probably step up and say, "Hey, if you're totally online, fine, but you need to have some residential requirements." What will those be?

Prof. Fowler also suggested a common online training experience for counselor educators might be helpful.

> I think about ACES since that's our main organization for counselor educators. I think if we can have maybe some type of model for everybody who doesn't have the same type of mindset at their campus. Maybe this becomes a preconference or a post-conference perhaps that could be helpful to people. If you had something that would address how to teach those eight core CACREP areas, that's what

people are concerned about. If we could have something that would train this is

what you can do for every model it would be helpful.

Three professors strongly supported the need to consider a hybrid experience as a

standard for online counselor education specifically when thinking of gatekeeping. Prof.

Bailey explained:

> I would love to have class part online and part residential. It is much harder to
>
> correct a student other than just choosing words on the screen when they're either
>
> unhealthy or they're having trouble. I'm finding more and more a lot of my
>
> students are filled with shame and guilt over stuff that they just won't deal with,
>
> and that's not the type person you want doing long-term intense therapy in my
>
> opinion.

Prof. Dixon supported this sentiment suggesting:

> You can do a lot of damage in this field and really hurt people emotionally and
>
> psychologically. So it's a hazardous profession both for us and for the client. I
>
> think it takes us as gatekeepers as best as we can to be responsible and make sure
>
> these students are interpersonally, emotionally, and psychologically ready or as
>
> ready as they can be for this field.

Three professors agreed with Prof. Dixon's statement that:

> Counselor education programs that are online should have elements of students
>
> coming in face-to-face. We really need to see them and see them in action
>
> physically to know, to make sure that we feel good about them going into the
>
> field.

Support at the institutional level. All counselor educators also felt support for the transition to online teaching was critical at the institutional level. Prof. Cole explained**,** "It's really important that we don't just dump this on teachers, and say "Hey, we're going to do this course online, but give them the training and the tools that they need to do that well." Supportive services for online teaching produced ideas such as (a) experiencing online courses, (b) mentorship, and (c) creating common platforms for sharing information. Four study participants had taken an online course at some point in their undergraduate or graduate training. These professors all indorsed being an online student as helpful to understanding how to be a good online instructor.

Prof. Cole said:

> The fact that I had been in an online program helped to kind of say okay, I understand how I work as a student and how I've seen it work in the classroom. So I know a little bit of what to look out for as the instructor.

Prof. Able suggested the profession might benefit from making online teaching and learning a graduate coursework requirement, "I think that teaching online should be completely integrated into counselor education classes as a standard. Knowing that this is the trend and something we're all going to have to be competent in" makes including it helpful. Prof. Cole explained that at her institution, instructors were required to take an online training course specifically designed to prepare online educators.

> They had training provided the month before I started teaching, and it was great. This is how you post a discussion; this is how you set up a classroom; this is how you do your grading. So functionally, I felt prepared for the class. It's done in a

fun sort of way, and it's not graded. You can do it as quickly or take as long as

you want, but it has to be finished before you teach the first online course. Part of

it is submitting a sample syllabus. There's a unit on engaging online learners, and

then, the practical aspects of doing a course, so it was pretty good. The course

that I had to do should be basic to universities.

The most prevailing idea that resonated with all of the participants was the need

for mentorship in the transition. Each participant described a type of passive mentoring

experience in their transition. Prof. Fowler summed up her mentoring experiences as,

"She kind of taught us what to do but not directly. It was more like here's the course

guide read it, and then fill it up with the material in the curriculum that you want."

Additionally, each participant expressed a deep desire for a more interactive and

intentional mentoring. Prof. Able suggested:

A person to be available like in the same manner that you expect the educators to

be available [online] which is maybe not 24/7 but at least at some point six to

seven days a week answering questions and serving the faculty in those areas.

Prof. Dixon described a good mentor as:

A professor who has taught a lot of online classes and can kind of guide a person

who is just getting into it. Let me help you. What kind of questions do you have?

Let me come to your office and actually watch you do this. Let me tell you what I

do for that kind of thing.

Prof. Evans recollected a positive mentoring experience:

So she met with me through video conference and showed me her shell. She

showed me how she set it up. She'd been teaching online for a couple of years.

She said that through trying a couple of different versions, she thought that this

was the best format for her. She told me I could try it or try something different. I

did it. I mean it worked well for her, and I figured why reinvent the wheel. She

was really open to questions. I could reach out to her, and she would kind of

navigate me through how do I change this or how to implement this course

objective the best way. She was really helpful, and I definitely appreciated that.

Another idea was offered by Prof. Bailey who suggested a common platform for

counselor educators to share information would be helpful.

Most of us are operating off a blank slate or a residential slate. We need to create

a place where counseling professionals can share what they've been doing, best

practice, or even the syllabus. We can't compete with each other. We can learn to

teach each other and grow together when you say, "That's a great idea, never

thought about that before, or that's a really bad idea. I need to make sure I don't

do that." We need to see something modeled.

These common themes of counselor educator experience offer rich information to

help understand this transitional process. Although counselor education faculty described

many of the same experiences, it is also important to remain aware that every counselor

educator is unique. The data I collected for this study provided various perspectives of

the transitional experience and from those experiences emerged the four common themes.

Discrepant Data

This qualitative study was designed to explore the lived experiences of counselor educators, and though the counselor educators in this study noted many common experiences in their transitional process, there were occasionally experiences unique to one participant. For example, one professor suggested instructors could simply transition the same material they used in their face-to-face course to an online course without any need for adjustments to the format. When analyzing the data, I recorded this experience as a meaning unit from the participant's transcript; however, this view was inconsistent with the perspective of the other five counselor educators who had transitioned to online teaching. With no supporting statements found in the subsequent transcripts, this data was not considered as a meaningful theme of the transitional experience.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Credibility

I used various strategies to established credibility in the project including attention to triangulation of data sources, informed consent, planning, descriptions, and reflective journaling. I included participants who represented various ages (33 – 68 years of age), ethnicities (White, Black), years of teaching experience (3 – 25 years), types of teaching (adjunct, full-time), and geographic locations across the United States. I also worked to make participants comfortable to share the most honest and accurate responses by providing an informed consent that outlined confidentiality and the participant's right to leave the study at any time. I carefully followed a structured data collection and analysis process with audio recordings to offer the most accurate language

of participant experience and field notes to document every detail. Finally, I paid careful attention to bracketing my own biases in this study. I answered all the interview questions for myself before beginning the study and reflected on each response. I also made notes about descriptions of experience that triggered personal perspectives during the interview process to remain aware of my own bias. Finally, themes for this study came strictly from the participant language with nothing added or taken away (Georgi, 2012).

Transferability

Results of this study are not readily transferable to other populations. This study focused specifically on the experiences of counselor educators at small universities across the United States. All participants were counselor educators who had taught both in the classroom and online. I provided detailed descriptions of various aspects surrounding the population, context, data collection and analysis strategy. Although I caution transferability of these results, other small counselor education programs across the United States might find the details provided in this study useful when determining if they might generalize aspects of this research to their unique setting.

Dependability

Support for the dependability of this study comes from six participants representing various ages, cultures, years of service, and teaching styles. These participants had direct experience with a transition from land-based to online teaching in counselor education. As a group, they offered saturated data of rich, thick descriptions of meaningful counselor educator experience. By carefully offering details of this research

process and focusing specifically on the language of participant experience, I hope other researchers might be able to replicate this work in their unique setting (Gunawan, 2015).

Confirmability

Several strategies helped to bolster confirmability in this research. First, all resulting themes stemmed directly from participant language leaving no room for personal interpretation. I supported the findings rich descriptions and direct quotes of participant experience (Finlay, 2014). Second, I also utilized member checking by having each participant review a summary of their interview transcript for accuracy. Finally, when considering the possibility of my own bias, I continually reflected on personal thoughts and beliefs throughout the data collection and analysis process through journaling, field notes, and memos (Hammarberg et al., 2016). Overall, I focused specifically on participant language to ensure the greatest objectivity in study findings.

<div align="center">

Study Results

</div>

The question that guided this research study was: What are the experiences of faculty members who have transitioned from land-based to online counseling courses in the United States? After interviewing and analyzing data from six counselor educators with rich experiences directly on the transition from land-based to online counselor education settings, themes emerged from common experience that highlighted both challenges and strategies for change. Challenges existed in the transitional process with high institutional expectations and often low support opportunities for counselor educators. With a limited understanding of best practices in online education, transitional enthusiasm among faculty members was often thwarted as they felt a lack of authenticity,

connection, and understanding of online teaching practices. As counselor educators grappled with making their transition, another theme emerged surrounding solutions that were beginning to present for educators as they gained more online teaching experience.

Even with a greater understanding of online teaching, however, the most prominent theme found in this study was an ongoing need for improvement in support of the transitional experience. All of the counselor educators endorsed a need for support at personal, professional, or institutional levels. Mentorship was by far the support suggestion expressed most adamantly by all of the counselor educators in this study. All of the participants explained in various ways that future counselor educators need intentional, active, and available mentorship to successfully navigate their transitional process.

Understanding this transition through the lens of those who have already started to negotiate the process offers valuable information for future counselor educators, organizational leaders, and stakeholders in the counseling profession. Growing understanding of what hinders and supports this transitional process will allow strategies to emerge in counseling programs that will directly support the most successful transition for counselor educators. As a result, the successful inclusion of online teaching might also enhance the academic experience of counseling students as they take both land-based and online courses.

Summary

This chapter provided a detailed description of the study process. I include information about the setting, participants, and procedures for data collection and analysis as well as evidence of trustworthiness. I outlined important themes of experience from six counselor educators who had transitioned from land-based to online teaching. Counselor educators are unique in their perspectives and experience, but through this study, four major themes were identified as common counselor educator transition experience. Results of this study have provided some insight into barriers, supports, and ultimately, what counselor educators need for success in their transition. In chapter five, I will continue to consider these themes in light of limitations to this project, recommendations for further research, and implications for social change.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

Technology continues to influence many aspects of modern life including counselor education. Adding online academic options to counselor education programs is a growing trend that has required counselor educators to rethink traditional strategies of teaching and connecting with students (Bridges & Frazier, 2018; Keengwe & Kidd, 2010). The literature on best practices for online teaching in counselor education is beginning to emerge; there is still much to understand about the process (ACES, 2016; Bridges & Frazier, 2018). Researchers who have explored online teaching in higher education have suggested that faculty members need support to help navigate their transition from land-based to online education (Blackmon, 2016; Mandernach et al., 2012; Moore, 2014). However, no literature is available to directly address how counselor educators have experienced this transition. Allowing counselor educators to reflect on their transitional experiences is important because it can provide meaningful information to help counseling programs facilitate the transitional process. Thus, the purpose of this study was to illuminate the lived experiences of faculty members who had transitioned from teaching land-based to online counselor education courses within the United States.

By highlighting counselor educator transitional experiences, themes emerged from this study, for example, common challenges and supports to the transitional process. Counselor educators expressed that they felt high expectations and often low levels of support when trying to make a move from land-based to online teaching. These

conditions often led to a lack of enthusiasm among faculty members who often found themselves presented with formidable challenges when trying to teach counselors online. With time and experience, counselor educators described gaining some clarity and often developing innovative solutions to enhance their teaching and connecting with students in the online setting. For example, they became more intentional with efforts to engage students and gave more attention to communicating clearly and consistency in the online format. However, even with more understanding of online methods, these counselor educators expressed a common desire to continue learning about what it takes to be an effective online counselor educator. Participants in this study explained that support during this process was essential.

Explanation of Findings

I used a transcendental phenomenological approach to understand the experiences of counselor educators who transitioned from land-based to online teaching. This method of exploring experiences suggests that knowledge comes directly from the participant's current perceptions found in their immediate awareness leaving no room for researcher interpretation (Giorgi, 2009). By focusing specifically on the language used by participants, patterns emerged in this study that culminated in the essence of the transitional experience for counselor educators: (a) high expectations and low support from university leaders, (b) limits to transitional enthusiasm among counseling faculty, (c) solutions for transitional success for counseling faculty, and (d) support essential for the counselor educator's transition (Giorgi, 2012).

Professors in counselor education are realistic in their view of online learning as a process that seems here to stay for a while. As a whole, participants acknowledged that online courses are attractive to institutions as they give universities a wider geographic reach and increased enrollment. Professors also noted that institutions choosing not to include online options for students could perhaps struggle in the future because students may gravitate toward schools with more convenient online opportunities.

Participants in this study all found the transition to online teaching a challenge. Many perceived their institutions had high hopes for a quick transition to online academics. Instructors, however, were slower to understand the transition as they still questioned how they might teach a traditional course in a format that felt foreign to their traditional understanding of the academic process. Navigating the transition for most of the professors was a formidable task with little guidance or support to help facilitate a meaningful and productive change.

An affinity for land-based teaching and a lack of skills and experience with online academic processes made counselor educators in this study less than enthusiastic about transitioning from land-based to online teaching. Participants noted problems with online engagement such as authenticity and a genuine connection with students. Counselor educators also expressed concerns over a lack of ability to model and teach effective interpersonal characteristics and skills online.

Along with frustrations expressed by counselor educators in the process of rethinking teaching and engagement strategies came another theme of emerging solutions that developed through their online teaching experience. Professors found themselves

thinking more creatively about how to form connections, model skills, and teach effect practice in the online environment. Participants provided suggestions such as including video segments, providing online office hours, and making face-to-face experiences a requirement in online courses to benefit interpersonal engagement.

Finally, the most important theme that resonated with all of the participants in this study was a need for greater support in the transitional experience. Professors explained that support began within the counselor educator as resistance to online teaching could limit personal growth and effectiveness in the changing academic landscape. Also, professors desired greater support on the professional level to more productively align counselor education standards with professional practice in the field. All participants in this study longed for greater institutional support in their transition from land-based to online teaching. Counselor educators explained they needed elements such as a safe place to gain online experience, a platform to share online teaching strategies and resources, and qualified mentors with time to provide intentional, active, and engaging supportive services throughout the transition process.

Limitations of the Study

Some possible limitations of this research revolve around researcher bias and recruiting an adequate sample. I am a counseling student in a fully online CACREP accredited counselor education and supervision program. My views surrounding online counselor education could sway my interpretation of findings and put this study at risk. To address this issue, I intentionally used a transcendental phenomenological approach to gather and analyze data that required me to focus specifically on participant language.

This approach does not allow any researcher interpretation of findings (Giorgi, 2012). I also took notes and reflected throughout the interview and data analysis process to remain keenly aware of personal thoughts and perspectives and limit their influence on the experience. I worked to bracket biases by reporting narratives of experience from counselor educators in the most uncontaminated manner (Husserl, 1931). Regardless of measures to reduce researcher bias, it can still limit the study in some ways due to the subjective nature of qualitative work (Husserl, 1931).

Another possible limitation of this research was an adequate sample. Although research participants offered rich, thick descriptions that provided saturation for this study, there was not an extensive variation in ethnicity among those who responded to the participation invitation. One participant in this study was Black, and the rest of the participants were White. This study would have benefited from greater diversity among study participants.

Beginning this research, I was also concerned about recruiting enough participants from small universities across the United States. These faculty members felt "stretched thin" with teaching responsibilities during the academic year. Fortunately, the time of recruitment for this research project fell during the summer break, and several counselor educators were willing to participate. These counselor educators also offered contact information for other counselor educators who were also willing to join the study.

Recommendations for Further Research

There are many opportunities for further research when it comes to online counselor education. The counseling profession is just beginning to consider best online

academic practices and would benefit from research that could empirically support

effective strategies to teach and connect with counseling students online (ACES, 2016;

Bridges & Frazier, 2018). Being a relational field, many counselor educators are

concerned that online counseling students may lack preparation for work in the field as

educators often feel limited in their ability to model counseling skills and characteristics

effectively online. Research that explores best practices to teach skills and assess

character online might provide meaning information to support the development of more

effective online academic practices. Also, the use of hybrid opportunities in counselor

education as a professional standard might be important to explore. More research is also

needed to address best gatekeeping practices in online programs to ensure counseling

students are emotionally and mentally prepared for their professional work. Finally,

research opportunities exist to address supportive services for counselor educators at the

institutional level. This research study identified mentoring as an important strategy for

helping counseling educators make a transition to online teaching, but what are effective

and realistic mentoring practices. Online teaching and learning are growing in counselor

education making this a rich area of continued exploration for further researchers.

Implications for Social Change

Technology has become a formidable force in modern society providing

innovation that boasts both benefits and conveniences that many find hard to ignore.

Stakeholders in higher education who have historically valued traditional academic

practices are often challenged to accommodate for this technological change (Bilbeisi &

Minsky, 2014). The counseling profession is no exception as leaders have worked to stay

on the leading edge of innovation by developing professional standards to guide the use of technology in both counseling practice and training (ACA, 2014). The counseling profession has also accredited both land-based and fully online counselor training programs to make online counselor education an accepted aspect of the counselor development experience (CACREP, 2018).

Universities with online counselor education programs have opened opportunities for many aspiring counselors. No longer do counseling students have to move their families and uproot their lives for graduate training. Students who were previously unable to join the profession due to family, work, financial, or geographic constraints are now met with new possibilities to forward their personal and professional goals (Smith et al., 2015).

With the inclusion of online academic opportunities in counselor education, there is also a continuum of beliefs surrounding the usefulness of online courses and the effectiveness of training online students for a relational field (Reamer, 2013). In this study, counselor educators who were comfortable with online teaching as well as those who still struggled to understand the method were both in agreement that more is needed to help counselor educators grow in their understanding of online teaching and learning practices (Blackmon, 2016; Mandernach et al., 2012). All participants in this study acknowledged they were continuing to learn best practices for online teaching and engagement. As online counseling programs continue to develop, it remains important to explore what is needed to support educators and produce well-qualified professionals for the field.

Technology has changed the landscape of interacting and communicating on a worldwide scale. Open communication and collaboration among diverse scholars in counselor education were recommended as strategies to bridge the divide between land-based and online teaching. Specifically, a common platform that allowed for the sharing of ideas and resources might help to promote best practices. As one faculty member suggested, counselor educators working together could produce valuable results. Integrating the wisdom of counselor educators that have years of teaching experience with the technology savvy understanding other educators, could result in a proactive process of effectively including technology and productively meeting the tide of educational change. Finding ways to support one another and continuing to unify the profession around a mission of academic experience will continue to encourage best practices as well as promote a strong common professional counseling identity.

Conclusion

The counseling profession is growing, developing, and becoming more of a formidable presence in the field of mental health services. Training well-qualified counselors is an imperative standard of the profession. Over the last decade, counselor training programs have shifted to accommodate for technological change. There remain still much to understand about how to develop well-qualified counselors for professional service with online counselor training methods. Many counselor educators are still unclear about how to effectively integrate online academic opportunities into well-developed counselor training programs.

In this study, counselor educators expressed a need for support to facilitate their transition at several different levels. As a profession, more research and the refining of professional standards could help to underpin strong online teaching practices across programs. At the institutional level, more training, experience, and mentorship opportunities were needed to facilitate the instructor's unique transitional process. Finally, on a personal level, counselor educators who resist academic change could find themselves on the fringes of a growing and developing counselor education program. Remaining open and flexible to change and engaging in an active life-long process of learning might encourage the healthy development of future counselor educators.

References

ACES Technology Interest Network (2017). ACES guidelines for online learning in counselor education. Retrieved from https://www.acesonline.net/sites/default /files/Online%20Learning%20CES%20Guidelines%20May%202017%20(1).pdf

Allen, I. E., & Seaman, J. (2014). Grade change: Tracking online education in the United States. Retrieved from http://www.onlinelearningsurvey.com/reports/ gradechange.pdf

American Counseling Association (ACA). (2014). ACA Code of Ethics. Alexandria, VA: Author. Retrieved from https://www.counseling.org/Resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf

Allen, I.E., Seaman, J., Poulin, R. & Straut, T.T. (2016). Online report card: Tracking online education in the United States. Retrieved from https://onlinelearningsurvey.com/reports/onlinereportcard.pdf

Association for Counselor Education and Supervision. (2016). Best practices in teaching in counselor education. Retrieved from: http://www.acesonline.net/ resources/aces-teaching-initiative-taskforce-report-october-2016

Baack, D., Jordan, D. R., & Baack, D. W. (2016). Evolution and revolution in higher education: Catastrophe theory's applications and implications. *Midwest Quarterly*, *57*(2), 105-125.

Baran, E., & Correia, A. (2014). A professional development framework for online teaching. *TechTrends: Linking Research & Practice to Improve Learning, 58*(5), 96-102. doi:10.1007/s11528-014-0791-0

Baran, E., Correia, A., & Thompson, A. (2011). Transforming online teaching practice:

critical analysis of the literature on the roles and competencies of online teachers.

Distance Education, *32*(3), 421-439. doi:10.1080/01587919.2011.610293

Bilbeisi, K. & Minsky, B. (2014). Teaching online versus teaching hybrid and in-class.

International Journal for Innovation Education and Research, 2(9), 1-9.

Retrieved from www.ijier.net.

Blackmon, S.J. (2016). Teaching online, challenges and motivations: A research

synthesis. *Education Maters the Journal for Teaching and Learning*, 4(1), 66-83.

Retrieve from http://em.journalhosting.ucalgary.ca/index.php/em/article/view/130

Bridges, C.W. & Frazier, W. (2018). Teaching across settings. In L. Haddock & J.

Whitman, *Preparing the educator in counselor education: A*

comprehensive guide to building knowledge and developing skills. (p.

190). Routledge: New York, NY.

Chiasson, K., Terras, K., & Smart, K. (2015). Faculty perceptions of moving a face-to-

face course to online instruction. *Journal of College Teaching & Learning, 12*(4),

231-240. doi:10.19030/tlc.v12i3.9315

Cleary, M., Horsfall, J., & Hayter, M. (2014). Data collection and sampling in qualitative

research: does sample size matter? *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 70*(3), 473-475.

doi.org/10.1111/jan.12163

Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP)

(2018). CACREP policy document. http://www.cacrep.org/

Dixon, C. S. (2014). The three E's of online discussion. *The Quarterly Review of Distance Education, 15*(1), 1-8.

Dockter, J. (2016). The problem of teaching presence in transactional theories of distance education. *Computers and Composition, 40*, 73-86. doi:10.1016/j.compcom.2016.03.009

Dollarhide, C.T., Gibson, D. M., & Moss, J.M. (2013). Professional identity development of counselor education doctoral students. *Counselor Education & Supervision, 52*, 137-150. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6978.2013.00034.x

Finlay, L. (2014). Engaging phenomenological analysis. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 11, 121-141. doi:10.1080/14780887.2013.807899

Fletcher, T. & Bullock, S.M. (2015). Reframing pedagogy while teaching about teaching online: A collaborative self-study. *Professional Development in Education, 41*(4), 690-706. doi:10.1080/19415257.2014.938357

Foster, L. H. (2012). Professional counselor credentialing and program accreditation in the United States: A historical review. *Journal for International Counselor Education, 4*, 42-56. Retrieved from http://digitalcommons.library.unlv.edu/jice

Frankfort-Nachmias, C., Nachmias, D., & DeWaard, J. (2015). *Research methods in the social sciences* (8th ed.). New York: Worth.

Fusch, P.I. & Ness, L.R. (2015). Are we there yet? Data saturation in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report, 20*(9), 1408-1416.

Garratt-Reed, D., Roberts L.D., & Heritage, B. (2016). Grades, student satisfaction and

    retention in online and face-to-face introductory psychology units: A test of

    equivalency theory. *Front Psychology*, 7, 673. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00673

Giorgi, A. (1997). The theory, practice, and evaluation of the phenomenological method

    as a qualitative research procedure. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology,*

    28(2), 235-246. doi:10.1163/156916297x00103

Giorgi, A. (2009). *The descriptive phenomenological method in psychology: A modified*

    Husserlian approach. Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press.

Giorgi, A. (2012). The descriptive phenomenological psychological method. *Journal of*

    Phenomenological Psychology, 43, 3-12. doi:10.1163/156916212X632934

Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? An

    experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods, 18*(1), 59-82.

    doi:10.1177/1525822X05279903

Gunawan, J. (2015). Ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Belitung Nursing*

    Journal, *1*(1), 10-11. Retrieved from http://belitungraya.org/BRP/index.php/bnj/

Hall, D. P. (2016). *Online counselor training: Challenges and successes in the*

    experiences of online counselor educators. Available from ProQuest

    Dissertations & Theses Global (Order No. 1868993575).

Hammarberg K., Kirkman M., & de Lacey, S. (2016) Qualitative research methods:

    When to use them and how to judge them. *Human Reproduction, 31*, (3), 498-

    501. doi:10.1093/humrep/dev334

Hays, D. G., Wood, C., Dahl, H. & Kirk-Jenkins, A. (2015). Methodological rigor in journal of counseling & development qualitative research articles: A 15-year review. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 94*, 172-183. doi:10.1002/jcad.12074

Heidegger, M. (1962). *Being and time* (J. Macquarrie & E. Robinson, Trans.). New York, NY: Harper and Row.

Hockridge, D. (2013). Challenges for educators using distance and online education to prepare students for relational professions. *Distance Education*, 34(2), 142-160. doi:10.1080/01587919.2013.793640

Holzweiss, P. C., Joyner, S. A., Fuller, M. B., Henderson, S., & Young, R. (2014). Online graduate students' perceptions of best learning experiences. *Distance Education*, *35*(3), 311-323. doi:10.1080/01587919.2015.955262

Horvitz, B. S., Beach, A. L., Anderson, M. L., & Xia, J. (2014). Examination of faculty self-efficacy related to online teaching. *Innovation in Higher Education, 40*, 305-316. doi:10.1007/s10755-014-9316-1

Husserl, E. (1931). *Ideas* (W.R. Boyce Gibson, Trans.). London: George Allen & Unwin.

Kammer, J. (2015) The new-to-online instructor: Conceptions, desires and expectations. *In iConference 2015 Proceedings*. Retrieved from https://www.ideals.illinois.edu /bitstream/handle/2142/73461/41_ready.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y

Karl, K. & Peluchette, J. (2013). Management faculty perceptions of candidates with online doctorates: Why the stigma? *American Journal of Distance Education*, 27(2), 89-99. doi:10.1080/08923647.2013.773221

Kearns, L. R. (2016). The experience of teaching online and its impact on faculty

  innovation across delivery methods. *Internet and Higher Education* 31, 71-78.

  doi:10.1016/j.iheduc.2016.06.005

Keengwe, J., & Kidd, T. T. (2010). Towards best practices in online learning and

  teaching in higher education. *Journal of Online Learning and Teaching, 6*(2),

  533.

Kirkpatrick, K. J. (2015). Universal design in online education: Employing organization

  change. *Journal of Online Learning and Teaching, 11*(2), 280- 290. Retrieved

  from http://jolt.merlot.org/Vol11no2/Kirkpatrick_0615.pdf

Kruger-Ross, M.J. & Waters, R.D. (2013). Predicting online learning success: Applying

  the situational theory of publics to the virtual classroom. *Computers &*

  Education, 61, 176-184. doi:10.1016/j.compedu.2012.09.015

Limperos, A.M., Buckner, M.M., Kaufmann, R., Frisby, B.N. (2015). Online teaching

  and technological affordances: An experimental investigation into the impact of

  modality and clarity on perceived and actual learning. *Computers & Education*,

  83, 1-9. doi:10.1016/j.compedu.2014.12.015

Lindsey, N.S. & Rice, M.L. (2015). Interpersonal skills and education in the traditional

  and online classroom environments. *Journal of Interactive Online Learning,*

  13(3), 126- 136. Retrieved from http://www.ncolr.org/jiol/issues/pdf/13.3.3.pdf

Lopez, K.A. & Willis, D.G. (2016). Descriptive versus interpretive phenomenology:

  Their contributions to nursing knowledge. *Qualitative Health Research*, 14,

  726- 735. doi:10.1177/1049732304263638.

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

Mandernach, B.J., Mason, T., Forrest, K.D., & Hackathorn, J. (2012). Faculty views on the appropriateness of teaching undergraduate psychology courses online. *Teaching of Psychology*, 39(3), 203-208. doi:10.1177/0098628312450437

Maxwell, J. A. (2013). *Applied social research methods series: Vol. 41. Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Moore, R. (2014). Importance of developing community in distance education courses. *Techtrends: Linking Research & Practice to Improve Learning*, *58*(2), 20-24. doi:10.1007/s11528-014-0733-x

Moran, K. & Milsom, A. (2015). The flipped classroom in counselor education. *Counselor Education & Supervision*, 54, 32- 43. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6978.2015.00068.x

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods (24-42)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Mulig, L. & Rhame, S. (2012). Time requirements in an online teaching environment: How to be more effective and efficient in teaching online. *Journal of Accounting and Finance,12*(4), 101- 109.

Naidu, S. (2014). Looking back, looking forward: The invention and reinvention of

distance education. *Distance Education*, *35*(3) 263-270.

doi:10.1080/01587919.2014.961671.

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (4th ed.). Thousand

Oaks, CA: Sage.

Priest, H. (2016). An approach to the phenomenological analysis of data. *Nurse

Researcher,10*(2), 50-63. doi:10.7748/nr2003.01.10.2.50.c5888

Qu, S. Q., & Dumay, J. (2011). The qualitative research interview. *Qualitative Research

in Accounting & Management, 8*(3), 238-264. doi:10.1108/11766091111162070

Ravitch, S. M., & Carl, N. M. (2016). *Qualitative research: Bridging the conceptual,

theoretical, and methodological*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Reamer, F.G. (2013). Distance and online social work education: Novel ethical

challenges. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, 33, 369-384.

doi:10.1080/08841233.2013.828669

Remley, T. P., Jr., & Herlihy, B. (2014). *Ethical, legal, and professional issues in

counseling*. (4th Ed.) Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Roby. T., Ashe, S., Singh, N., & Clark, C. (2013). Shaping the online experience: How

administrators can influence student and instructor perceptions through policy and

practice. *Internet and Higher Education, 17*, 29-37.

doi:10.1016/j.ihedu.2012.09.004

Rockinson-Szapkiw, A.J., Spaulding, L.S., & Spaulding, M.T. (2016). Identifying

significant integration and institutional factors that predict online doctoral

persistence. *Internet and Higher Education, 31*, 101-112.

doi:10.1016/j.iheduc.2016.07.003

Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2012). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sampson, J.P. & Makela, J. P. (2014). Ethical issues associated with information and communication technology in counseling and guidance. *Department of Educational Psychology and Learning Systems*, 1-24.

doi:10.1007/s10775-013-9258-7

Schmidt, S. W., Hodge, E. M., Tschida, C. M. (2013). How university faculty members developed their online teaching skills. *Quarterly Review of Distance Education, 14*(3),131-140.

Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information, 22*(2), 63–75. doi:10.3233/efi-2004-22201

Shepherd, C., Bolliger, D., Dousay, T., & Persichitte, K. (2016). Preparing teachers for online instruction with a graduate certificate program. *Techtrends: Linking Research & Practice to Improve Learning*, *60*(1), 41-47.

doi:10.1007/s11528-015-0015-2

Smith, R.L., Flamez, B., Vela, J.C., Schomaker, S.A., Fernandez, M.A., and Armstrong, S.N. (2015). An exploratory investigation of levels of learning and learning

efficiency between online and face-to-face instruction. *Counseling Outcomes Research and Evaluation, 6*(1), 47-57. doi:10.1177/2150137815572148

Sword, T. (2012). The transition to online teaching as experienced by nurse educators. *Nursing Education Perspectives*, 33(4), 269-271. doi:10.5480/1536-5026-33.4.269

Tang, E. & Lam, C. (2012). Building an effective online learning community (OCL) in blog-based teaching portfolios. *Internet and Higher Education*, 20, 79-85. doi:10.1016/j.iheduc.2012.12.002

Trepal, H., Haberstroh, S., Duffey, T., & Evans, M. (2007). Considerations and strategies for teaching online counseling skills: Establishing relationships in cyberspace. *Counselor Education & Supervision, 46*(4), 266-279. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6978.2007tb00031.x

Urofsky, R.I. (2013). The council for accreditation of counseling and related educational programs: Promoting quality in counselor education. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 91, 6-14. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6676.2013.00065

Appendix A: Participation Letter

Counselor Education Faculty,

My name is Natalie Hale, and I am a doctoral student in the Counselor Education and Supervision program at Walden University. As partial fulfillment of my degree requirements, I am conducting a qualitative research study designed to highlight the experiences of counselor educators who have transitioned from teaching counseling courses in a classroom to teaching counseling courses online. I am seeking counselor educators who are currently teaching at least one online counselor education course, have prior experience teaching land-based counselor education courses, and represent a college or university with less than 2,500 online students.

Participation in this study will include an interview lasting approximately 60 minutes. The interview will be conducted either face-to-face or through video conferencing (Skype). I will audio record the interview and use the information to identify essential themes consistent across counselor educator experience.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you can choose to withdrawal at any time. All participants who complete the interview will receive a $10 Starbucks gift card as a thank you for participation. Educators who participate in this study will offer some valuable insight to the field of counselor education as currently there is little research available to fully understand what might limit or support counselor educators as they work to navigate this transition. I expect results of this study will help inform practices in higher education that might support smoother transitional experiences for

counselor educators who find themselves faced with a need to move from land-based to online teaching experiences.

Thank you for considering participation in this study. If you meet the criteria for participation and are interested in being a part of this research, please send an e-mail to natalie.hale@waldenu.edu. Also, if you have questions or need additional information about this study, please let me know.

Thank you,

Natalie Hale

Appendix B: Interview Guide

1. How would you say you have personally experienced a difference between teaching counselors online and teaching them in a classroom?

2. What is your comfort level with teaching counseling courses in a classroom compared to teaching counseling courses online?

3. How would you describe your method of connecting with counseling students in the classroom setting? How have you experienced changes to this method when teaching online?

4. How would you describe your teaching style in the classroom setting? How have you experienced changes to your teaching style in the online academic environment?

5. What are some challenges you have experienced with your transition from land-based to online teaching?

6. What are some supports you have experienced during your transition from land-based to online teaching?